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# ETERNAL PURPOSE.

A Study

OF THE

SCRIPTURE DOCTRINE OF IMMORTALITY.

BY

WILLIAM R. HART.

SECOND EDITION.

WITH A SUPPLEMENTARY ESSAY ON

LIFE: TEMPORAL AND ETERNAL.

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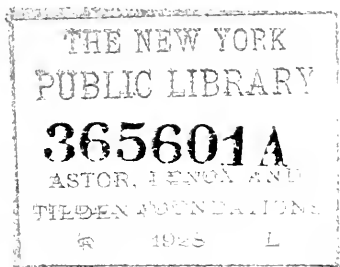
“ Πνευματικοὶς πνευματικῶς συγκρίνοντες.”—1 COR. ii. 13.

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## PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

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THE reception accorded to this book on both sides of the Atlantic, both in the way of hostile criticism and earnest approval, testifies to the very deep and wide-spread interest which is felt in the Bible teaching concerning Immortality. While the masses of professors of religion are sunk in indifferentism, and while much of the preaching of the present day is merely humanitarian or speculative in its character, it is evident that a large and increasing number of thoughtful Christians are turning to the Bible itself for an answer to the doubts and perplexities for which modern religious thought and teaching have no solution. To such this book is offered only in the hope that it may prove an aid to their study of the Word.

The essay on "Life: Temporal and Eternal," which supplements this edition, is written with the design of answering some questions asked of the

author by the readers of the book. For the sake of completeness, inasmuch as the essay is also published separately, some statements made in the body of the volume are repeated in it.

The doctrine taught in this book is not "Annihilation." The current arguments based on this word, in favor of the inherent immortality of the human soul, do not apply to the Scripture teaching of an immortality derived from Christ only, and its corollary of the ultimate destruction, both body and soul, of the wicked. Nor can the phrase, now so popular, of "Conditional Immortality" be accepted as correctly representing the doctrine. The *gift* of God is Eternal Life; and that which is a gift must of necessity be *un*-conditional.

To friends in various parts of the world whose faces I have not seen, but from whom letters of encouragement and sympathy have been received, my sincere thanks are tendered.

W. R. H.

3301 ARCH STREET,  
PHILADELPHIA, February, 1882.

## “IN LIMINE.”

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IT is assumed in the following pages that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the divinely-inspired Word of God. Their authority is considered absolute, their decisions final.

But if, indeed, it be true that the Bible is God's Word, we should naturally expect to find in it some marks of similarity to other works known to be by the same Author. The Word and the Works of God should be found to possess common characteristics. If we find similar principles governing the origin, development, and relations both of the facts of the material universe and the spiritual facts recorded in the Bible, we have not only a proof of common authorship, but a most important clue to the study of the meaning of both classes of facts.

It has been only within a comparatively brief period that it has been discovered that the order of nature does not consist in mere external arrange-

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ment, but is an order of growth and development. Formerly, animals were classified according to size, form, color, number of limbs, and other merely external characteristics. Cuvier, and in later days, Agassiz, have taught us that of the individuals which were thus classified many have no real relation to each other. The relations of plants and animals are relations of internal structure, not of outward garb. Who, for instance, could know from external traits, that the Whale is not a Fish, but a warm-blooded animal, of different genus from any of the tribes of Fishes? Or who would suppose by merely looking at them, that the cultivated Easter lily and the field onion have a common ancestry, and belong to the same family?

Of late years, the aim of scientific research has been, first, the ascertainment and verification of facts, and, second, to learn the relations of these facts to each other. It has so far been found that all the facts of physical science have relation to a vast, systematic, and comprehensive plan, extending over a vast series of ages. The plan is seen to have been evidently complete from the beginning, in the mind of its author. But its development has been gradual.

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The forms of life were at first few and simple. In the course of ages they have become multitudinous and complex. But in this almost infinite variety, every species, and every individual of the species, retains its conformity to the original type. Thus all the individuals, though perhaps differing widely in form, size, color, and many other outward characteristics, are related to each other, as well as to the type from which they sprung. To ascertain and establish these relations is the mission of the scientist.

But, besides all this, the unity of scientific truth is now a well-established fact. Astronomy, geology, botany, zoology, chemistry, optics, physics, mathematics, and other branches of science, are now so linked together—so interwoven, so to speak, with one another—that the proficient in any one branch must know a good deal of all the rest. No new fact is discovered in any department which is not found to be related to the facts in all the rest, and to aid in the understanding of them all. In a word, the truth is one.

As we said in beginning, if the Bible be indeed the Word of God, we should expect to find it characterized by the same laws of relation, progression, and

unity which rule in the works of God. It is only of late that this has begun to be recognized. A few earnest students, chiefly in England, have demonstrated that this correspondence exists, and have made considerable advances in the scientific investigation of Holy Scripture. But in the theological seminaries, and in most of the various commentaries, the methods of study and exposition are similar to those which prevailed in natural history a century ago. The habit of preaching from, and the being trained to preach from, isolated texts, instead of comprehensive scriptural exposition, is largely accountable for this. The Scriptures are like a mighty tree, with roots, trunk, branches, leaves, sap, and fruit. Scientific study would recognize the common life which permeates the entire tree; would seek to understand the various developments of this life as shown in the different portions of the tree, and to recognize the relations, distinctions, and appropriate functions of every part. But that which is called systematic theology cuts down the tree, and re-arranges its several constituents in rectangular piles, according to their length, size, shape, and color, and places upon each pile its appropriate label. As each school of theology



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assorts these heaps of fragments differently, it is not wonderful that there is a war of creeds. In preaching, the clergyman too frequently first selects his subject, and then pulls out from the appropriate pile the text that he thinks will fit it. Nor is it strange that there should exist a conflict between science and religion. This conflict will disappear when the ultimate facts on both sides, with their relations have been ascertained. Meanwhile, the Bible suffers more at the hands of its professed defenders than of its avowed assailants.

The present book is an attempt to investigate and explain a short passage of Scripture in conformity with the principles of interpretation we have been endeavoring to set forth. The theory of the work is expressed in the words of the Apostle Paul, which form the motto on the title-page, and which Dean Alford translates: "Combining spiritual things for spiritual persons." The idea conveyed in these words is exactly that which we see carried out in natural science,—that of bringing isolated facts into their divinely-ordained combinations. The book is, however, only an attempt. It has been written piecemeal, in moments pinched from the edges of a very

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busy life. The best hope of the writer is, that some one, with greater learning and better opportunities, will be led to do well what he has now tried to do with but imperfect success.

In the investigation of any passage of Holy Scripture, the first requisite is to ascertain exactly *what it is* that God has revealed. For this purpose, literal translations of the passage under review (Chapters I. and II. of the Epistle to the Hebrews), and of the various texts quoted in the book, are offered to the reader. No claim is made for these, except that they are meant to be, as nearly as possible, an exact literal transcript of the meaning of the original Greek. The basis of these translations is Wilson's "Emphatic Diaglott," but every other authority accessible to the writer has been consulted.

It has also been assumed that words are used by the inspired writers in their ordinary and obvious sense. Neither exact literalism nor strained spiritual meanings have been followed. Many Greek words have come to have what is called a theological or New Testament meaning, quite foreign to the sense in which they are used by profane writers, or in which they were employed in conversation at the

time the Christian Scriptures were written. These meanings have become attached to these words *since* that time; and we have therefore not considered them as inspired.

There are also some English words, such, for instance, as “repentance,” which have entirely changed their meaning since the Bible was translated. It has been sought to replace these by others, whose present usage more correctly conveys the sense of the original.

The present authorized Version is, in many respects, a paraphrase rather than a translation. Important shades of meaning are conveyed in the use or omission of the definite article,—in tenses and numbers, and in the use of different words for which the translators have used but one English equivalent. It will be seen that some important deductions have resulted from the consideration of these differences, which appear only in a *literal* translation.

The essay on the “Episode of Evil” is designed to give a comprehensive view of the truth brought to light in the investigation of the Scripture which forms the subject of the book.

Inasmuch as the commonly-received view of “eter-

nal punishment" will in many minds form the principal objection to the conclusions reached herein, it has been deemed advisable to append an explanatory essay on that subject.

In humble dependence on the Great Head of the Church, the book is now commended to the attention of the earnest and thoughtful student of Holy Scripture, with but one request: that everything in it shall be brought to the test of the Word itself, and nothing in it accepted but that which is found in conformity therewith.

# ETERNAL PURPOSE.

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## THE SON AND HEIR.

### THEME.

THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS, CHAPS. I. AND II.

(A LITERAL TRANSLATION.)

“GOD, having in many portions and by various methods spoken anciently to the Fathers in the prophets, hath in these, the last of the days, spoken to us in a Son, whom He appointed Heir of All Things; on account of whom also He constituted the Ages; who, being the brightness of His glory and the exact image of His substance, and sustaining all things by the word of His power; having made a purification of sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high; having become so much greater than angels, as He hath inherited a more excellent Name than they.”

For to which of the angels did He ever say, “Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten Thee”? And again, “I will be to Him for a Father, and He shall be to Me for a Son”? And when He shall again introduce the First Born into the world, He saith, “And let all the angels of God worship Him;” and, indeed, concerning the angels, He saith, “It is He who makes the winds His messengers, and a flame of fire His ministering servants.” But unto the Son He saith,

“Thy throne, O God, is unto the Age, and the sceptre of rectitude is the sceptre of Thy kingdom. Thou didst love righteousness and hate lawlessness; on account of this Thy God anointed Thee, O God, with the oil of exultation beyond Thine associates.” Also, “Thou, O Lord, in beginning didst form the earth, and the heavens are the works of Thy hands; they shall perish, but Thou remainest; and they all shall become old like a garment, and like a mantle Thou wilt fold them, and they shall be changed; but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail.” But to which of the angels did He ever say, “Sit thou at my right hand till I place thine enemies a footstool for thy feet”? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to service on account of those being about to inherit salvation?

On this account it behooves us to attend more earnestly to the things we have heard, lest perhaps we should glide away. For if the word having been spoken through angels was firm, and every deviation and inattention received a just retribution; how shall we escape, having disregarded so great a salvation, which, having received a beginning to be spoken by the Lord, was confirmed unto us by those having heard, God co-attesting both by signs and wonders and various mighty works, and distributions of holy spirit, according to His will? For to angels He did not subject the world about coming, concerning which we speak.

But one testified in a certain place, saying, “What is man that Thou dost remember him, or a son of man, that Thou dost observe him? Thou didst make him a little

while less than angels ; Thou didst crown him with glory and honor ; thou didst place All Things beneath his feet ;” for in the All Things to be subjected nothing is left unsubjected to him ; but now we do not yet see the All Things placed under him ; but we see Jesus, on account of the suffering of the death, having been crowned with glory and honor ; having been made for a little while inferior to angels, so that, by the grace of God, He might taste of death on behalf of every one. For it was fitting for Him on account of whom are All Things, and through whom are All Things, in leading many sons to glory to perfect the Prince of their Salvation through sufferings.

For both the Sanctifier and the sanctified are out of<sup>\*</sup> one, for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, “ I will announce Thy name to my brethren, in the midst of the Church will I praise Thee,” and again, “ Behold, I and the little ones which God gave me.”

Since, then, the little ones have been sharers of flesh and blood, He also in like manner partook of these, that He might vanquish him having the power of death, that is, the devil ; and might liberate those who by fear of death were through their whole life held in slavery.

For not in any manner does He lay hold of angels, but He lays hold of the seed of Abraham ; hence He was obliged in all things to be made like the brethren, so that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest as to things relating to God, in order to expiate the sins of the people, for by what He has Himself suffered, having been tried, He is able to render aid to those being tried.

\* ἐκ, signifying *origin or source*.

## I.

## THE HEIR AND THE INHERITANCE.

“God, having in many portions and by various methods spoken anciently to the Fathers in the prophets, hath in these, the last of the days, spoken unto us in a Son, whom He appointed heir of All Things, on account of whom also He constituted the Ages ; who, being the brightness of His glory and the exact image of His substance, and sustaining all things by the word of His power ; having made a purification of sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high ; having become so much greater than angels, as He hath inherited a more excellent Name than they.”

GOD has spoken. Many deny this, but those to whom He has given ears to hear know that He has spoken. When God speaks, it is becoming for creatures to be silent, to listen and obey.

In past times God spoke to the Jewish Fathers. He did not speak to the world as such, but to His own chosen nation. He spoke to them *in* the prophets. When God gives a man a message to deliver, He puts it *into* the messenger. It is not the messenger who



possesses the message, but God's message possesses the messenger, and dominates him; as in the case of the Apostle Paul, who said, "Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel!" A man *must* have the message *in* him to be God's messenger.

He spoke in various manners and in sundry portions. The message was progressive in its character, and was delivered by such methods and in such portions as to meet the need of man; as that need was gradually developed and became manifest. Hence, we must study the Word of God in its progressive character, and with reference to the relations of its several parts. What was spoken to the Hebrew Fathers may not be intended for the Gentile Christian; as most certainly what is now addressed to the latter could not have been received or understood by the former.

But God has now spoken to *us*. Bear in mind that this is addressed to Christians only.<sup>1</sup> A man must have ears to hear, and capacity to receive, before a message can be addressed to him. Those im-

<sup>1</sup> "But the natural (literally, *psychical*) man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned." I Cor. ii. 14.

mediately addressed were Hebrew Christians, who were familiar with Jewish priesthood and ritual.

God has spoken in *a Son*. "By *His* Son" is not the correct rendering here, and weakens the force of the statement. The term is used in a generic sense; and the genus is sharply contrasted with that through which the former messages were sent. But not only is the Son the messenger: He is Himself the message.

Truth is reality. Words may be the medium of conveying truth, but the *substance* of the truth is not in the mere symbols which form its expression. Hence, a man may believe much *about* the Son, but he who really has received God's message, believes *in* the Son. To him he is a Divine Reality, a Living Person, the object of his hope and trust. So the Lord Jesus Christ declared Himself to be the *Truth*, as well as the Way and the Life. He is the embodiment in living reality, of all that God has to say to men.

What God has thus revealed, as meeting the need of man, is simply Himself. The failure of all the ancient revelations has proved that nothing less will meet this need. But God, by His very nature, is

incomprehensible by man. He has therefore been manifested in "A Son," who is declared to be "the effulgence of His Glory and the express image of His substance."<sup>1</sup> In the beginning, God said, "Be light; and light was;" and light has truly been called "the shadow of God." Now mere luminousness is not light; it is only one effect and manifestation of a mighty but invisible Force, which we also know as Heat, as Gravitation, as that which develops the life-principle in animals and plants, and which pervades the Universe. But stored in the Sun, and thence transmitted through our atmosphere, the light becomes radiant,—it *shines*, and we behold the effulgence of its glory. So God, the invisible, immaterial, omnipresent, inconceivable, has manifested His *character* in the Sun of Righteousness, whose moral glory inspires adoring praise, whose light is adapted to our spiritual vision, and whose warmth comforts our hearts.

In Col. i. 15 He is called the "Likeness of the invisible God." The word there<sup>3</sup> means "an image

<sup>1</sup> Or, literally, "the impress of His Essence,"—*i. e.* the manifestation of His Essential Nature.

<sup>2</sup> χαρακτήρ.

<sup>3</sup> εἰκὼν.

a face," and it signifies the exact representation of that which is invisible.

Like the sun, too, which sustains by its attractive force the planets in their orbits, He upholds all things by the Word of His power.

God is One. No conception of Deity is possible, which does not include the idea of Omnipresence. He fills all space, and there is no place where He is not. Beyond the farthest star which marks the limit of the Universe, He is. Could an angel fly eternally, in a straight line, away from the Throne of God, he would yet never pass out of His actual presence. It is evident that in the Universe there can be room for but one such Being; and that, therefore, there can be but one God.

As the angel could not pass beyond the bounds of God's presence, so, also, during his eternal flight he could never arrive at a moment in which God would cease to be. If a Thought could be sent backward from the Present through the Past, just as the angel flies forward through the Future, it would never reach a moment in which God has not existed. Therefore, as God fills Space, so, also, He fills Eternity. From everlasting to everlasting, He is God.

Time is an attribute of matter: a result of the revolutions of created worlds. But God is above the worlds and their revolutions. Before day and night were, or the stars had begun to mark out seasons and years, He is. As He is everywhere present in Space, so is He equally present with all that we call Past, Present, and Future. He needs no effort of memory to recall the Past, no exercise of reason to predict the Future. There is one Universe, one Eternity; and one God fills them both.

Such is the primary idea of God, as revealed to us in Holy Scripture.

But it is revealed not only that He is everywhere present; He is also everywhere *active*. Men commonly attribute the multiform phenomena of earth, air, sea, and sky to an impersonal and unintelligent something, which they call Nature. It would seem more reasonable, in the presence of manifest design, organization, and beauty, to say that personality, intelligence, and power have been at work; and instead of speaking of the activities of Nature, to speak of the activities of God. It is not Nature, of whom Jesus tells His disciples, as clothing the lilies and feeding the sparrows, but "your Heavenly

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Father." It is a *Person* who notices the fall of the sparrow, and numbers the hairs of the human head. When, in the unexplored depths of a Mexican forest, a new variety of Humming-Bird is developed, God is as really and actively present as though there were nothing else in the Universe to occupy His attention. In hearkening to the roar of the young lions, "who seek their prey from God" (not from Nature); or in listening to the cry of one of His own dependent children, He is as engaged as if there were but two beings in the Universe, the suppliant and Himself. Therefore, while it is true that God is One, we may also say of Him that He is *multitudinous*. Not that He is a multitude of gods, but that His manifestations and activities can only be expressed to the finite mind by the idea of infinite multitude.

So, also, the *character* of God is infinite; not only as to its essence, but in its variety and expression. Men speak of the prodigality of Nature; and wonder at the profusion and seeming waste of that, which, though adapted for human enjoyment, is yet unavailable for that purpose. But that which man deems waste, because unavailable by him, is God's superabundant expression of Himself. In the soli-

tude of tropical wildernesses, never before seen by man, explorers have found a multitude of gorgeous and beautiful forms of animal and vegetable life, previously unknown, and have exclaimed, "Why should this be, since no one was here to behold it?" But it was God, who there, alone in the forest, was giving expression to His own idea of the Beautiful. Every bird, flower, and insect expresses a thought of God. It is a mistake to suppose that character necessarily requires an audience for its expression. The born poet *must* sing, the born artist realize to sight his sense of beauty in form and color, whether there be any one to hear and see, or not. So God has expressed the overflowing wealth of His Nature, in microscopic animals and plants, in monsters of the great deep, in trees and flowers, in majestic mountains and peaceful valleys, in continents and oceans, in suns and systems of rolling worlds. The researches of Science show also infinite variety in purpose, design, and adaptation. All this is in accordance with, and in subordination to, Law; but this Law, like all the rest, is but the expression of a Character which we may well call multitudinous. A machine is a partial expression of the mind of its

inventor; a house, of the mind of its architect; a poem, of the mind of its author. Man is but finite, but no man has ever yet given full expression to his mind and character. God, also, is greater than all His works; and in all that we can see in the material creation, and in the human mind and character, there is but a partial expression of that which is in Him who created them all.

To say of such a Being,—the Eternal, Almighty, Universal, Multitudinous, Unknowable One,—that being One in Essence, He cannot be more than one in Person, is the merest anthropomorphism. It is created and finite Man, seeking to measure the Uncreated and Infinite by the standard of his little self. As well might an ant, having mounted to the serene heights of a woodpile, declaim on the moral and intellectual nature of man. Why should we argue that one Being cannot consist in Three Persons? We might equally well assert that one substance cannot be three diverse minerals; but the converse is a demonstrated scientific fact. This fact, admitted concerning Matter, is quite as inexplicable as the revealed fact, concerning God. What is man, that he should say of the Infinite One that He should never



know companionship,—that He who set men in families, should never be able to say “We”?

God is first announced to us in Genesis under a plural title,—“In beginning ELOHIM created the Heavens and the Earth.” We next read of Divine action, predicated of a Person in the singular number,—“The Spirit of God brooded upon the face of the abyss.” We are told that “Elohim *created* man in His own image, male and female created He them,”—thus joining a plural noun to a singular verb and pronoun,—and shortly afterward we learn that “Jehovah-Elohim (translated Lord God in the A. V.) *formed* man out of the dust (chemical atoms) of the earth.” Throughout the Bible we are told of a Divine Person who purposes and designs,—a Divine Person who is manifested and active,—the Jehovah (literally, *Coming One*) who *made* what Elohim *created*; and of a silent and unseen Divine Person, who is life-giving and executive,—the Spirit who brooded over chaos, preparatory to the manifestation of vegetable and animal life. These Three are represented as acting distinctively, and as counselling and covenanting together. The insect upon the woodpile would say they are three Gods; but Rev-

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elation unites with the highest Reason to say they must be, and are, One God.

Of these Three, we have now to do with the Second Person, revealed to us as the Son of God. The term Son, in Hebrew idiom, does not necessarily imply derivation of being, but does always imply *likeness*. Of the Son, it is here declared that He is the Brightness of the glory of God, and the exact image of His substance. In the Epistle to the Colossians He is said to be "the image of the invisible God;" also, that "in Him dwelleth the whole fulness of the Godhead bodily." He is therefore God's *full* expression to the Universe of Himself. All that is revealed to us, as to the multitudinous Nature of God, is treasured up and manifested in the Son. In the material creation—"the things that are seen"—God has partially manifested Himself. There we behold His power and glory. But in the Son He has made a *complete* manifestation, and we there behold the riches of His moral nature, the wonders of His Love. We are not, however, to suppose that this declaration refers merely to the incarnation of the Son. It declares the place which He occupied from all Eternity, in the economy of Godhead.

While in the flesh, He was, as He Himself declared, "straitened," till His work was accomplished. Yet in the flesh, and in the days of His humiliation, He was not less the Brightness of the Glory of God, and the exact image of His substance, than when in the bosom of the Father before the foundation of the world, or now when seated at His right hand. Indeed, it was then that angels, principalities, and powers first began to discern in Him riches of the Divine Character of which they had never dreamed before.

As is the rainbow to light, so is the Son to the Godhead. We *see* the Sun, and say, "Behold the light!" We feel but cannot see its heat; we perceive the effect of its actinic (or quickening) rays, but can neither see nor feel them. Both of these exist and are potent, beyond the *visible* bounds of the solar spectrum. But all these three are indivisibly *one*; and are all included in the solar light, which is "the brightness of the glory" of the central sun.

Assuming that God is infinitely good, it follows, by a deduction of pure reason, that He must manifest Himself to His creatures. Assuming that He is infinitely benevolent, that manifestation would be

made among those who needed it most. That which men dignify by the name of Reason cavils at the thought that God should condescend to be born in circumstances of poverty and suffering, and that He should submit to an ignominious death. But since sin, suffering, and sorrow *do* exist in any part of God's Universe, where else should Infinite Goodness and Infinite Compassion be manifested but just there? And how else should they be manifested, but by coming into the very conditions which are to be relieved—into sympathy with the very sorrow which is to be put away?

It has been even so. When moral night was darkest upon the Earth, the Sun arose, and shining, as it were through tears, brought into visible manifestation the brightness of God's glory, the exact impress of what He intrinsically is. In the One "despised and rejected of men," "the Man of sorrows, acquainted with grief," angels beheld the anti-type of the heaven-spanning arch, threefold in nature, but sevenfold (therefore *complete*) in manifested characteristics,—the pledge of Divine Mercy to the helpless and the vile. The Son came a Light into the world, shining in the darkness which compre-

hended Him not; but telling out, on the one hand, the Love of God, and imparting, on the other, the Life of God. The righteous, the prosperous, and the happy may afford to be Deists or Unitarians, but the sinful, poor, and sorrowful, who have heard of Him, cling instinctively to the belief that God has wept, suffered, and died. The news that a Man, who bore upon a Cross the penalty of sin, and who measured in His own experience the depth of all human sorrow, is the brightness of God's glory and the express image of His substance, is so exactly adapted to their need, that they are persuaded the message must be Divine.

We are now to study a concise history concerning Him. First, He is appointed "Heir of All Things." Second, He makes a "purification of sins." Third, having effected this, He sits down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having by His own work *acquired* the super-angelic position to which He had been appointed.

The term "All Things" is commonly used in the Scriptures to include the entire Universe. Our conceptions of this are altogether too limited—I may say Chinese—in their character. This earth is but

an insignificant dot among the worlds with which God has studded the starry heavens. Formerly the earth was considered the centre of the Universe; and all the stars were supposed to have been made for the sole purpose of giving it light. Astronomic research has dispelled this error; but it has not dispelled the kindred error regarding the things of God, that this world is the centre and circumference of all the counsels of Deity; the ultimate object of Whom is but to patch up the breach made by sin, and to save as many as can be persuaded to accept the "terms of salvation." But we read of "governments, authorities, principalities, and potentates in the heavens;" and that the object of what God is now working out upon this Earth is to reveal Himself to them. The Earth, it is true, is greatly distinguished by being the scene upon which the plans of Infinite Wisdom are developed; but it is, nevertheless, but a temporary stage, upon which, from the amphitheatre of the circling heavens, beings of wisdom and power far transcending our weak humanity, look down to study as here displayed, the infinite riches of the wisdom and love of God.

But there are not only such beings who look in

admiring wonder upon God's revelation of His own character,—there are also *in the Heavens* other beings of transcendent might and intellect, who are opposed to God. There are Governments, Authorities, World-rulers of this darkness, who constitute the spiritual things of the Wicked One. (See Eph. vi. 12, literally translated.) This earth is the scene of the conflict between the Son of God and these mighty hierarchies and countless hosts of wickedness; but were His inheritance of All Things bounded by it, it would seem entirely out of proportion to, and incommensurate with, such stupendous facts as the Incarnation, Death, and Resurrection of the Son of God. We shall see as we progress, by the express statement of many Scriptures, that the All Things to which the Son was appointed Heir, include the entire Universe; and that the things in the heavens, as well as those upon the earth, are to be the fruits of His victory over the Devil and his hosts.

It could not have been in the capacity of the co-equal and co-eternal Son, that He was thus appointed to heirship, since the "all things" which constituted His inheritance were already His, by Divine right, as Creator and Sovereign Lord. On reading a little

further, we discover a marked distinction between His standing in the economy of Godhead, and the filial relation as here set forth,—or rather, that as Son, He is here made known in entirely new and distinctive relationships. He is declared to be a *begotten* Son; and His being begotten is placed within the limitations of time,—“*To-day* I have begotten Thee.” In the fourth chapter of this Epistle we find this word used to mark a definite period of time: “Again, He limiteth a certain time (defines a certain day), saying, *To-day*, after so long a time,—*to-day* if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts.” Heb. iv. 7. He is further declared to be a *first-born* Son, implying other sons. We learn later of “many sons,” and that “He is not ashamed to call them brethren;” “also, that He who sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of One.” Surely, there is a distinction between His Eternal Godhead and the “begotten” nature which He shares with the many brethren.

Other Scriptures will throw light on this question. In Paul’s letter to the Philippians (ch. ii. 5–11) occurs the following important statement. We translate literally :



“Let this disposition be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who, though being in God’s form, did not deem equality with God a thing to be eagerly retained; but divested Himself, having taken the form of a bond-servant, having been formed in likeness of men; and being found in condition as a Man, He humbled Himself, having become obedient until death, even the death of the Cross. Therefore, also, God supremely exalted Him, and freely gave Him the Name which is above every name, so that in the name of JESUS every knee should bend, of heavenly ones and earthly ones, and subterranean ones; and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father.”

It is here declared that the Son divested Himself of all Divine power, wisdom, authority, dignity,—all, in short, that He had; and, as a Man, walked in obedience to God, even unto death.

The self-emptied One lived alone by faith in God. The vindication of God before the Universe was linked in with the trial of humanity. The first man had failed through unbelief, in the first test of his obedience, and involved the race in ruin. Again, in the person of the Second Man, humanity was on trial; and He conquered by faith in God. His Deity, though present, was veiled and held in abeyance. Any putting forth of Divine power would have been the

failure of the Man ; and to induce this was the constant effort of Satan. The words and acts of Jesus were throughout consistent with the place to which He had descended. He said, " I do nothing of Myself, but as the Father taught Me, I say these things." John viii. 28. " The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do ; for whatsoever the Father doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise." John v. 19. " I can of mine own self do nothing ; as I hear I judge, and my judgment is just, because I seek not my own will, but the will of Him who hath sent me." Ibid., 30.

The temptations of Satan in the wilderness were addressed to the need of physical sustenance, the desire for self-vindication, and the desire for power ; all which are inherent in human nature ; and it was sought to cause Him to put forth the exercise of Divine power to meet these demands. His reply to each of these temptations was from the stand-point of weak humanity: " It is written." Especially significant of the place which He had taken, and of the principle which governed His whole life, was His reply to the first temptation: " It is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word

that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Thus He lived,—by faith in God only.

When hanging upon the cross, He conquered by faith. The God who hung there was veiled and passive; while the Man fought out to a victorious ending, the supreme conflict of the Universe. A helpless Man endured in his own soul the full appreciation of God's estimate of the sins which He had made His own; and realized in His own consciousness the horror of the utter death which is justly due to the sinner; while the principalities and powers of wickedness sought to make Him come down from the Cross. But by faith He conquered, and in faith committed His spirit to His Father's hands.

We have dwelt at some length upon this, because it is of the greatest importance as furnishing the key to the understanding of the Scripture we are now endeavoring to study. It was as the self-emptied One, who had come down into the place of weakness, poverty, and receptivity, that God conferred upon Him the heirship of the Universe.

But, though appointed Heir, He had yet to vindicate His title and enter upon His inheritance. Sin was there, and mighty potentates of wickedness dom-

inated portions of it, and denied His right to reign. This Earth, Satan had conquered, and held it as his own dominion; and it was here that the question was to be settled. The sovereignty of the world had been committed to Adam, and Adam had surrendered it to Satan. Here Satan had intrenched himself. Doubtless God could have destroyed him by the exercise of Omnipotence; but it was necessary for the moral dignity and justice of God, as well as for the preservation of the race, that *man* should regain what man had lost; and what the first man lost through unbelief, the Second Man regained through faith.

Next, we are told, that on His account God constituted the Ages. The word here translated "worlds" in the received version,<sup>2</sup> always and only, in the Scriptures, has reference to *time*, never to space or matter. God dwells in an Eternal Now. With Him there is no succession of years or epochs; but just as His presence fills immensity, so, from everlasting to everlasting, He is God. But in the scheme by which evil was to be destroyed, His government to be exalted, and the whole Universe to be

<sup>2</sup> αἰών.

raised to a higher plane of holiness and happiness, it was necessary to constitute a series of progressive epochs, during which Sin should be shown as what it really is, and the way prepared for the Son of God to come upon the scene to make an end of it forever. Hence it is said, that on His account the Ages were constituted.

We have, in the Epistle to the Ephesians, a fuller statement of the same fact, as follows: "In order that now may be made known to the governments and authorities in the heavenlies, by means of the Church, the manifold wisdom of God, according to a Plan of the Ages, which He formed in Christ Jesus our Lord." Eph. iii. 10, 11.<sup>1</sup>

The object of God is here declared to be the making known of His own much-diversified Wisdom. The means by which He makes known His Wisdom is the Church. The persons to whom He makes it known are the governments and authorities of the heavenly, or stellar regions. The Plan adopted for its revelation is gradual, and extends through a series of successive epochs. In the verses just preceding those above quoted, the Apostle speaks of a mys-

<sup>1</sup> Πρόθεσιν τῶν αἰώνων.

tery, or secret thing, which had not been made known to previous Ages; but is now revealed. And all the gradual development of God's purposes—this Plan of the Ages—is in His Son. All is for Him, through Him, and unto Him.

Again, we have in the Epistle to the Hebrews another reference to the same subject: "In Faith, we perceive that the Ages have been adjusted by the Word of God, in order that out of things not appearing have come to pass those that are seen." Heb. xi. 3.<sup>1</sup>

A Divine principle is here stated, that the fulfilment of His purposes is always the subject of promise, and is always apprehended by faith, in the Ages preceding that in which they are actually brought to pass. This principle is abundantly illustrated and exemplified in the eleventh of Hebrews, from the commencement of which this verse is taken.

In each of the Ages thus constituted, the ostensible relations of man to God have differed. In each successive age there has been a fuller manifestation of evil, accompanied by a higher display of grace. The communications of God to man have been appropri-

<sup>1</sup> *κατηρτίσθαι τοὺς αἰῶνας.*

ate to these progressive dispensations. It is, therefore, of the utmost importance, in the study of Holy Scripture, to know under what conditions each revelation was made, and the relations of the Ages to each other. The student who neglects this, is like an astronomer who ignores the relations of the stars in the systems to which they belong; or the geologist who should study the rocks without reference to the strata in which they are found. The significance of things inheres largely in their relations; and this is as true of God's Word as of His material Creation.

We have next to note what He accomplished, which was "A purification—or cleansing—of sins." The authorized version is here again very faulty, and entirely obscures the sense. *Our* sins have not yet specially come into view, nor is this world as yet specially referred to. We must bear in mind that it is as the Heir of *All Things*,—a phrase which cannot be restricted to an insignificant planet, but of necessity includes the entire universe, that He is acting. Nor is the idea of atonement for sins here present. Remembering that it is the Heir and the Inheritance that are alone the subject; that no particular place or people are mentioned; we shall have no difficulty

in understanding that what the Heir accomplished in order to enter upon the possession of His inheritance was, to eliminate from it all evil,—to *cleanse* it entirely from sins. The word here employed<sup>1</sup> is always translated “cleansing” or “purifying.” It does not necessarily include the thought of cleansing by atonement. We are elsewhere taught that the sins of the redeemed have been forever blotted out; but this was part and only part of the purification of sins accomplished by the Heir.

The same Greek word is employed in exactly the same way by the Apostle Peter: “For he to whom these things are not present, is blind; being short-sighted, having become forgetful of the purification<sup>2</sup> of his old sins.” 2 Pet. i. 9. The word purification is applied, not to the one who has been cleansed, but to the “old sins.” These are made objective to the action of cleansing, because by this action they are put away or removed. Thus, when it is said, with reference to the “All Things,” that the Son made a “purification of sins,” it is a simple, broad statement of the purification of the Universe; so that in all its height and depth and length and breadth no evil

<sup>1</sup> καθαρισμόν.

<sup>2</sup> καθαρισμόν.



nor defilement should remain. This was the object for which He was appointed Heir, and for which the Ages were constituted.

True, evil persons and evil things still exist in the Universe; but the lesson here taught is, that the moral effect and ultimate result of the work of the Heir is their utter destruction. The victory effected on the Cross was a *moral* victory. It is not for this reason less real and great a victory, and its ultimate results must follow in God's own time. In Chap. II. this is thus explained: "Thou didst put all things under His feet,—for in the all things subjected, nothing is left unsubjected to Him; but we do not yet *see* that all things have been placed under Him. But we (*do*) see Jesus, through the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor," etc. That is to say, the fact that Jesus is now seated at God's right hand crowned with glory and honor, is proof that in due season *all things* shall be placed under Him.

It will at once be objected by some who read these pages, that the doctrine of the cleansing away of sins from the entire Universe, involving, as it does, the destruction of all evil, does away with the immortality of all men, and with the eternity of penal suf-

fering. We cannot help this. The Bible in many places teaches, as in this passage, that evil is but an episode in the history of the Universe; and that when it has served the purpose for which it was permitted to exist, it will be done away. Nor does the Bible *anywhere* teach the innate immortality of the human soul. From Genesis to Revelation there is not such a statement, while there are multitudes which, in language of the plainest and most unequivocal character, declare the contrary.

This, however, is not the theme of this essay; and we confine ourselves to referring to a few passages which affirm the teaching of the Scripture we are now studying.

In the extract from the Epistle to the Philippians, already quoted, it is stated as the result of the humiliation and death of Jesus, that "God hath supremely exalted Him, and given Him the Name which is above every name, that IN THE NAME OF JESUS every knee should bend, of heavenly ones and earthly ones and underground ones, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father."

Again, the A. V. mistranslates this passage by

rendering the Greek,<sup>1</sup> *at*, instead of *in*. It is *in* the Name of Jesus that every knee shall bend. Those who bend the knee in His Name, and who glorify God the Father in confessing Him Lord, can only be those who are in the position of peace with God, and of loving subjection to Him. Holy Scripture declares that every human being who does these things is a saved person. In this case, the apostle has carefully included every possible order of beings in the entire Universe, as being brought under the same principle by which we now "have access in one Spirit unto the Father." This passage is commonly explained to mean an enforced bending of the knee, on the part of wicked men and spirits; but the very persons who thus represent the wicked as in subjection to God, tell us they will be in rebellion against Him, to all eternity. The whole argument for this interpretation is based on arbitrary substitution by the translators of *at* for *in*.

Colossians i. 20 furnishes concurrent testimony: "Through Him to reconcile *all things* unto Himself, having made peace through the blood of His Cross: ALL THINGS, whether things on the earth or things

<sup>1</sup> ἐν.

in the Heavens." Mark that *things*, not persons only, are here spoken of. Since sin exists in any portion of God's universe (and we know not how widely it is diffused, inasmuch as we are told of wicked spirits in the heavenlies; Eph. vi. 12), the whole is tainted, so that the "Heavens were not clean in His sight." Job xv. 15. The Heir has cleansed them, so that not one spot in the Creation shall ultimately remain which is not pure in His sight, and in harmony with His will.

The Lord Jesus said, "In My Father's House are many mansions; I go to prepare a Place for you." The mind of the Jew who heard this would at once revert to the Temple, in which were a vast number of dwellings of Priests, Levites, servants, and others; but whose inner penetralium was a *Place*, in which dwelt the manifested presence of Jehovah; and into which the High Priest entered alone, not without blood, once every year. These things, we are told, are *figures* of the true. God fills the immensity of space. The Temple was but a microcosm of the Universe, which is the true House of God. The Worlds constitute its many mansions; but there is a central Place, where the Father's presence is

immediate; and there Jesus entered by His own blood, having made an end of sins forever. People often talk and sing about the mansions which Jesus has gone to prepare, and that "He is fitting up a mansion, eternally for me." But He did not pass through the heavens for the purpose of fitting up residences; He went to prepare *a Place*. This Place was that of immediate nearness to God; and it was prepared, once for all, when He there presented Himself, the Risen One, with the evidence that He had finished His work, and had put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. To that Place, from which our sin formerly barred us out, we now have access in spirit. To that Place Jesus will take us, when He fulfils His promise to come again and take us to Himself, that where He is, there we may also be.

The purification of sins which we are considering is not merely a purification of persons. As already said, the inheritance of the Heir, not the salvation of sinners, is the subject here. The work of Jesus on the Cross has many relations, of which the salvation of sinners is but one. It is the whole House, from which sins are cleansed away. In common ecclesiastical teaching, the House of God is a place

called Heaven, where mansions are fitted up for those who have embraced the "offers of salvation," and where they are to enjoy every imaginable luxury. (A lady has given us a peep into it, through the "Gates Ajar," and we must admit that, according to her, everything is very comfortably arranged.) Within all is clean; but without, at the gate, is a heap of vile and offensive refuse, which is to be kept there forever. The Universalist insists that this pile of filth is to be taken into the gates; but the Restorationist admits that it must first be *deodorized*. The Bible declares that it will be utterly destroyed.

The consummation of this cleansing of the whole House, yet in the future, finds a type in the driving out from the Temple of the money-changers, and cattle-dealers. The Lord Jesus had just been present at a marriage-feast, on the third, or Resurrection day; and there, from the symbol of death, had brought forth the symbol of joy. After a brief interval, He drives from the Temple the offensive and inappropriate persons and things which had established themselves there. So after the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, when He shall have drank new wine with His disciples in His Father's Kingdom,

He will proceed to cleanse the House by the utter destruction of all evil beings and evil things.

Turn now to Eph. i. 9, 10: "Having made known to us the SECRET of His will, according to His good pleasure which He had before purposed in Himself, unto the dispensation of the fulness of the times, to rehead up together (unite under one head) *All Things*, in THE CHRIST,—the things in the heavens and the things on the earth,—IN HIM."

Here again is universality. We are pointed forward to the crowning Age of those which were constituted on account of the Heir. In that day the ALL THINGS of His inheritance are to be united in Him, the Head over them all. That there may be no misapprehension, we are told that the All Things include not only the things on the Earth, but those in the Heavens as well. What words could more clearly describe a new administration of the government of the Universe? In what corner of a Universe reheaded up in the Christ and united in Him, could exist a pest-house of corruption,—a prison of eternal woe?

In 1 Cor. xv. 22–28, we have a history of the steps leading up to this consummation:

“As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive. But each one in his own order (or *band*); Christ a first fruit; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming.<sup>1</sup> Then the End, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down (annulled, brought to nought, done away) all rule and all authority and power, for He must reign till He hath put all His enemies under His feet. Death, the last enemy, is destroyed. For He hath put ALL THINGS under His feet. But when He saith All Things are put under Him, it is manifest that He is excepted who did put all things under Him. And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject to Him that put all things under Him, that God may be All in All.”

Christ has risen, the First Fruit of His own death. As He rose, His saints must also rise. There are now principalities and powers of wickedness in heavenly places. See Eph. vi. 12, which would read, if correctly translated, “Spiritual things of wickedness in the heavenlies.” These are next to be put down.<sup>2</sup> Death is the last enemy, and that also is to be done away; but, as if already virtually accomplished, the Apostle here uses the present tense. Then the Heir will present to the Father a redeemed

<sup>1</sup> Παρουσία,—actual, personal presence.

<sup>2</sup> καταργέω,—to annul, cause to vanish, render powerless, *destroy*.



and reconstituted Universe, in which remains no trace of sin or pollution, and will take the place of loving subjection that God may be ALL AND IN EVERY ONE. What a Universe will that be, in which every knee shall bend in the name of Jesus, and every tongue shall give glory to the Father in the confession of the Son as Sovereign Lord; throughout the whole of which shall be extended the effect of the reconciling blood of the Cross, and in which Omnipotent Paternal Love shall alone command, and responsive, filial love obey!

The Book of the Revelation gives us the consummation of the work of the Heir:

“And I saw a new Heaven and a new earth, for the first Heaven and the first earth were gone, and the sea is no more. And the Holy City, New Jerusalem, I saw coming down out of Heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice out of the throne, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will tabernacle with men, and Himself shall be God with them—their God. And He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither mourning nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, *for the former things are passed away*. And He who sitteth upon the throne saith, BEHOLD, I MAKE ALL THINGS NEW.” Rev. xxi. 1-5.

The Heir, at the time here contemplated, has risen up from His session on the right hand of the Father. All things having been by God's decree placed under His feet, He has proceeded to carry that decree into effect. Satan has been chained for a thousand years, and Jesus has ruled the earth ; but the Prince of Darkness having been loosed, has gathered together all the powers of wickedness to make one more struggle for his lost dominion. In that struggle he is defeated and cast into the lake of fire. With him are cast in two mighty but impersonal systems,—political and religious,—the Beast and the False Prophet. Then is set up the great White Throne of Eternal Judgment for the trial of the dead. The disembodied souls not written in the Book of Life are cast into the Lake of Fire. Death, the last enemy, is destroyed. But how destroyed? He is cast into the same lake of fire. He is accompanied by Hades, the place of darkness, forgetfulness, and silence, where there is no knowledge nor device, and where the dead know not anything,<sup>1</sup>—a place now, at the time we are contem-

<sup>1</sup> Job vii. 9; xiv. 13; Ps. xxxi. 17; Eccl. ix. 10; Acts ii. 27, 31; 1 Cor. xv. 55. There are many other passages in which Hell is described as a place of darkness, silence, and forgetfulness, into which *all* the dead went until Christ died and rose again; but their mean-

plating, empty, since Jesus at His Resurrection led out of it a "multitude of captives";<sup>1</sup> and it has now given up its remaining inmates for the judgment of the Great White Throne. We are commonly told that hell itself is the lake of fire; but it is difficult to see how hell could be cast into itself. Here are both personal and impersonal entities, together with disembodied souls, said to be cast into the same lake of fire and tormented. Certainly it does not require much discernment to see that this language is highly figurative, and that the utter destruction, in accordance with other Scripture, of both Evil Persons and Evil Things is here declared. Now follows the vision of the Beloved Apostle above quoted. "*I saw* a new heaven and new earth." The inspired Seer here uses the singular number, instead of the customary plural of universality, in speaking of the Heaven, because he is simply telling what he *saw*; and his vision was not extensive enough to include the Universe. But Peter says, "We, according to His promise, look for new *Heavens* and a new Earth in which dwelleth

ing has been hidden by the arbitrary rendering of the Greek *Hades*, and its Hebrew equivalent *Sho'hl*, as "the grave," or "the pit," etc.

<sup>1</sup> Eph. iv. 8, 9, 10.

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righteousness." He has previously told us concerning the present Heavens that they, "being on fire, will be dissolved." Moreover, in reading a little further the words of John, we find again that he is speaking of the "All Things,"—the Inheritance of the Son.

Death, the last enemy, has now been destroyed. "Then cometh the end, when He shall deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father, that God may be all in all." God receives the Kingdom, and bestows, under the figure of the New Jerusalem, a Bride upon the Son. The intercourse between God and man, long interrupted by sin, is now resumed;—the tears, that in the sudden change from sorrow to joy, have not yet had time to dry on the faces of the redeemed, God Himself will wipe away; and then comes the declaration that the causes of those tears can never occur again, and why? Because "the former things have passed away." But *all* the former things or only part of them? Immediately the answer comes, "Behold, I make *all things* new."

Strange, that our religious teachers, in view of all the passages that we have quoted, should so persistently cling to the idea of the Eternity of Evil; that

as God is eternal, so evil, sin, and suffering are eternal ; that sin, having entered a Universe which we must believe was once free from it, can never again be expelled, even by Omnipotence. It is stranger still, that contrary to the express statements of a great number of passages which, taken in their obvious sense, declare that evil persons and things shall "perish,"—"shall be as though they had not been,"—"shall sleep an everlasting sleep,"—that for them there "shall be no hereafter" (which is the correct reading of Prov. xxiv. 20),—it is strange, I say, that in contradiction to these inspired statements, they adopt the theory of immortality first propounded by Plato, afterwards taken up by a corrupt Church and incorporated with the heathen doctrine of Tartarus, and seek to bolster it up by the misuse or mistranslation of some eight texts concerning eternal punishment.

The truth of Scripture is, that in the history of God's Universe evil is but an Episode. The moral and ultimate effect of the work of the Son of God upon the Cross was to effect a "purification of sins" from the entire Universe. When this has been carried into effect, the Universe will be re-constituted

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under the Headship of the Son,—the temporary existence of Evil having been the occasion of displaying the “exceeding riches of the grace,” and making known the “manifold wisdom of God,” and thus, throughout all future ages, of adding infinitely to the bliss of the whole creation of God. Such a purpose is worthy of the God whom we adore. How infinitely mean beside it appears the theory, that Evil having *somehow* entered the Universe, God has only been able, by the gift of His Son, to patch up the breach, but can never wholly extirpate its cause! And yet more horrible is the thought, that the existence of the eternal, unpalliable, increasing agony of the creatures whom God has made, and to whom He gave the descriptive name of “Enosh,” signifying weakness and mortality, is necessary to satisfy His sense of justice, and enhance the happiness of the saved!

## II.

## THE MANY SONS.

“For to which of the angels did He ever say, ‘Thou art My Son, to-day I have begotten Thee?’ And again, ‘I will be to Him for a Father, and He shall be to Me for a Son?’ And when He shall again introduce the First-Born into the world, He saith, ‘And let all the angels of God worship Him;’ And, indeed, concerning the angels, He saith, ‘It is He who makes the winds His messengers, and a flame of fire His ministering servants.’ But unto the Son He saith, ‘Thy Throne, O God, is unto the Age, and the sceptre of rectitude is the sceptre of Thy Kingdom. Thou didst love righteousness and hate lawlessness; on account of this Thy God anointed Thee, O God, with the oil of exultation beyond Thine associates.’ Also, ‘Thou, O Lord, in beginning didst form the earth, and the heavens are the works of Thine hands. They shall perish, but Thou remainest, and they all shall become old like a garment, and like a mantle Thou wilt fold them, and they shall be changed; but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail.’ But to which of the angels did He ever say, ‘Sit thou at My right hand till I place thine enemies a footstool for thy feet?’ Are they not all ministering

spirits, sent forth to service on account of those being about to inherit salvation?"

WE now proceed with the history of the Heir. Having accomplished the "purification of sins," He "passed through the heavens." He was first *appointed* Heir; He has now *acquired* His inheritance. Having finished the work which His Father gave Him to do, He sits down on the right hand of the Majesty on High. The position is that of honor and of repose; but we are told a little later that it is temporary. He is "expecting until His enemies are made His footstool." And while the position is the one of highest honor, it is still one of subordination. He is honored as the victorious Heir, but He does not yet reign.

We have now to follow the successive steps by which He will take to Himself His great power and reign. Preliminary to this is the declaration of His Sonship. There has ever been in the heart of man a lurking desire to estimate Him as something less than God. Especially might this be the case with Hebrews, who were familiar with angelic manifestations and mediation, and whose conceptions of angelic majesty and might were far more lofty than



ours are apt to be. Accordingly, He is here placed in comparison with angels, and shown to be far above the highest of them, as we are told in the Epistle to the Ephesians: "Having raised Him from the dead, and seated Him at His own right hand in the heavenlies,<sup>1</sup> far above every authority and government and power and lordship, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but that about to come." Eph. i. 20, 21. He has thus *become* as much superior to angels as He has *inherited* a more excellent Name than they.

"For to which of the angels did He ever say, Thou art My Son, this day I have begotten Thee?" And again, "I will be to Him for a Father, and He will be to Me for a Son?" The first thing that strikes us here is, that it is not in the relation of Eternal Godhead that His Sonship is announced, but in a very different relation,—*i.e.*, that of a *begotten* Son. The address is to Him in the character of the Self-emptied one, who took the form of a bond-servant and became obedient to the death of the Cross; and it is preparatory, as we shall shortly see, to His being introduced in glory to the scene of His humiliation.

<sup>1</sup> ἐπουρανίους.

And not only is He a begotten Son, His being begotten has relation to time; it is *this day*. We must again seek to interpret Scripture by Scripture.

The Apostle Paul, in his address in the synagogue of Antioch in Pisidia, uses this same quotation from the Second Psalm; and declares that its prophecy was fulfilled in the resurrection of Jesus Christ: "And we proclaim good news to you, that God has fulfilled to us, the children, the promise which He made to the fathers; *having raised up Jesus*, as it is written also in the Second Psalm, THOU ART MY SON, THIS DAY HAVE I BEGOTTEN THEE." Acts xiii. 32, 33. Here His being a begotten Son is indissolubly connected with the fact of His resurrection, and the day on which He was begotten is declared to be that of His resurrection from the dead. This is further confirmed by such passages as Rev. i. 5: "The faithful witness and the *First-Born of the dead*, and the Prince of the Kings of the earth." And Col. i. 18: "Who is the Beginning, *the First-Born from among the dead ones*, that He might become pre-eminent among all." The explanation of this is found in the words of the Lord Jesus Himself, "For as the Father has Life in Himself, so hath He given

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to the Son to have Life in Himself; and hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man." John v. 26, 27. To have "life in Himself,"—that is, innate, inherent immortality, is pre-eminently an attribute of God. He says: "I lift My hand to heaven and say, I LIVE FOREVER." Deut. xxxii. 40. Plato and his Christian disciples teach that inherent immortality is also the attribute of every human soul. But Holy Scripture declares concerning God, that He *only* has immortality. 1 Tim. vi. 16. But some one will say, "Did not God impart His own immortality when He breathed the breath of life into the nostrils of Adam, and he became a living Soul?" We answer: "The Scripture declares the "breath of lives" to be common to all animals; also, that "they have all one breath;" and the Hebrew words translated "living soul" are also applied to *all* animals, from the lowest grade up to man. Moreover, if God has already imparted immortality to all men, of what force are the words of the Lord Jesus, "He has *given* to the Son to have life in Himself;"—"I *give* unto them *Eternal* life." John x. 28. "That He may *give* Eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him." John xvii. 2. And, "He that eateth

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of this bread shall live forever." If those who do *not* partake of the bread shall also live forever, of what value is the statement ?

We learn here that the Heir, having divested Himself of all His possessions, and "become poor, that we, through His poverty might be rich," went down into death ; and that the Father then bestowed upon Him, in raising Him from the dead, the special gift of communicable immortality. Thus were fulfilled the words, "as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself." This is further sustained by the following words, "I will be unto Him for a Father, and He shall be unto Me for a Son." This announces a newly-constituted relation, a relation added to that which had previously existed. Son from all Eternity in co-equal Godhead, He now becomes Son by virtue of being quickened from among "the dead ones."

But not only is the Heir superior to angels ; He is proclaimed as the object of angelic worship. "For when He bringeth again the First-Born into the world, He saith : And let all the angels of God worship Him."

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The word here translated world is *oikoumenē*, which is a word of limited meaning. It is not the word *aiōn* which occurs in the second verse of the chapter, which has relation to time only, and not to space or matter; and should therefore always be translated *Age*. Nor is it the word *gē*, signifying the earth, nor the word *cosmos*, meaning "an order of things." All these words are frequently rendered "world" in the New Testament. The word *oikoumenē* literally means "the habitable." In the Scriptures it is uniformly applied only to that portion of the earth known to be inhabited in Christ's day, and which was under the dominion of Rome. One out of many instances occurs in Luke ii. 1: "In those days went forth a decree from Cæsar Augustus that all the world (*oikoumenē*) should be taxed" (more properly *enrolled*).

This word, then, is limited to the very scene of the Heir's humiliation, sufferings, and death. And when God brings Him *again* upon the scene, He says, "And let all the angels of God worship Him." When He was first here we read of angelic ministrations; but never of angelic worship. Nor was He then worshipped by any one. We do indeed read in the common version of the New Testament, that a blind man

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to whom He gave sight, "worshipped Him"; but the word should instead have been translated, "prostrated to Him." He spoke of Himself continually as the "Son of Man"; and mingled as man among men. His disciples usually addressed Him as "Teacher." As the Man, the Servant, the destitute and dependent One, despised and rejected of men, He walked, in the power of trust in God, to the death of the Cross. To this very scene of former ignominy and sorrow, God is now about to again introduce Him in glory, amid the adoration of all the heavenly hosts. The world, as such, has never known anything of Him since His death as a condemned malefactor, for after His resurrection He showed Himself only to His friends. The hour of His return will be the hour of His vindication. The world shall recognize Him as King of Kings and Lord of Lords; while His saints shall be glorified together with Him; and every holy being which God has made shall render Him the tribute of adoration. This is now His hope, while He waits on the right hand of the Father. It is also the hope of His Church. "Even so, Come, Lord Jesus!"

But we have now some new information concern-

ing Him. He is not only a begotten Son, but He is also the FIRST-BORN, implying *other* sons. In the next chapter of this Epistle, we read of the "many sons" whom He is conducting to glory. Turning to other passages in which the title of "First-Born" is applied to Him, we find:

Rev. i. 5. The First-Born (this is not correctly rendered "begotten" here) of the dead ones.

Col. i. 18. The First-Born from *among* the dead ones.

Rom. viii. 29. The First-Born among many brethren.

Col. i. 15. The First-Born of the whole Creation.

These "many sons," then, as we know from the context of these passages, are those for whom He died. But how is it that they can be called the sons of God? What is the nature of the relationship to which such a title is applied?

Jesus declared concerning His own death, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone, but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." John xii. 24. This comparison is to a stalk of wheat bearing many grains; these many grains all living and growing by virtue of the life inherent

in and developed out of a first grain, which fell into the ground and died. So the Son of God would here say that the "life in Himself," communicated to Him by the Father in His Resurrection, and by which He became a begotten Son, is communicated to others, by virtue of which they too are called the sons of God, and shall live forever.

But we need not make a mere illustration, however forcible, serve as the basis of a doctrine. Again, we refer to express declarations. "To as many as received Him, to them gave He authority to become children of God." John i. 12. This was prior to His death and resurrection. Till then they could not become partakers of His resurrection life; but they received authority to become such, when that new life should have been developed. The word here rendered "sons" in the A. V. should more properly be translated "children";<sup>1</sup> as it is usually limited in its meaning to those who are children by real generation and birth; while the word "Son"<sup>2</sup> has a somewhat wider application. Of these children it is declared, that "they were begotten, not out of (*ἐκ*, signifying origin or source) blood, (the

<sup>1</sup> τέκνα.

<sup>2</sup> υἱός. See Rom. viii.



Bible declares that all human and animal life is in the blood) “nor out of the will of the flesh, nor out of the will of man, but out of God.” And yet we are constantly told that regeneration is entirely dependent upon human choice!

The Lord Jesus told a Jewish doctor of divinity, Nicodemus by name, “Except a man be born from above he cannot see<sup>1</sup> the Kingdom of God. . . . Except a man be born out of water and Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh *is flesh*, and that which is born of the Spirit IS SPIRIT.”

It is said that this spiritual birth is merely the figure of a great moral change,—indeed, Prof. Austin Phelps, of Andover, terms the language here used by the Lord, “daring imagery.”<sup>2</sup> But if the statement, that what is born of the Spirit is spirit, be figurative, then the one that what is born of the flesh is flesh, must be also figurative; for you cannot separate them; they must be taken together. But we know that the latter is, and must be, a literal statement; hence, that spiritual birth, and the spiritual nature which is its product, must be actual and

<sup>1</sup> Discern.

<sup>2</sup> “*The New Birth*,” by Austin Phelps, D.D.

real. Put together the statement that the children of God are begotten, not of human inherent life, nor human procreative power, nor human purpose, but *out of God*,—with this, that the prerequisite to their discerning or entering the Kingdom of God, is their being born from above and born of the Spirit,—and you will begin to have some idea of the relationship borne by the “many sons” toward the Father as children, and toward the Son as brethren. It is a *real* relationship, resulting from the possession of a *real* life,—the life and its relations being as real and actual as those derived from Adam.

So, also, believers in Jesus are said to be “partakers of a divine nature.”<sup>1</sup> 2 Pet. i. 4. They are “begotten again from incorruptible seed.” 1 Pet. i. 23. In many places they are declared to be “begotten of God,” “born of God,” “children of God,” and “sons of God.”

In Rom. viii. 16, 17, we read: “The Spirit itself also testifies together with our spirit that we are the children (*tekna*) of God; and if children, then *heirs*—heirs indeed of God, and joint heirs with Christ.” So

<sup>1</sup> Peter does not say “*the*” Divine Nature, though King James’s translators have put this word into his mouth.

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then the "many sons" are not only associated with Jesus in His Sonship, by reason of their possession of His imparted resurrection life, but they also share His heirship of the Universe. And to be fitted for this high position they are to become *manifestly* like Him, as it is written, "Whom he foreknew, He previously marked out copies of the likeness of His Son, that He might be a first-born among many brethren." Rom. viii. 29. Like produces like. A grain of wheat will produce wheat only, and a grain of barley will produce barley only. "God gives to every seed its own body, as it has pleased Him." 1 Cor. xv. 38. So only flesh is produced from flesh, and spirit from spirit. The first Adam was a living soul. Similar living souls, with bodies to correspond, have been developed from Him. The Second Adam is a life-giving Spirit. The likeness of the many sons to His image, now marked out, or outlined, and to be filled in by and by, will consist in the development of His life in each believer. That life is now possessed by every one who has been born from above; and it is to be developed in due season into the perfect similitude of the First-Born. So the Heir and His many brethren are partakers of a com-

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mon nature; as it is written, "For both He who sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one." They have one common life.

In the Resurrection argument of the Apostle Paul (1 Cor. xv.) he uses an illustration concerning Seeds, both vegetable and animal, which may help us to a clearer and more vivid idea of the actuality of the New Nature. The passage, beginning with v. 35 and ending with v. 50, is, literally translated, as follows:

"But some one will say, 'How are the dead ones raised up, and with what body do they come?' O foolish one, what thou sowest is not made alive unless it die; and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not the body that is going to be born, but naked grain, it may be of wheat or of some of the others; but God gives it a body as He designed, and to each of the Seeds its own body. All flesh is not the same flesh, but (there is) one indeed of men; and another flesh of cattle, and another of fishes, another of birds. And (there are) heavenly bodies and earthly bodies; but the glory of the heavenly, indeed, is one, and the glory of the earthly is another. (There is) one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of stars, for star differs from star in glory. And thus is the resurrection of the dead ones. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is

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sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a psychical body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a psychical body, and there is a spiritual. And so it has been written, the first Adam became a living soul, the last Adam a life-giving spirit. But the spiritual was not first, but the psychical; afterward the spiritual. The first man was out of the earth, earthy; the Second Man was out of heaven. Of what kind the earthy, such-like also the earthy ones; and of what kind the heavenly, such-like also the heavenly ones; and even as we bore the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. And I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither can corruption inherit incorruption.”

The Lord Jesus Christ is here represented as the Seed which fell into the ground and died. He is the Second Adam, the head of a new race of beings, whose actual immortality is derived from Him; the Heavenly Man, in whose image His kindred, having first borne the image of the earthy, are by and by to be glorified.

The habits of modern thought have made it difficult for us to dissociate the actual and real from the material. But a thing which is *only* psychical—a thought, for instance—may be more intensely real than anything which is merely physical. So also

the Soul is itself the real Person, the body being but the instrument, organized and built up by itself out of material atoms for its use. In the New Testament a very marked distinction is drawn between that which is psychical and that which is spiritual; but the Spirit and the things which pertain to it are always spoken of as real entities; quite as real as, though perfectly distinct from, the Soul and its belongings. Nicodemus could not understand the reality of the New Birth when it was first announced to him, but immediately connected it with material ideas: "Can a man enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" The answer of the Great Teacher at once raised his thoughts to a higher plane, and affirmed the actuality of the New Birth: "That which is born of the flesh *is flesh*; and that which is born of the Spirit *is spirit*." Like produces like. Flesh produces flesh, and spirit produces spirit. It is not the soul or psychical existence which is here spoken of as spirit, else there could be no necessity for a *second birth*,—a very different thing from the reformation or re-adjustment of something already born. The teaching has three steps: First, a man must be born "from above."

His first birth was "out of the earth, earthy." Second, this birth is defined as being "out of water (signifying the moral death out of which he is quickened) and spirit." The absence of the definite article in the Greek is most significant. Third, he is born into a new genus. Not merely by the action of *The Spirit*, but he is born "out of spirit." Spirit, not soul or body, is the source and quality of his new life. Now, "*that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and THAT which is born of the Spirit, is spirit.*" "*That*" is something which has been born; something added, something which was not there before. There was previously existing in the man psychical and physical life. Now, he has been born "from above," born "out of the Spirit"; and that which has been born of the Spirit, is spirit. It is actual and potential; it lusts against the flesh, and the flesh against it.

It is this fact which forms the basis of the apostle's resurrection argument. The question he answers is the counterpart of that of Nicodemus. "*How are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come?*" The answer is a statement of a law of vegetable and animal life. A seed falls into the

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ground and dies. It contains an immaterial, invisible, untraceable, vital principle; and that principle is endowed with power to take up and organize, and build up into a body, the atoms of the earth, air, and water. Each seed thus develops a body in accordance with its own law of life "as it hath pleased Him." The illustration is carried on to animal life. "There is one flesh of men: and another flesh of cattle, and another of birds, and another of fishes." The soul implanted in the ovum does the same work that the vital principle of the seed does in the ground; it attracts, organizes, and builds from the substance of the mother, a body for itself. The body of each creature is the product and expression of its soul. Hence, in this argument, the apostle always speaks of the human body as a *psychical*<sup>2</sup> body. Now we learn that there *is* a psychical body, and that there *is* a spiritual body. As the soul has a body suited to its needs, so also must the spirit have a body suited for its expression and use. Mark now the successive deductions. The first Adam was a Living Soul. All that is psychical had its origin

<sup>2</sup> ψυχικός. This word means strictly, psychical, or pertaining to the soul. There is no reason for translating it "natural" or "sensual."



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in him. The last Adam is contrasted with the Living Soul,—He is a Life-giving Spirit. The spirit and its body are from Him. The first man—*the Living Soul*—is out of the earth, earthy. Ps. cxxxix. teaches us that his soul was created “in the lower parts of the earth,” and that by the process since repeated in gestation, it formed for itself a body. Thus the Earth is the mother of Man. We thus understand how he was formed out of the dust of the ground; or, to speak more correctly, of the atoms of the earth. God blew into his nostrils the “breath of lives,”—the breath common to all animals, and he became a “NEPHESH CHAH-YAH,” meaning literally “a vigorous breather.” Exactly the same Hebrew term is applied in Genesis to all animals. But the Second Man—the Life-giving Spirit—is not, like the first man, the living soul, out of the earth, earthy, but His origin is from Heaven. We are next told of the difference in genus between those who have only a life derived from the first Adam, and those who have life imparted from the Second Adam. “Of what kind the earthy, such-like also the earthy ones; and of what kind the Heavenly, such-like also the heavenly ones.”

There is nothing like symbolism or "daring imagery" about the Lord Jesus' announcement of the New Birth, or Paul's announcement of its consequence,—the Resurrection Body. The statements, though wonderful beyond our comprehension, are yet plain and literal statements of the facts of Divine Science. A new order of beings is brought before our view. As psychical life is derived from Adam, so their immortal nature is communicated from the Son of God. As the human soul has now its appropriate body, so will the immortal spirit be by and by "clothed upon with its house which is from Heaven."

It is also declared that He is the Head, and the saints are the members, of One Body. "As the (human) body is one, and has many members, so also is the Christ." 1 Cor. xii. 12. "And made Him Head over all things to the Church, which is His Body, the fulness of Him who filleth all things in all." Eph. i. 22, 23. That is, the Body of Christ is the development into fullest manifestation of Him who is its Head. The life of the Head is the life of the members, by which alone they live. The Apostle Paul expresses this truth as follows:

“From whom the whole body, being fitly joined together and compacted through every joint, according to the energy of the supply, He<sup>r</sup> effects the growth of the body in the measure of each single part, for the building up of itself in love.” Eph. iv. 16.

As we have already seen, the purpose of God in redemption, is to make known to heavenly principalities and powers by means of the Church, the exceeding opulence of His favor; and through the same channel to display to the same spectators, His manifold Wisdom. Now in Christ resides the whole fulness of the Godhead bodily. This fulness is brought out into manifestation in the sight of principalities and powers by means of His body, the Church. The grain of wheat not yet planted does not disclose its potentialities to sight or touch. Nor could angels, while adoring the might and majesty and justice of God, ever know the exceeding wealth of His love, or the infinitude of His wisdom, but for the “much fruit” which the Seed brought forth.

<sup>r</sup> He, the Head, just previously mentioned, is the subject of this sentence, and I have therefore supplied the nominative “He” before the verb “effects.” This renders plain a sentence which in the A. V. is somewhat involved and obscure.

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The Head and the members together are the *expression* to the Universe of the mind and heart of God. At first this expression was in the Son alone. Even in the days of His humiliation angels beheld His glory, the glory of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. The figure *One*, standing alone, may mean little or much. To become concrete to our apprehension, it needs something added to express its value. Add to the integer a dozen ciphers, and you have a number greater than you can count. These ciphers have in themselves *no* value. Standing alone, they signify nothing. But added to the integer, they serve to express its value; and for this purpose not one of them can be dispensed with. A great multitude, which no man can number, of worthless, defiled and helpless sinners, saved by grace, cleansed by blood, and quickened into union with the Son, shall, during the ages of the ages, burgeon and blossom in the energy of His communicated life, in His likeness, and radiant with His glory; and thus shall be known, what otherwise could never have been disclosed, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God, and the overflowing wealth of His mercy and love. So

shall He come to be glorified *in His Saints*, and admired *in all them that believe*.

With relation to the union of Christ with His Church and its results, we will quote one more passage. It is 2 Cor. v. 14-21:

“ For the Love of Christ binds us together,<sup>†</sup> because we judge this, that if One died on behalf of all, then they all died, and that He died on behalf of all, that the living should no longer live for themselves but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf. So that we from this time know no one according to flesh, and even if we knew Christ according to flesh, yet we know Him no longer. For if *any* one is in Christ—a *NEW Creation*; the old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. And the all things are out of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given to us the service of the reconciliation; namely, that God was in Christ reconciling a world (*cosmos*) unto Himself, not reckoning their trespasses unto them, and has put in us the word of reconciliation. We are therefore ambassadors on Christ’s behalf; as though God were beseeching through us, we entreat on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God. For Him not having known sin, He made sin on our behalf, that we in Him might become the righteousness of God.”

<sup>†</sup> *Συνέχω*. This word does not mean constrain, in the sense of *compel*. The primary meaning of constrain, derived from the Latin *constringo*, is the same as that of the Greek, “*to bind together*.”

Look at the successive steps of this argument. First, the love of Christ has bound His saints in one bundle with Himself.<sup>1</sup> He died for them and has risen again, and they are now living with His resurrection life. Hence God counts them as having died with Him, and having left on the other side of His grave the old nature, termed in Scripture, the Flesh; and which we may define as *Self*. Therefore they are no longer to live for themselves. They are actually made one with Him, therefore self is to be set aside, and Christ put in its place. What follows? This, that having left my old self on the other side of Christ's grave, and my brother having also left his old self there, I cannot any longer know him after the old relationship in Adam, but only according to the new in Christ. But why and how are the old relations thus set aside? Because, if any man—if but *one* man be *in Christ Jesus*, there is a *New* Creation. A single grain of

<sup>1</sup> “Now I saw Christ Jesus was looked upon of God, and should also be looked upon by us, as that common or public person, in whom the whole body of His Elect are always to be considered or reckoned; that we fulfilled the law by Him, died by Him, got the victory over sin, death, and the devil by Him; when He died, we died, and so of His resurrection.”—JOHN BUNYAN: *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*.

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wheat upon the stalk is evidence enough to you of the new creation which sprung from the seed which you last autumn committed to the earth. So one grain of fruit springing from that Seed, which went into the ground and died, shows the Apostle that the New Creation is an accomplished fact; and he deduces from this, that "the old things have passed away,—lo, all things have become new." Virtually and morally this is true, according to God's estimate. The old nature, it is true, still asserts itself, and the old things still in fact exist. But God has doomed them to death,—they are about to vanish away; and this is proved by the existence of a *New* Creation. "By saying 'New' He has declared the first one old; now that decaying and growing old is near vanishing." Heb. viii. 13. Therefore God counts them, and teaches us to count them, as *already* virtually passed away, as it is written, "*Reckon ye yourselves therefore dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.*" And the "all things" of this "New Creation" are out of God. They all have their origin in Him, and are therefore like Him. They are not out of blood, nor out of the will of the flesh, but out of

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*God.* But not only so, their origin is in the God with whom we have been made acquainted,—even in Him who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and who gave to His Apostles the service of the reconciliation, *i.e.*, its authoritative announcement to those whom He has reconciled. That announcement is simply this: that God was in Christ (the past tense is used here as denoting something done and finished) reconciling a World unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. The word here translated “World” is “*Cosmos.*” The same word is constantly used with reference to the present order of things on the Earth. It cannot, however, here mean that, but a new and quite different order of things. The Apostle Paul writes: “God forbid, that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ by which I am crucified to a world (*Cosmos*), and a world unto me.” There is no idea of reconciliation in these words, but that of utter, complete, eternal separation and opposedness. It is a rejected and crucified Christ on the one hand, by the side of whom Paul takes his place like the penitent thief on the cross, and a guilty and doomed *Cosmos* upon the other. There can be



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no reconciliation between these. But the *Cosmos* now referred to is the *New Creation*.<sup>1</sup> The law of the Old Creation was that every transgression should receive its just recompense of reward,—the law of the New is, that their trespasses are *not* imputed unto them. But will not this immunity from punishment cause us to sin? No; for “how shall we, who are *dead* to sin live any longer therein?” “The law of the spirit of the Life in Christ Jesus has *delivered* us from the law of sin and death; for what the law could not do, because it was weak on account of the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, so that the righteous things of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk, not according to *flesh*, but according to SPIRIT.” Rom. viii. 2-4.

The exhortation which concludes this extract is addressed to those whom God has thus reconciled, and made living constituents of the New Creation. Because God has, by His own sovereign act, brought

<sup>1</sup> In neither of the above-quoted passages does the definite article occur in the original, in connection with the word “Cosmos.” It is, in each instance, *a* World, and not *the* World. In relation to one Cosmos, Paul was crucified with Christ; but of the other, which God has reconciled to Himself, he is a constituent.

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them into oneness with His Son, and has exalted them in Him, He addresses them through an ambassador, and *beseches* them. He never sent an embassy to sinners "already condemned," nor would it be becoming for Him so to do,—nor does He beseech them. He has never authorized any, except His own divinely commissioned and miraculously accredited apostles, to announce themselves as "ambassadors." The message committed to the ambassador is worthy to be sent by a God to those whom He has constituted sons by actual regeneration. God *has* reconciled you to Himself. Therefore *be* you reconciled to Him. In other words, let your thoughts and ways be in practical harmony with His thoughts and ways. As those who have been raised from the dead, walk in a *new life*. So shall you carry out into practical manifestation the reconciliation which He has already effected through His Son, Jesus Christ. So shall you be *practically* as well as *judicially* reconciled. So also shall you *realize* the reconciliation which He has made.

And a mighty reason enforces the exhortation. He knew *no* sin; but God made Him to *be* sin on our behalf. This statement, it has been attempted to

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soften, by explaining it to mean that He became a sin-offering. But it is true as it stands. He is represented in Ps. xl. (quoted from in the Epistle to the Hebrews as His utterance) as saying, "Mine iniquities have taken hold of me so that I am not able to look up, they are more than the hairs of mine head, therefore my heart faileth me." These sins He made His own, identifying Himself with them when on the cross; and there He apprehended in His inmost soul the adverse aspect toward them of the perfect Holiness of God. He looked into the abyss of utter death which those sins deserved; and in the agony of His soul cried out, "My God, my God, unto what hast Thou abandoned me!" It is this which constituted the atonement. "The suspended smile of God is utter death." This is the proper penalty of sin, and this Jesus endured, on behalf of the "many sons." A mere creature would have perished under its infliction,—the exercise of Divine power on the part of the sin-bearer would have left the Man defeated; but the God-man triumphed by faith in God; and from His death brought forth a New Creation,—immortal, incorruptible, holy, like Himself. In Him, those who constitute it are

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made the righteousness of God. This is not more wonderful than that He should have been made sin. Under the frown of God, all evil shall ultimately perish. Under that frown, our sins, transferred to the head of the Victim, were consumed; and we, therefore, eternally freed. But where the sin and the sinner remain identified under that frown, both must perish.

Thus did the Heir accomplish His work, and thus did he become the First-Born,—the Head of a new order of beings, superior to angels, and likenesses of Himself. The declaration of the apostle that all things have become new, will become true in fact, as it is now true in God's design, when the hour arrives in which He says, "Behold, I make all things new." But since Jesus became sin, He has not been seen of the world, nor will He be, until God brings Him again upon the scene with the fiat resounding through the whole Universe, "Let all the angels of God worship HIM."

And in the consummation to which this is but a preparatory step, He will be manifested as the "First-Born of the Whole Creation." Col. i. 15. He is not the "First-Born of every creature," as the A. V.

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reads, for He is not a creature ; nor is He the First-Born of the present Creation ; for the present Creation does not stand in filial relationship to God. But into such filial relationship will the Universe be brought when the "All Things" are "reheaded up in the Christ," and the Son shall take His proper place as Head over them all.

We now have—again in comparison with angels—the disclosure of another step in the history of the exaltation of the Heir. The word angel, as the reader is doubtless aware, means, primarily, "messenger." The angels are the servants of God, "who do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His word." But with these He can dispense, if He so please. "He maketh the winds His messengers, and His ministering servants a flame of fire. But unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is unto the Age."

We have seen the Heir, giving up "all that He had," making a purification of sins, raised to the right hand of God upon the completion of His work, and now seated expectant there till His enemies are placed beneath His feet. His position is therefore but temporary. He is seated in the place

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of highest honor, but He does not yet reign. He does not yet occupy His own proper throne, to which His victory on the Cross entitled Him. But He is about to rise up from His seat on the right hand of God, and to be introduced in power and glory to the scene of His weakness and humiliation. When this takes place, the decree will go forth putting His enemies under His feet. The Gentiles will rage and the people will imagine a vain thing,—the kings of the earth and the rulers will gather themselves against Jehovah and against His Anointed One, but God's reply will be,—“*Yet* have I set my King upon my Holy Hill of Zion.”

As Son of David He will then occupy the throne of David. As Son of God He will occupy the throne of the Universe. We have seen that “as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself.” The latter part of the verse is now to be fulfilled: “And hath given Him authority to execute judgment also.” And the reason is given why life and authority are thus bestowed: “Because He is the Son of Man.” According to the doom which God pronounced upon the serpent, it was the “*Seed of the woman*” who must

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crush his head. The "Son of Man" is the distinctive title He bore throughout the days of His humiliation. As Son of Man He suffered, died, and rose again. As Son of Man He is exalted to the right hand of the Father. In the first man the race fell to utter depth of ruin; in the Second Man it is exalted to the highest honor in the Universe. As Son of Man, He will take His seat upon His throne when God shall again introduce Him into the world, and will exercise absolute sway over the Universe committed to His charge.

The throne is "Unto the age." The preposition here translated "unto" does not signify time, but rather, relation or purpose. The throne is for, or with reference to "The Age." In the Septuagint version of Ps. xlv., from which these words are quoted, the phrase stands "unto the age of the ages." This again is a different phrase from "the *ages* of the ages,"—usually translated "for ever and ever."

The Age referred to, is the "age of the ages"; the crowning one of that Plan of the Ages which was constituted on account of the Heir. It is that which is mentioned in Eph. i. 10, as "The adminis-

tration of the fulness of the times," "when all things in the heavens and upon the earth shall be reheaded up together in the Christ;" also in 1 Cor. xv., when death, the last enemy shall have been destroyed, and the Son shall have delivered up the Kingdom unto God, even the Father, that God may be all in all. The bringing in of that Age is to be the work of the Heir, and for that purpose He will take His seat upon His throne, which shall have been set up to that end. He will reign a thousand years, when the final and greatest outbreak of evil, resulting in its utter destruction by Him, will take place, and He will then deliver up the purified Universe to the Father.

Fidelity in the path of obedience, proved and manifested, has demonstrated His fitness to reign. When put to the proof, in the days of His flesh, He "*loved* righteousness and hated lawlessness." This is not true of any other human being in the state of nature. Hence it is said, "Thy God anointed thee with the oil of exultation beyond thine associates." He alone among them all could stand the trial. While God and all His holy angels rejoice over the many sons brought by Him to glory, upon Him, be



yond all the rest, is poured the oil of extreme joy. We have here a glimpse of the height of glory to which the First-Born has brought the many sons. When He takes the sceptre of the Universe, they are called "His associates." So it is also said elsewhere, "If we suffer with Him we shall also reign with Him." Again, "Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" And special distinction will be then accorded to those who have manifested practical fidelity. "And he who overcometh, even he who keeps my works to the end, I will give to him authority over the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, and break them in pieces as an earthen vessel; as also I have received of my Father." Rev. ii. 26, 27. And again, "He that overcometh, I will give to him *to sit down with me upon my throne*, even as I also overcame, and sat down with my Father upon His throne." Ibid., iii. 21.

He is waiting now on the right hand of the Majesty on High till *God* shall place all enemies under His feet. When this decree goes forth *He* will assume the government, and must then "reign till *He* has placed all enemies under His feet." 1 Cor. xv. 25. As He was at first *appointed* Heir, and then *acquired*

His inheritance; so now when God's decree makes His enemies His footstool, He proceeds to "subdue all things to Himself."

When He comes in glory, the nations shall be subjected to Him; and Satan and his host—"the governments, the authorities, the world rulers of this darkness, the spiritual things of the Wicked One, in the heavenlies," Eph. vi. 12—shall be cast into prison for a thousand years. Rev. xx. 2. During this thousand years there will be great peace and blessing by reason of the enforced subjection of all evil. But it remains to be demonstrated before the Universe, that this last experiment has not changed the nature of men or evil angels. When, at the expiration of the thousand years, Satan shall have been let out of prison, men and demons will unite to defy the authority of the Son, and to do battle against Him; and they shall be *consumed by fire*. Read Rev. xx. 7-10. Thus will He have reigned until He has put all enemies under His feet. He will have *abrogated* all government and authority and power. "Death, the last enemy, is *abrogated*,<sup>1</sup> because He has subjected all things under His feet." Death is an im-

<sup>1</sup> Καταργέω.

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personal negation; therefore it cannot in an exact sense be said to be destroyed. But it is abrogated, annulled, done away, *because* the Son has subdued all things unto Himself. There is no longer in the Universe anything left which death can make his prey, or which can by any possibility die.

The inspired Writer does not here lift the curtain upon the "Age of the Ages." But he chronicles the destruction of the present earth and heavens. They shall perish. Like a garment shall they become old, and be folded away like an upper garment; as a garment shall they be *changed*. But He who made them shall endure, forever the same, and His years shall never fail.

From the many Scriptures quoted in this essay, we know that when the garment of the Universe shall have been changed, the new Robe shall not have within its borders one spot or stain of evil.

But we are reminded that all this has yet to be accomplished. At present the Heir is sitting on the right hand of His Father's throne, waiting the hour that shall place His enemies beneath His feet. Angels, so far from occupying such high position, are God's servants, sent forth for service on account of

the "many brethren" and "joint heirs," who are about to inherit salvation.

We will not here dwell upon angelic ministry. Suffice it to say that when the Heir was in the place of weakness and temptation, angels ministered to Him. In like manner, though unseen, do they encamp around the many sons, and guard them while they pass across the scene through which He led the way.

## III.

## THE PRINCE OF SALVATION.

“ On this account it behooves us to attend more earnestly to the things we have heard, lest perhaps we should glide away. For if the word having been spoken through angels was firm, and every deviation and inattention received a just retribution; how shall we escape, having disregarded so great a salvation, which having received a beginning to be spoken by the Lord, was confirmed unto us by those having heard; God co-attesting both by signs and wonders and various mighty works and distributions of Holy Spirit, according to His will? For to angels He did not subject the world about coming, concerning which we speak.

“ But one testified in a certain place saying, ‘ What is man, that Thou dost remember him, or a son of man, that Thou dost observe him? Thou didst make him a little while less than angels; Thou didst crown him with glory and honor; Thou didst place All Things beneath his feet;’ for with All Things to be subjected, nothing is left unsubjected to him; but now we do not yet see the All Things placed under him; but we see Jesus, on account of the suffering of death, having been crowned with glory and honor; having been made for a little while inferior to

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angels, so that, by the grace of God, He might taste of death in behalf of every one. For it was fitting for Him on account of whom are all things and through whom are all things, in leading many sons to glory, to perfect the Prince of their salvation through sufferings.”

THE Word of God is immovable. It stands as a rock founded upon the fidelity and omnipotence of God. The translators of King James made a grave error when they represented it as liable to slip out of the hands of those who grasp it. On the contrary, the warning which begins the passage is “lest *we* should glide away.” It is addressed to all who call themselves Christians, and who are professedly standing upon the rock. The allurements of this present evil age are constantly tempting us to move, by imperceptible gradations, to other foundations. But God has laid but *one* foundation, and that is Christ Jesus. In the deluge of judgment which is shortly to overtake a guilty world, every other foundation will be swept away, with all who rest on them. Hence the exhortation, “How shall *we* escape, if we neglect so great salvation?” It is only as we are consciously trusting in and resting upon Christ that we can know ourselves secure. No matter what we may say or think about the eternal purposes of God,

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the moment we find ourselves standing upon any other ground of confidence, we are out of the only place of safety. The declarations concerning these eternal purposes are made for the comfort and encouragement of those only who are trusting Christ, and trusting Him *now*.

And well may this be called a "great salvation." It comprehends the entire Universe in its scope, and its plan, purpose, and consummation require from everlasting to everlasting for their fulfilment. In its progress certain poor sinners have been taken up and saved out of a ruined world that by means of them God might teach angels about Himself. That is the meaning and purpose of our personal salvation. It is after all but incidental, though important, to the plan by which God is elevating and blessing the heavenly hosts. And here we see our security. It is neither our faith nor God's compassion that makes us safe; but the meanest sinner who trusts in Jesus is absolutely indispensable to the carrying out of God's glorious plan, which would be incomplete without him.

It is to *these* things that we are to give earnest heed. We stand in the absolute grace of God, upon

the finished work of His Son, and in the power of His Holy Spirit. To glide away from this, is to put human option in the place of God's sovereignty; human merit, no matter in how small a degree, in the place of the value of the blood of Christ; and human strength in the place of the Spirit's power. But this is just what the pulpits of Christendom, in one way and another, are constantly doing; and the great body of professors of religion have to-day glided far away from the great salvation. But God's foundation remains steady. His salvation does not depend for its full and uttermost consummation upon the fidelity of any man or any number of men. It depends upon Himself alone; and those who, in the confession of utter nothingness, rest on this foundation, will be carried on, in the grand onward sweep of the ages, from eternal purpose to eternal glory.

In the last section we contemplated an "oikoumene," or "habitable," the scene of the Saviour's sufferings and death, into which God is about to introduce Him again in glory. We now read of a *future* "habitable" not subjected to angels, but over which the Son will reign. This is now being pre-



pared. Its constituents are being gathered by the great salvation. In it, God will be all in all. To neglect this salvation, therefore; to make light of it, misrepresent it, or deny it, is not so to treat angels, but God Himself. May we be delivered from that sin!

So far, we have been occupied with the victory of the Son and its results. We have now to contemplate His pathway of humiliation and suffering while down here. The quotation here introduced is from the eighth Psalm, and the speaker is the Second Man. In the conscious weakness and insignificance of humanity, He adores Jehovah, who ordains strength out of the mouth of babes and sucklings. Looking up to the starry heavens, and knowing all that they contain, He is impressed with the comparative littleness of Man, and exclaims, "What is Man that Thou art mindful of him? and a Son of Man, that Thou visitest him?"

What is man? Theologians and scientists tell us that he is immortal and godlike. The Word of God tells us that "his breath is in his nostrils,"—"as a flower of the field so he flourisheth, for the wind passeth over it and it is gone." In a word, he is weak, evanescent, *mortal*.

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Down to this place of weakness and insignificance came the Son of God, and was for a little while made lower than the angels. But now, having finished the work which His Father gave Him to do, He has become as much higher than the angels as He hath by inheritance a more excellent name than they. All things therefore are to be put underneath His feet. This, we are told, has not yet been done; but the fact that Jesus, the feeble man, the one born of a woman, is now seated, crowned with glory and honor at God's right hand, is the proof that the victory has been won, and that its results are assured. And then we learn the reasons why He was for a little while made inferior to angels. It was, first, that He might taste death on behalf of every one. It is the "many sons" who are here contemplated. Second, that as the Captain or Prince<sup>1</sup> of their salvation, He might be made perfect through sufferings.

The death that He tasted was our due. God's righteous wrath against sin, which would have destroyed us, fell on Him, because our sins were there. He looked down into the abyss of utter death, and realized in His own soul, the horror of extinction of

<sup>1</sup> Ἀρχηγός.

being. He cried aloud with tears to Him who was able to deliver Him out of death, and was heard for His devotion. Heb. v. 7. Thus He became the Prince of our Salvation,—*The First of the saved ones.*

It is God who is here represented as conducting the many sons to glory. They are treading a thorny path; but it was trod before them by the Leader of their salvation. And it was *fitting*, we are told, that He should be perfected for this office through sufferings. His Deity could not perfect Him for this office, nor could His Omniscience. It was necessary that a Man should work out perfect obedience to God. To prevent this, the utmost effort of the mighty powers of evil was put forth. The test involved, therefore, conflict and agony beyond our conception, but the result was but to more fully perfect the obedience than could otherwise have been possible. Thus Jesus, at one and the same time, became the perfect example of the many sons, and able from personal human experience, to sympathize with and succor them in every trial. That He might know how man feels, He became Man. That He might know how man can suffer, He also suffered. He became a “man of sorrows and acquainted with

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grief;" as you and I, whatever may have been our trials, have never become acquainted with it.

Nor was His suffering aught but human suffering, nor otherwise than intensely real. It was not the mere acting of a part, by one who condescends to assume for a little, a personation foreign to His nature. Yet this must have been the case, had His divine attributes been in exercise while down here. It was only as these were held in abeyance, that He could truly enter into the apprehension of human suffering.

For Jesus, though God over all, blessed forever, was and is, as really and truly a man, as any of those among whom He walked. He had all the feelings, needs, and desires that belong to our common humanity. But He was the perfect man, and these feelings, needs, and desires were all in harmonious balance, and governed by the obedience of faith. Sin is not in the possession of the desires which God has implanted in the soul; nor are there in any human soul any propensities which do not spring from the original and sinless constitution of its being. But it is in the undue development and inharmonious relations of these propensities, and in the want of

subjection to the higher principles of Good, that original sin consists. For instance, the trait of acquisitiveness, which in the Apostle Paul had its centre in Christ, instead of in Self, and was manifested in winning souls for Him; in its abnormal and selfish development becomes covetousness. The love of men and women, the highest and purest of all human affections, when thus abnormally developed, becomes lust, the lowest and vilest of them all. It is said that "He was tempted in all points like as we are." The temptations were adapted to the desires of His human nature, and He could vividly feel them all; but never, for a single moment nor in the slightest degree, was one of these desires exercised out of harmony with the perfection of His human nature, nor otherwise than on the principle of the obedience of faith. Hence are added to the statement just quoted, the words, "sin apart." In Him, Faith had set self aside and put God in its place; hence all His desires and aspirations had God, instead of self, for their object. In the matured Christian we may see the same principle at work; and he cries, "Not I, but Christ!" As his real and vital oneness with Christ is realized and appreciated,

self is more and more set aside, and Christ substituted. This is true, practical holiness, and real consecration to God. It is very different from the folly of those who, seeking their own happiness and religious enjoyment, proclaim that through a single act of the will, they are emancipated from sin; and triumphantly tell us that for so long a time they have not committed a single sin. In point of fact, their desires are all centred in self,—were it otherwise, they would not think or talk about themselves or their experience at all, but would have Christ for their only theme; hence their every thought and action has been sin and only sin throughout. For all is sin which is self-centred, and all is holiness which is centred upon God. This is but stating in another form the inspired declaration, “Whatsoever is not of faith is sin.”

As Jesus was capable of enduring exquisite physical suffering, so also was He of enduring mental anguish. He knew the bitterness of a wounded spirit. He was keenly sensitive to the reproach and scorn of those among whom He moved,—the contemptuous rejection by His own nation of His rightful claims as their Messiah, and to the unbelief and

want of appreciation of His own friends. He shared, too, in the grief of others; and wept in sympathy with Mary's tears, even when He was about to raise Lazarus from death.

It was thus, by sounding in His own experience the utmost depth of human sorrow, and perfecting obedience under the extremest trial of His faith, that He was perfected as the Prince of their salvation, for the many sons. The suffering they endure is that with which He is familiar; the temptation that besets them is that which He experienced; their victory over sin is on the battle-ground where He first overcame on their behalf. When they stand upon the grave's edge, and nature shrinks from the descent, they behold Him upon the other side, and know that He passed through first, and robbed it of its terrors, — nay, that Death in its reality no longer exists for them, since they possess resurrection immortality in Him. He meant what He said, when He said, "He that liveth and believeth in Me shall *never die*."

A proper apprehension of the relations borne by the many sons to the Captain of their salvation, would do away with much of the fearfulness and misgiving, as well as with much of the worldliness,

common among Christians. They are, in the first place, the objects of God's eternal love. The reason of this love we seek for in vain in ourselves; it is in Himself alone; therefore it is unwavering. A Christian once said to another, "God loves me, because I have accepted His Son." "No," was the reply; "say rather that you have received the Son, because God loves you." And this is the truth. The origin of all our Christian life and hope lies in the fact that God loved us "even when we were dead in sins." He therefore "chose us in Christ from before the foundation of the world." Next, the Father gave us to the Son, and at the appointed time the Son redeemed us unto Himself. Like His Inheritance of the All Things, the many sons, who are the "first fruits" (James i. 18) of them all, were first *given* to Him, and then had to be *acquired* by Him. By reason of sin, we were under the dominion of Satan, but the Heir cancelled that claim, and "delivered us from that wherein we were held." The whole question of sin, as to the many sons, was settled forever on the Cross. Henceforward "there is *no* condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus." There will be trespasses to be confessed and forgiven, and defile-



ment to be cleansed ; but judicially, sin is no longer imputed to them, since their High Priest first entered by His own blood, on their behalf, into the presence of the divine Majesty. They are “justified from all things.” “But you are washed, but you are sanctified, but you are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.” 1 Cor. vi. 11. And not only so, they are made *in Him*, “the righteousness of God.”

To those who are thus loved, chosen, given, redeemed, and made righteous is imparted the resurrection life of the Son ; by which they, too, enter into a real (not adoptive) filiation to God. “But God being rich in mercy,—for His great love wherewith He loved us even when we were dead in sins, hath made us alive together with Christ (by grace you were saved); and raised us up together, and seated us together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus.” Eph. ii. 4, 5, 6. The word adoption occurring in Rom. viii. 15, and Gal. iv. 5, is wrongly translated, and should be rendered “*Sonship*.” Those who have thus been “born from above” are *real* sons, and are by and by to be glorified as the brethren of the Son of God. Their history is concisely given in Rom.

viii. 28-30: "And we know that all things work together unto good to those that love God,—those being called according to His purpose; because whom He foreknew, He previously marked out (outlined) copies of the likeness of His Son, for Him to be a First-Born among many brethren; and whom He before marked out, them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified." This chain of sequences has its beginning in Grace, and its consummation in Glory.

But as the Prince of our salvation was perfected through suffering, and learned obedience by the things which He suffered, it is also fitting that those who are to share His glory should experience something of what He endured in the days of His humiliation. Were there no temptation, and no trial, there could be no victory; and were there no victory, there could be no crown. It is to the overcoming ones that distinctive rewards are promised.<sup>2</sup> That we are allowed to remain for a little in the midst of evil and suffering, is for the growth and

<sup>2</sup> There will be many crownless ones—those "saved so as by fire"—among the redeemed.

development of our New Life, by exercise and conflict; that it may be demonstrated in the sight of all heavenly intelligences, that what law could not do, grace has accomplished; since the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in those who walk, not according to flesh, but according to spirit. It is also that the distinctive rewards of obedience and fidelity may be earned and bestowed, in addition to the "common salvation."

Such a conflict must involve suffering. There is the consciousness of utter weakness, but Faith lays hold of Omnipotence, and cries, "We are more than conquerors, through Him who loved us." The struggle in the same breast between the old and sinful, and the new and holy nature, will at times be terrible. The patient endurance, the faithful service, the lowly life, the confiding faith, the steadfast hope, the abiding love, all these mark out the pathway of the Prince of our salvation; along which the many sons are being conducted to glory.

Before leaving this part of our subject, let us trace some of the correspondencies between the Son and the many sons.

He is God's First-Born. They, too, are born of

God. True, He is the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth; but to as many as received Him in the days of His flesh, to them gave He authority to become the children of God; and now that He is risen, every believer is made a partaker of His resurrection life.

He is a Life-giving Spirit. God is Spirit. Not *a* Spirit, as the A. V. has it; but He *is* Spirit. The many sons inherited from Adam a nature which is termed "the flesh"; but they have been born again, and born of the Spirit. Now that which is born of flesh *is* flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit *is* spirit. It is godlike in its character; it is the communicated life of the Life-giving Spirit. Hence they are said to be "partakers of a divine nature." Man, as descended from Adam, consists of a soul and a body; the new man in Christ Jesus, is "body, soul, and spirit." 1 Thess. v. 23. Jude tells us concerning mockers, who walk after their own lusts, that "these are *psychical, not having a spirit.*" That is, while professedly religious, they have not in them the imparted life of the Son. Thus we see that the Son and the many sons are alike in the possession of a spiritual, in addition to a psychical nature.

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He is the First-Born from the dead. The day of His Resurrection, as we have seen, is declared to be the day concerning which God says, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee." So, also, the many sons are "begotten again unto a living hope, through the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." 1 Pet. i. 3. His birthday and theirs are the same; and their common immortality that which springs from His grave. Water was, among the Jews, a common symbol of death. To be immersed in, and covered with water, was the symbol of dying. The believer is born of *water* (*i.e.*, out of death) and of the Spirit. So in being "buried with Him in baptism," he confesses himself to have died with Christ; and his rising from the baptismal flood, is, or ought to be, his confession that he is risen with Christ, having been born with Him from among the dead ones, and now lives in His resurrection life. Like Christ, he has become dead to that which lies on the world's side of His Cross and Grave, but alive to that which is upon their resurrection side. To Him, the Cross of Christ, is, virtually and morally, the End of the World. The "former things have passed away" for him, since he died to them by that

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Cross. But he is alive unto God, and, henceforth, all his real interests are, where also his hopes and aspirations ought to be, with Christ, with whom his life is hidden on the right hand of God.

Such a spiritual birth is not, and from the nature of things cannot be, the result of previous choice on the part of the one thus born. The child born into the world has no choice in the matter. The new birth of the many sons is the result of the sovereign act of God, exerted upon those who were dead in trespasses and sins. Before the foundation of the world, the Father gave them to the Son; and before they ever had a thought of God, their sins had been eternally blotted out by the blood of the Cross. "And you, being dead in sins, and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He made alive together with Him, *having freely forgiven you all trespasses.*" Col. ii. 13. Forgiveness is here seen to be antecedent to the impartation of life. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, and canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." John iii. 8. What words could more distinctly state entire independence of human volition?

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The many sons are also said to be begotten by the *Word* of God: "Of His own will begat He us by the word of Truth." James i. 18. The decree is the Father's, the power is the Spirit's, and the instrument is the Word. And the Word is that which tells of Christ,—indeed, it is Christ, *in* the Word, which the Father's decree bestows, and the Spirit's power applies for our salvation. "Having been begotten again, not from corruptible seed, but incorruptible, through the living and enduring Word of God." 1 Pet. i. 23.

One whom the grace of God has caused to see his own ill-desert, and to have some estimate of divine justice, is reduced to the sense of extreme need and utter helplessness. When to such an one Christ is presented in the Word, there is the perception that this is the Saviour, exactly adapted to supply and succor such need and helplessness. There is an exact adaptation, known and recognized, between the Saviour and the sinner. *They are just suited to one another.* The sinner sees in the Saviour the omnipotence to meet his helplessness, the fulness of Godhead to supply his need, and Atonement of infinite value which has blotted out his guilt for-

ever. He repents, for his mind has been changed; <sup>‡</sup> since, instead of his own thoughts, he now has God's thoughts about His Son. He believes because he cannot help believing; any more than a new-born babe can help breathing. Believing is never a matter of volition. I may, it is true, shut my mind against evidence; but when evidence is brought fairly before me, I *must* believe, if the evidence is convincing. It is, therefore, a solecism to speak of repentance and faith as *conditions* of salvation. When the sinner sees the Saviour in His Word, his belief in Him is as involuntary as the exclamation of Thomas when he first saw the Lord after His resurrection,—“My Lord and my God!” It is his new nature,—that which is born of God, which thus believes. Hold up Christ before one man, and he passes by in unmoved indifference. Speak of Him to another, and the kindling eye and flushed cheek tell that He is

<sup>‡</sup> The Greek word “*μετάνοια*,” translated “repentance,” means simply “a change of mind.” This is also the original and only proper meaning of the English word “repentance.” The word is never used in Scripture in connection with sins, but we are told of repentance (a change of mind or thoughts) *towards God*. That is to say, it consists in putting away our own thoughts about God, and having instead *His* thoughts about Himself. “Godly sorrow” for sin is the *effect* of repentance, but is not the thing itself.



known, apprehended, and precious. The difference between the two is, that the one has only a psychical, but the other possesses a spiritual nature. The Gospel is not an offer, which men are to be persuaded to accept; but a proclamation, which God makes effectual to those whom He designed from all eternity to save; and to whom He gives the spiritual nature which only will receive it.

This sovereignty of Grace, repugnant as it is to every thought of the merely psychical man, is nevertheless the foundation of every believer's hope. Without it, no one could ever be saved. Nay, more, its sovereignty and its freeness are indissolubly bound together. Were it not sovereign, it could not be free,—it is absolutely free, because absolutely sovereign. If you give a piece of money to a destitute person, you give that which is your own, and you have the right to dispose of it as you please. Your giving is an act of sovereignty. But only because this money is yours, and at your supreme disposal, you are able to give it freely, unconditionally. "But," I hear some one say, "does not the beggar stretch forth his hand to receive the gift, and does not this correspond with what God requires of a

sinner, as the simple condition of his salvation?" That is as much as to say, that before making a *free* gift, you require as a *condition* that it shall be received,—which is, of course, absurd. If, as in the case of the sinner, the need be extreme, and the gift ample to relieve it, the sense of need and the knowledge of the gift will bring forth the hand; there is no thought of option in the matter. But suppose, which is a truer illustration, that the man is helpless and insensible when your heart is moved to relieve him. The sinner is *dead*<sup>1</sup> in trespasses and sins, when grace meets and saves him. He is, as to spiritual things, impotent, insensible, inert. God quickens him, *having* forgiven him all trespasses. His faith is the gift of God, and is the first motion of his new life. Thus salvation is truly *free*, even to the vilest of sinners. "Being justified *freely* by His grace." Rom. iii. 24. "I will give to him that is athirst the fountain of the water of life *freely*." Rev. xxi. 6. The word here translated "freely"<sup>2</sup> is elsewhere translated as follows: "They hated me *without a cause*." John xv. 25. "Nor did we eat any man's bread *for nought*." 2 Thess. iii. 8. So then the prin-

<sup>1</sup> νεκρός.<sup>2</sup> δωρεάν.

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inciple upon which we are justified, and upon which the water of life is bestowed, is "*without a cause*,"— "*for nothing*." In a word, it is UNCONDITIONAL.

As freely giving is necessarily of sovereignty, so freely receiving must be of faith. The one exactly corresponds to the other. If you are the giver, and I the receiver, it is only in the exercise of confidence in you that I can receive and appropriate your gift. It is faith in your intention that makes the recipient of your bounty hold out his hand to receive the gift, though he does not see what yours contains. If you put into his hand that which is worthless, he feels that he has been cheated. It is related that, for a wager, a man once stood on London bridge with a plateful of sovereigns, offering them to the passing crowd for a penny each. Had any availed of the offer, they would have received genuine golden sovereigns in exchange for their pennies. But no one did, just because no one had faith in the offerer or the offer. It is only in *believing* God, that we are able to receive what God has to give. So self-evident does this seem that it would appear unnecessary to state it; but it is, nevertheless, constantly denied. In being saved, the sinner gives nothing, and *nothing is*

*required from him*, but he receives everything. But the first consciousness of his new life is trusting in Jesus, and its first motion is that of obedience, on the ground of having received everything for nothing.

As faith is the beginning of the new life, it is also its continuance. Just as we received Christ Jesus the Lord by faith, we are to walk in Him. And here we find another principle of community between the Son and His many brethren.

The Son walked by faith in God. The many sons, therefore, are to walk, not by sight or feeling, but by faith only. "*It is written*" was the resource of Jesus in the hour of temptation; "*It is written*" is the refuge and resource of the believer. Faith has nothing to do with self, but with that which is external to self. Self, as an object of trust, is to be set aside entirely, and Christ to take its place. When this is effected, the soul realizes as true, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in *Thee*."

There are, however, many of God's dear children who fail to realize this. This is due largely to their having been taught to look within themselves, for the comfort which can only come from the contem-

plation of that which is external to themselves. They have neither been taught their own entire helplessness, nor the fulness that is in Christ Jesus; and that it is *only* in looking to Him that they were saved; *only* in looking to Him that they can have conscious peace. And yet, such are equally safe for eternity with those who enjoy the fullest assurance. Faith derives all its value from its object. It is only in exercise when the Object is in view; never when Self is the subject of contemplation. The saint is kept in perfect peace because his mind "is stayed on Thee,"—not on himself, nor on his own works or experiences. So, also, the weakest believer, whose faith is most obscure, is saved, because the fidelity of God is as equally pledged to the faintest as well as to the strongest exercise of trust. There is difference in blessing and in usefulness; but *every one* believing in Him has (as an actual present possession) eternal life.

But faith can be strengthened, hope brightened, and obedience developed, only by trusting. When I look away from my own fault and failure,—ay, and from my own goodness too,—and rest in the naked promise of Him who cannot lie, to save my helpless

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soul, I have beneath me that which is solid and immovable as Eternity. And when I see the value which God places upon the Son, and the absoluteness with which He rests in His finished work on behalf of sinners, I am assured that in resting there too, I am eternally safe. "Behold," God says, "I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste." Isa. xxviii. 16.

But, says one, "How am I to know that *I* trust Him?" You can only know that you trust, by trusting. You can only know that you see, by seeing. Look to Jesus; and be assured on the word of a faithful God, that whatever be your own feelings, He is the Saviour exactly adapted to meet your need.

Great comfort may be derived from the contemplation of God's absolute sovereignty in saving sinners. This removes self entirely out of sight, and leaves the whole matter in His hands. Some years ago a man, crushed with doubts as to His eternal safety, heard a speaker declare with emphasis, "God saves *whom* He pleases, *when* He pleases, and *as* He pleases." The words carried the conviction of their truth; but they struck from beneath the listener the

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whole foundation on which he rested, and left him lost, without help or hope. It was but for a moment, however, for in the next he felt himself grasped in the arms of Omnipotence. Nothing but God Himself could save him; and the moment this was realized, he knew that He *did* save him.

God is Love, and His sovereignty is the sovereignty of love. It invites, but does not repel. It includes and renders eternally safe all whom it includes; but it does not exclude. "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." "Whosoever will" (*the one desiring*) "let him take of the water of life *for nothing*." So the feeblest believer and the strongest, are alike the objects of God's everlasting love, and of His super-abounding grace.

The faith which thus receives the great salvation without money and without price, is constantly brought into exercise along the pathway of the many sons. Too often, it is only the consciousness of need, caused by our own failure, which calls it into exercise. But it is only as we are walking by faith and living by faith, that we are practically following the Prince of our salvation. Faith has to do with that which is invisible. It may often be believing against

sight and against circumstance; but these are as nothing against the promise of Him who cannot lie. The example of Jesus, the "Beginner and Perfecter of the Faith" (Heb. xii. 2), who trusted through the darkest hour of the Universe, enduring on the cross the contradiction of sinners against himself, is before us, and we are called upon to "consider Him, lest we become wearied and faint in our minds."

Faith grows by exercise; and the more we receive of God through faith, the greater becomes our capacity to receive. As we contemplate Christ, our thoughts of Him grow broader and higher and deeper. In Him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily; and we learn, day by day, to draw from that fulness. The saint who thus avails of this divine supply, learns in due season to understand what is the "breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ, which surpasses knowledge, so that He may be filled up unto all the fulness of God." Eph. iii. 19. But this is not all at once, nor can we ever explore the utmost bounds of that love, or so draw from that overflowing fulness that we cannot receive more. "Not as though I had already attained," says the Apostle



Paul, "or were already perfect, but I follow after if that I may apprehend (lay hold of) that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus." Phil. iii. 12.

The effect of this constant reception by faith of that which is freely given by God, will be to bring forth another element of likeness to Christ, and that is, the *obedience* of faith. So long as the believer's heart is occupied with Christ, he cannot do otherwise than walk in loving obedience to Him. Once, careful to please himself, he is now careful only to please God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. In looking to Him to receive from Him, self is necessarily set aside. It is helpless and can do nothing for us. I must expect *all* from Christ, therefore I become occupied with Him. The effect of this looking to Him must needs make me Christ-like. The beginning of real self-abnegation is therefore in receiving from Him everything for nothing. Even in studying the character of a highly regarded friend, and through intercourse with him, one becomes in measure like him. The new nature is already assimilated to Christ, but grows by contemplating Him. So the Apostle Paul writes, "We all, beholding with unveiled face as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are

transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Lord, the Spirit." 2 Cor. iii. 18.

And so the believer becomes, like Jesus, a source of blessing to others. He said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." God Himself occupies the highest place of blessing. He is the Blessed One; and it is His happiness to give. But before the believer can give, he must receive, and in receiving he learns to give. It is only he who has that can give at all; and he who has abundant riches that can bestow abundantly. But in receiving, the eye is fixed upon the Giver, and the heart is occupied with him. Self, as we have seen, must in this needs become ignored and forgotten. And when self is set aside, it becomes easy to give as well as to receive. The receiving heart responds to the Giver, and in the practical effect of this response consists the obedience of faith. He who receives much from God, rises up into the place of blessing, and becomes a giver, like God Himself. The happiness that is not sought for self, comes unsought in ministry to others. But Self cannot be set aside by any mere effort of the will. "Nature abhors a vacuum" is an adage which will bear application to spiritual things. It is

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only as Christ is received into the heart, that self can be driven out. It is, as Dr. Chalmers has said, only the "expulsive power of a new affection," that can subdue the old desires. Hence Christ must be *first* received as the giver,—as bestowing forgiveness, salvation, and immortality *for nothing*,—before one can walk in His pathway of self-abnegation. The first manifestation of spiritual life corresponds to the beginning of psychical life,—it is shown only in the sense of need, and capacity to receive. There must be nourishment and growth, before the activities of holiness can be manifested.

Jesus stooped first to utter emptiness, that He might receive. Those who would be like Him must receive from Him that for which they have "nothing to pay." They may then become like Him, in giving, freely as they have received. What they give is what He gives,—comfort, joy, sustenance, sympathy, relief.

It is almost nineteen hundred years since He passed out of sight. The history of the many sons since then has been mainly one of trial and persecution. In the visible bodies which to-day call themselves His Churches we see but little to remind us of

His career of self-denial. But, as He had of old, unknown except to Himself, seven thousand who had not bowed the knee to Baal, so now, in the midst of all the sloth and pride and worldliness which characterize this present age, He has His own whom He is surely leading to glory. If their path be stony, they may notwithstanding discern the footsteps of Him who once passed that way; and if it be full of grief and trial, they have the tender sympathy and present help of One who knows by experience what it all is.

IV.

THE ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE BRETHREN.

“For both the Sanctifier and the sanctified are out of one, for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, ‘I will announce Thy name to my brethren, in the midst of the Church will I praise Thee.’ And again, ‘I will confide in Him;’ and again, ‘Behold, I and the little ones which God gave me.’”

WE have now seen Jesus as the Heir of the Universe, vindicating His title to His Inheritance; as the Son, the Head of a new order of beings called sons of God, and superior to angels; and as the Prince of their salvation, leading them to glory along the pathway of suffering and humiliation. In the progress of the history, we have now reached a point at which that glory is about to be revealed. Preparatory to this, He is announced in a new relationship,—that of the Sanctifier.

The meaning of the word in the original is, “To consecrate, render sacred, or make holy.”<sup>1</sup> Those

<sup>1</sup> Ἀγιάζω.

whom He sanctifies are holy in the sight of God and angels. This is an absolute necessity, else they could never appear in the presence of God. But it is not a work which *remains* to be done before the believer can enter Heaven; neither is the progressive work of the Holy Spirit in him here referred to, in which the believer is called upon to co-operate by *working out* his "salvation with fear and trembling, since it is God who worketh in him to will and to do of His good pleasure." The sanctification here mentioned is that which was effected when Jesus died upon the Cross; and it consists in the absolute cancelment and blotting out of all the sins and uncleanness pertaining to His elect, and thus bringing them into immediate nearness to a holy God. Hence, the Apostle Paul writes to the Corinthians, whom he severely rebukes in the same Epistle for their gross licentiousness,—“but ye were washed, but ye were sanctified, but ye were justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.” The exhortation to holy living which precedes these words is based on the fact that they had *previously* been constituted holy ones “In the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.” Their

“old man” was hopelessly corrupt, but the new was holy and incorruptible. The essence of all New Testament exhortation, is to crush and put to death the “old man,” and to nourish and exercise the new. The former, they were to reckon as dead by the Cross of Christ. God so reckons it, and it is the “new man in Christ Jesus” with which alone He has to do. So also, “Giving thanks to the Father who *has* made us meet for the inheritance of the saints in the Light; who delivered us from the authority of the darkness and translated us into the kingdom of the Son of His love.” Col. i. 12, 13. All is spoken of as accomplished. The saints are *now*, by the sovereign act of God, made meet for their inheritance; nay more, they have been taken out from under the authority of the darkness,—from the dominion of the “World-rulers of this darkness,” and *changed over* into the Light, the Kingdom of the Son of His Love. This is now their actual standing before God. “You are all sons of light and sons of day; we are not of the night nor of the darkness.” 1 Thess. v. 5. The Day has not yet risen, and the many sons are in the midst of the Night and its darkness; but they do not belong to it. The act of God has severed their

former relations to it, and brought them into relationship to an opposite state of things. Hence the exhortation which follows, not to sleep or be drunken (with the wine of this world's excitements), like those who are of the night; but to watch and be sober, as those who belong to the day. A similar exhortation occurs in the Epistle to the Ephesians: "You were indeed once darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord; walk as children of light." The believer has therefore been made meet already for the inheritance which he is to share with the Son. There is now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus (Rom. viii. 1); no one can lay any charge against those whom God has justified, nor condemn those for whom Christ died (Ibid., 33, 34); they are accepted (graced) in the Beloved One (Eph. i. 6); they are made in Him the righteousness of God (2 Cor. v. 21); they are holy and blameless before Him in love (Eph. i. 4). This is their judicial status, so to speak, before God. As a child of God, in holy relationship with the Father through the Son, the believer needs daily to make confession of the failure and trespass arising from his flesh; with the result that he is instantly forgiven and cleansed according to the word: "If we



confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John i. 9. It is only while walking in the light, as God is in the Light, that we can realize our Communion<sup>1</sup> (common interest in His Son) with Him, and know *experimentally*, that the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin. 1 John i. 7. If we walk "in the Darkness,"—that is to say, according to the course of this world, which we may do quite consistently with strict outward morality,—we cannot enjoy either the communion or the cleansing which appertain to our actual judicial standing. But that standing, constituted of God, remains, nevertheless, immutable as His throne. We have "passed over, out of the Death into the Life;" and this can never be reversed.

We gain, however, a fuller conception of this truth when we learn concerning the Sanctifier and the sanctified, that they are "all of one." Literally, all *out of* one,—having a common nature. They are not mystically one (merely); nor are they symbolically or metaphorically one; but there is an actual Oneness between the Head and the members, by virtue of

<sup>1</sup> Κοινωνία.

their possession of a common life. Therefore as the Head is holy, the members are holy in Him. The flesh, or Adam-nature, has been judged and set aside by the Cross; and henceforth God views us only in Christ. Thus is fulfilled that word, "Of his fulness have we all received, and grace *for*<sup>1</sup> grace,"—that is to say, that for every grace that shines in Him, its counterpart has been imparted to each one of the many sons. Now and then we may see in one of God's children the partial development of some of these graces. They will be brought out into fullest manifestation when the many sons have been brought to glory. Christ, the Wisdom of God, has been made unto us, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption, and we are out of God, in Him. 1 Cor. i. 30. Therefore each believer stands before God in the righteousness, sanctification, and redemption of his Son.

But the contrast between the position from which the Son descended and that from which He raised the many sons is extreme. Had God chosen to restore the fallen angels, natural reason would judge that in them His sympathies would find a more worthy ob-

<sup>1</sup> 'Αντί, over against, in correspondence to.

ject than in feeble and insignificant humanity. The former are, even in their ruin, mighty, intelligent, and glorious beyond our conception; the latter, dwelling upon one of the least of the multitudinous worlds which compose the Universe, are themselves, puny, evanescent, feeble by comparison in mind and body, yet full of sin. But the Son of God passed by angels. The noblest being in the Universe took his many brethren from among those who are the meanest. The contrast between His greatness and our littleness, His glory and our shame, exists still in appearance. Nevertheless, it is said that He and they are of one; and "for this cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren."

The public owning of His brethren by the Son is at this moment—that in which we are now living—His and their proximate Hope. The pathway along which God has conducted the many sons is red-dened with their blood and whitened with their bones. The world that rejected Him has also rejected and cast them out. Christendom to-day pretends to own Him Lord. But the professing Churches, no longer bearing the offence of the Cross, are lovingly walking arm in arm with the world, and

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planning its amelioration and improvement. But when these plans have reached their height,—“when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction comes upon them, as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape.” 1 Thess. v. 3. Then shall the righteous shine forth “as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father.” Matt. xiii. 43. No one knows of that day and hour, not even the angels. The Son when here in the days of His humiliation, declared that it was unknown to Him. But we know that it is proximate and impending. The traveller in Switzerland, in leaving Vevey for Martigny, sees directly before him, and apparently near, the majestic form of a mountain called the “Dent du Midi.” It is the most conspicuous object in the direction in which he is travelling. Yet, as he progresses, it does not for a long time seem to become any nearer. It is still proximate and impending: he ceases at last to guess at its distance, when, suddenly and unexpectedly, he finds himself in its very presence. So, ever since Jesus went back into Heaven, He has been *about* to come again, in like manner as He ascended; and His saints have been *about* to be caught up to meet the Lord in the

air. The period in which we live is an interregnum, not referred to in Old Testament prophecy. When Jesus at Nazareth announced His mission, He quoted the words of the Prophet Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed me to proclaim glad tidings to the poor; He has sent me to publish deliverance to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to dispense freedom to the oppressed; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." But He closed the Book and sat down without completing the quotation, which ends, "and the day of vengeance of our God." The interval between the words quoted and those omitted, is that between the resurrection of Jesus Christ and His appearance in glory. As said above, this interval is unnoticed in Old Testament prophecy. In Isaiah, His glory appears immediately to follow His humiliation. In the New Testament, this interval is spoken of as "the night," "the darkness," "the age," of which Satan is the god, "the evil day." In regard to the progress of God's plans it is called the "day of grace;" "the day of salvation." And such indeed it is. With all its material and intellectual development, it is the darkness which Satan rules; but

it is also the period in which God is manifesting His saving grace in absoluteness and freedom, as it was never disclosed till after the resurrection of Christ, and the rejection by Israel of God's final offer to send Him again, on condition of their repentance and reformation (Acts iii. 19, 20). When the number of God's elect shall have been completed, this interregnum will end; as it is written, "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is long-suffering toward us (the whole Church), not desiring that any (of His chosen) should perish, but that all should come to repentance." 2 Pet. iii. 9. With the coming again of the Lord, the course of prophetic history will be resumed.

This public acknowledgment of His brethren is threefold,—first, "I will declare Thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the church<sup>1</sup> will I praise thee." These two acts are joined together as synchronous. We are reminded of Joseph (a distinguished type of Christ) and his brethren; when, in his exaltation and their distress, he revealed himself

<sup>1</sup> Ἐκκλησία,—an assembly of called out ones. The term is almost always translated "church" in the New Testament, and undoubtedly has the same meaning here.

to them as the son of their common father. Joseph, like Jesus, declared his oneness with his brethren. They were weary, travel-stained, awed by his grandeur, apprehensive; but when he said to them "I am Joseph," he set their fears at rest, changed their worn garments for princely robes, and feasted them at his own table. Thus, also, when Jesus comes, the announcement of His Name to His brethren will drive away every vestige of fear. His Name is now the sweetest that sounds in the believer's ear; but the words, "Jehovah saveth," will then have a fullness of meaning, a depth of preciousness that we had never conceived before. And "when we shall see Him, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." Then, in the midst of that vast assembly,—the millions of His brethren, in bodies like unto His own glorious body,—He will take up the Psalm of Praise to Jehovah. There is a wonderful contrast here, between the Son as feeble man, for a little while lower than the angels, looking up to the starry firmament, and exclaiming, "What is man that Thou art mindful of him?" and the risen and glorified Second Man, filling the heavens with the music of His anthem of adoration. As we learn

from Psalm xxii., from which these prophetic words are quoted, He will call upon His brethren to join Him in this act of praise. But that mighty chorus shall be preceded by the anthem of angelic hosts who have waited until now the mandate, "Let all the angels of God worship Him." From God's central throne to the farthest star which He created, the Universe shall be vocal; but higher, sweeter, fuller, than all, to listen to which the heavenly choirs shall hush their notes, will be the "New Song" of the Redeemed, led by the Prince of their salvation. And the day of this consummation is imminent, impending, about to be revealed.

The second particular in the acknowledgment by the Sanctifier of the sanctified, is in the words, "I will trust in Him." The first announcement was that of relationship merely. They are declared to be His brethren. The next announces community with them, in the very means through which they are sanctified. They were born, it is true, by the sovereign act of God, and thus became the brethren of the First-Born. But the conscious reception of their salvation was in the way of believing God's testimony concerning His Son. Their walk on



earth, so far as it was conformed to their sonship, was a walk of faith. "For we walk by faith, not by sight." 2 Cor. v. 7. Their life on earth, so far as it produced fruit for eternity, was a life of faith. "The just (or righteous) out of faith, shall live." Rom. i. 17. The first conscious beginning of the New Life was trust; and trust in God, through His Son, Jesus Christ, was throughout, the principle of their life and power of their walk. They had nothing but what they received; they could receive nothing except in the way of believing God. "It was of faith, that it might be by grace" (Rom. iv. 16),—that is, by unconditional, unmerited favor. There could be no stronger contradiction than that contained in these words, to the oft-repeated statement that faith is an act of volition, optional to man; and is the condition on which God bestows salvation. This is neither philosophical nor scriptural. As Grace stands in exact contrast to Law, so Faith stands in exact contrast to the very thought of fulfilling a condition. Its very exercise is incompatible with doing anything. *His* faith is "reckoned unto righteousness, who worketh NOT, but believeth on Him who died for the ungodly." Rom. iv. 5. If faith is a con-

dition to be fulfilled, a debit and credit account is opened at once. But it is the God-imparted faculty of the new nature, by which we apprehend, receive, and appropriate what God gives "for nothing," "without a cause." Sight would be valueless, were there no object to be seen; and faith is also nothing, apart from its object. But it is "reckoned unto righteousness" to the believer, because it receives and appropriates as its own the gratuitously-given righteousness of God. And this is not a question of the measure of appropriation, but of simple fact. The righteousness of God is embodied in His Son. The believer whose faith, however feebly, lays hold of Christ, is endowed with the righteousness of God in Him.

By faith, therefore, these brethren have lived and walked; by faith they have overcome; by faith been obedient; by faith have become Christ-like. It is their grand, distinguishing characteristic in the sight of God and angels; the stalk upon which have grown all the fruits of the Spirit, and all holy actions.

It is to emphasize the oneness of the Sanctifier with the sanctified, that he avows, "I will trust in

Him." He had descended into the place of poverty and weakness, and lived by faith in God only. He had set a perfect example to the many brethren; His life was the pattern for theirs. Now, He makes before the Universe, the declaration that this governing principle is common to Him and to them. It is as if one should say of another, "This is my brother," and then point out in proof of it some distinctive trait or feature, common to them both. Such an avowal would also naturally imply common descent and nurture; and to some extent at least, a common history, and common aspirations. All this is implied in the avowal of the Sanctifier, "I will trust in Him," or literally, "I will be having trusted in Him." He had condescended to be the Son of Man that He might be "distinctly set forth a Son of God in power, according to the Spirit of Holiness by resurrection from the dead." Rom. i. 4. He was identified with them in their weakness, suffering, and temptation, as now in their glory.

But it is not only that He *has* trusted in God; or that He does *now* trust Him for the fruits of the travail of His soul, which he does not fully receive, until He has presented His Church to the Father,

without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. He says, "I WILL be having trusted in Him." The principle of Grace through Faith, on which God has saved and glorified the many sons, is not a mere temporary expedient. The introduction of this declaration on such an occasion as that now under consideration, is most significant in this regard. Bearing in mind the distinction between duteous obedience on the basis of legal enactment, and duteous obedience on the principle of faith, we may apprehend something of the force of this statement. The first has its source in the being who obeys, without aid except from the force of external motives. The second has its source in God Himself, and is therefore eternally secured. Angels were created holy, but under the principle of obedience to legal enactment, some of them fell. Man was created innocent, and under the first temptation to disobedience, he also fell. From their fall, holy angels have already learned the lesson that no created being can stand in his own power. From the "New Song" they will learn, what indeed they are now learning, how redeemed sinners can stand in the power of God. "It was of faith that it might be by grace,"

the Apostle says, "that *the promise might be sure to all the seed.*" Had it been otherwise than by absolute favor, the promise must have been forfeited. But an absolute, unconditional promise whether of God or man, can only be received in the way of believing it. Thus the promise depends for its fulfilment on God only, and is therefore sure. In the many sons, therefore, the heavenly intelligences will behold an example of holiness forever assured on the principle of faith. The avowal of the First of the Saved Ones eternizes that principle. Elsewhere we have learned, that all things are to be gathered together under one head in Him; and that in His Name every knee will bow. Thus the *principle* of faith—dependence upon God—having its source, its object, and its power in God alone, will pervade the Universe. It is of course true, that faith will then have been done away by sight, but the principle underlying both remains,—that God is the *source* and God the *object* of love and obedience. It will no longer be possible for one of God's creatures to fall, since the fountain of their obedience is in God Himself. It will be of grace, and will therefore be assured to every one. Faith worketh by love only.

It first apprehends the love of God; and its work is in the nature of practical response to that love. Therefore, while dependence on God will ever be the principle of obedience, love will be its impelling power. The whole heavens shall be filled with the Love of God as manifested in the only Begotten Son, and in His body, the Church, the fulness of Him who filleth all in all. It shall flow like a river from Him into the heart of every being, and flow back to Him in glad and dutiful response of obedience and worship. The Father will receive the government delivered up by the Son; and in that government, reheaded up in the Christ and thus brought into filial relation, love shall eternally reign.

But we must now turn to the third particular in the Son's acknowledgment of His brethren. When here on earth, His Love to the Father was constantly declared. It was expressed in earnest aspirations toward Him; in entire subjection to His will, and in His Love, stronger than death, to His brethren, because they were the objects of His Father's love, and the gift of the Father to Him. To please the Father was the supreme and avowed object of His life. The consciousness of the Father's Love was

ever with Him. The suspension of that consciousness, when the frown of God consumed the sins that were laid on Him, brought a cry of agony from lips that had been dumb to the reproach of men.

It would be well if Christians would oftentimes more seriously consider the Love of the Father. It is the source of their salvation, even as the love of the Son accomplished it, and the Love of the Spirit applies and reveals it; it was the Love of the Father that gave us to the Son; and that gave the Son—His Only Begotten, the Son of His Love—for our redemption. It is that which is the foundation of our hope, as Toplady sings,—

“ Sweet in His promises to rest,  
And trust His *firm decrees*.”

The Beloved Apostle tells us that “our fellowship<sup>1</sup> is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.” 1 John i. 3. Our consciousness of communion with the Father is in the contemplation of the Love of the Son; but our realized fellowship with the Son is in having the heart occupied with the Love of the Father. It was the mission of the Son while

<sup>1</sup> *Koinwvia*,—common possession.

on earth, to tell out that Love. If we, indeed, hear His voice, we shall be led to contemplate, in fellowship with Him, the breadth and length, the depth and height of that love, omnipotent, unchangeable, unforfeitable ; which passeth knowledge.

To meet and own His brethren, to lead them in the anthem of praise, and to proclaim His identity with them in the chief characteristic of their earthly pilgrimage ; even all this will not fully satisfy the loving heart of Jesus. He shall "see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied ;" but this satisfaction will not be complete till He has presented His Church to the Father. Therefore He takes the Elder Brother's place, and says, "Behold ! I and the little ones whom God has given Me." They are His brethren, declared to be the children of God ; but this is not the description given of them here. The word here translated "children" <sup>†</sup> is not that employed for "sons." It is a descriptive word, indicative rather of endearment and dependence than relationship, and strictly translated means "*little children.*" They were given to the Son in the counsels of eternity,

<sup>†</sup> Τέκνα is employed for children by *generation*, as in 1 John iii. 1, 2 ; υἱοὶ for sons, including the idea of *likeness*, as in Rom. viii. 14.



and He now presents them to the Father. To prepare the Place to which He now introduces them, He had first presented Himself alone on their behalf, by His own blood. He has now returned to earth for them, and brings them, in royal robes, into the inmost presence chamber of Deity; and there presents them "holy and blameless, and irreproachable before Him." Col. i. 22. Then shall God rejoice over them; for then will be brought into view "what is the Hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the Saints." Eph. i. 18. As Jesus has an Inheritance in the All Things, and we have in Him an inheritance "laid up in the heavens for us;" and as His hope is in the presentation of the Church to God, and ours His coming again to receive us to Himself; so God the Father has an Inheritance and a Hope. The one is in the saints themselves, the other in the consummation of the purpose for which He called them. When the Body of Christ—the development and expression of His fulness—shall shine out in glorious splendor, filling "All things in All" (Eph. i. 23), then shall the Father rejoice in the first fruits of His Hope and the earnest of the possession of His In-

heritance. The fulness of that Hope and of that Inheritance will be realized when all things shall have been reheaded up in the Christ, and the Son shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father, that God may be all in all.

V.

THE DELIVERANCE OF DEATH'S CAPTIVES.

“Since then the little ones have been sharers of flesh and blood, He also, in like manner partook of these, that He might vanquish him having the power of death, that is, the Devil; and might liberate those who by fear of death were through their whole life held in slavery.”

THE introduction, by the Sanctifier, of the children into the presence-chamber of Deity, is the vindication and exaltation of Humanity. God had created Man, and the Devil had proclaimed God's creation a failure. Now the purpose of God, in the creation of the race, is vindicated, and in that vindication the race itself is exalted above all other created beings, and into immediate nearness to God Himself. It is because the human aspect of the many sons is here in view that the word *paidia* is employed, instead of *tekna*, used when speaking of them as children by actual birth, or *whyoi* (sons), used to include the likeness resulting from the possession of a nature in common with the First-Born. *Paidia* is descriptive and comparative, meaning

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“little children,” or “little ones”; but does not, like the other two words, necessarily convey the idea of relationship. It means simply “little children,” without any indication of *whose* they are. The reason for the employment of this word becomes apparent in the statement we have now to consider. We have hitherto looked at the many sons as possessing a nature in addition to their original Adam nature, imparted from the Son. Now, we are referred back to their humanity, and learn that before the Son could impart to them His Nature, it was necessary that He should become partaker of theirs.

This was necessary, as said above, in order to vindicate God in His creation of the race. Satan had, by the surrender to him of it by the first man, acquired the dominion of the Earth. He put forth this claim in the very presence of the Son of God; when, taking Him up into a high mountain, he showed unto Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, and said to Him, “All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them, *for that is delivered*<sup>1</sup> *unto me*, and to whomsoever I will, I give

<sup>1</sup> Παράδωμι. “To deliver, to hand over, to surrender, to betray.”  
—*Donnegan's Lexicon.*

it." Luke iv. 6. The claim was not denied. The offer was of the restoration of all that was lost by the fall of man. The answer was that of faith: "It is written." It was not thus that the dominion was to be regained; but, nevertheless, it had to be regained *by man*. "As through man the death, also through a man a resurrection of dead ones." 1 Cor. xv. 21. The translation of this verse in the A. V. reduces it to the mere statement of an historic fact; whereas, as a link in the resurrection argument of the Apostle, it is the statement of a necessity. The fact that a *man*—one who was subjected to death—has risen from the dead, is the proof that man shall rise.

As we have said in another place, God *could* have destroyed Satan and all his works by the mere exercise of omnipotence. In that event, His justice would have been displayed, but where would have been His wisdom? Such an exercise of power (we speak in reverent humility) would have been to confess that the creation of Man was a mistake, and that the course of events in the Universe had been outside the counsels of His sovereign will. Therefore, as by man came death, by man *must*

come the resurrection of the dead. Therefore, also, "As the children have one common nature of flesh and blood, He in like manner partook of these, in order that by means of death He might conquer him who possesses the power of death, that is, the Devil."

This is very beautifully typified in the Hebrew ordinance concerning the "Kinsman." In the Old Testament the same word is indifferently translated Kinsman, Redeemer, and Avenger. If the inheritance of a poor man were mortgaged and he was in danger of losing it, it was the duty of his rich kinsman to redeem it. If a man were slain, his nearest kinsman was the avenger of his blood. If a man died childless, his kinsman was to take to wife his widow and raise up children to him, that his name might not be blotted out in Israel. Typically, therefore, the kinsman was the raiser up of the dead. *Only* the kinsman could take these offices. So the Son of God took on Him our nature, that He might redeem for us an inheritance of immortality, destroy him who had the power of death, and impart everlasting life to those who were dead in trespasses and sins, and were ready to perish forever.

A striking and prophetic instance of this kinsman-work occurs in the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah. When the Jews were about being carried away to Babylon, the nephew of Jeremiah came to him in person, asking him to buy his field in Anathoth, "for the right of inheritance is thine, and the redemption is thine, buy it for thyself."

The kinsman accordingly redeemed the inheritance, though, owing to the removal of the nation to Babylon, it was apparently worthless. He paid down the price, which is stated as seventeen shekels of silver. The metal in which the payment was made was that which constituted the foundations of the tabernacle, typifying the foundations of God's intercourse with man. The number of shekels was compounded of the numbers ten and seven,—the first of which and its multiples are employed in Scripture to signify that which is uncomputed, or incomputable; as, for instance, in Heb. xii. 22, where the Greek word for ten thousand is translated "an innumerable company," and Luke xii., where "tens of thousands" is the equivalent of "an innumerable multitude," which may really have been much less than ten thousand. The number seven is in-

variably used as the symbol of *completeness*. The title-deeds to the inheritance thus acquired were put into an *earthen vessel*, there to remain till the nation should come to its own again. It is perhaps hardly necessary to follow out so striking a type. The Lord Jesus when "straitened" in His flesh, paid down the ransom price for our inheritance. That price was that which constitutes the sole basis of our intercourse with God. It was of inestimable value, and it was complete. The inheritance is not yet possessed, and will not be till His return. Meanwhile the evidence of ownership is "hid in earthen vessels." It is in the saints, who are "not yet manifested." As yet, they are all the visible evidence of the inheritance which He has purchased.

The aspect in which the Devil is here presented is that of the one who possesses the power (or *strength*) of Death. We are commonly taught that God is the inflicter of death, and that the coming of death is synonymous with the coming of the Lord. But death is the result of sin. That the race is subject to death tells of the shame and disgrace into which it has fallen. "By sin came



death." Sin, "when it is finished, bringeth forth death." "The sting of death is sin." The Devil has the power of death. He wields the sting and inflicts the doom. It is God who restrains him, not He who sends him. Sorrow, sickness and death do not come from God; but are the characteristics of the Devil's reign over the earth. God mercifully controls and restrains them; else they would run riot through the world. They are still permitted by Him, for in the scene where sin still has existence, its legitimate fruits remain, but they are overruled unto good, like all the rest of the all things, "unto those who love God, the called according to purpose." And since the Cross, they have only been permitted on sufferance. It is, therefore, a great mistake to speak of afflictions as being sent from God for the discipline or chastisement of His saints. The discipline spoken of in Holy Scripture comes from the "Father of Spirits," and is applied to spiritual natures. It is not external and through the flesh; but internal, and "in spirit." The afflictions which happen to the flesh may, and doubtless often are—as in the case of Job, who was afflicted by Satan with God's permission—made the occasion of

testing and vindicating the believer's faith; but this is something quite different from the child-training<sup>1</sup> which God bestows on the heirs of promise.

In order, therefore, to render powerless<sup>2</sup> (for that is the meaning of the word, which is the same as that applied to death in 1 Cor. xv.) him who had the power of death, the Son must and did partake of the nature of the children. As feeble man, He met the Prince of Death in the wilderness and withstood; as feeble man, He met him a second time on the Cross and deprived him of his power. In due season He will, as glorified Man, meet him a third time; and will then destroy him forever. To destroy a noxious weed, it must be cut up at the root. Sin is the cause of death; therefore sin must first be destroyed; and to make an end of sins forever it was necessary that the Son should lay down His life. Therefore, it was only in dying that He could vanquish him that had the power of death. He went down into the territory of Death, remaining three days and nights in the heart of the earth; but Death could not

<sup>1</sup> *Haúela* (from *παῖς*, a child), translated *chastisement* in Heb. xii. 5-8, but in Eph. vii. *nurture*, and in 2 Tim. iii. 16 *instruction*.

<sup>2</sup> *Καταργέω*.

hold Him there, for in Him there was no sin. When He rose, it is declared concerning Him, "that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dieth no more, death no longer lords it over Him." Rom. vi. 9.

We read in other places also that He went down into the domain of death. "The Son of Man shall be three days and three nights in the *heart of the earth*." Matt. xii. 40. This was not the rock-hewn sepulchre of Joseph, upon the surface of the earth. The comparison is with Jonah, in the belly of the great fish; and the obvious meaning of the words is, the very centre of the earth. So also, "Say not in thine heart, who shall descend into *the abyss*,<sup>1</sup> that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead." Rom. x. 7.

This "Abyss" is frequently referred to in the Apocalypse. Apollyon (the Destroyer) is represented as coming up out of it. Rev. ix. 2-11. The Antichrist, figured as the Beast who was, and is, and is not, and is about to go into destruction (Rev. xvii. 8), ascends from it. The Devil, whose present abode is in the heavenlies, is put into it, and is there confined a thousand years. Rev. xx. 3. The legion of demons whom the Lord commanded to come out of

<sup>1</sup> Ἄβυσσος.

the man in the country of the Gadarenes, besought Him that He would not command them to go into it. Luke viii. 31. Down into this place, Jesus, according to His own word, went when He died, as it is also written, "Now that He ascended, what is it but that He also descended *into the lower parts of the earth.*" Eph. iv. 9. From the prophetic sixteenth Psalm, quoted by the Apostle Peter in his address on the day of Pentecost, we learn the name of this place into which Jesus descended. "Thou wilt not abandon my soul in *Hades* (it is Jesus who speaks) nor suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption." Acts ii. 27. And Peter's comment upon this is that David "spoke concerning the resurrection of Christ, that He was not abandoned in Hades, neither did His flesh see corruption." *Ibid.*, 31.

We now learn that the fruit of the victory of Jesus over the Prince of Death was to deliver those who through fear of death had throughout their whole lives been held in bondage. He bound and rendered powerless the keeper of the prison-house, and then led out of it "a multitude of captives." It is written: "Having ascended on high, He led a multitude of captives, and gave gifts to men; but that He ascended,

what is it unless that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is also the one who ascended far above all heavens, that He might fill the All Things." Eph. iv. 8, 9, 10.

The makers of the Apostles' Creed knew and meant what they said when they wrote, "He descended into Hell."<sup>1</sup> This important fact is now generally lost sight of, or denied; while some who repeat the Creed every Sunday have stricken out these words, because they are incompatible with the modern conception of Hell and of its character. But the makers of the Creed understood well of what they were affirming. There is, according to the Word of God, a place in the "heart of the earth," an "Abyss" into which Jesus descended at His death, and from which He ascended, leading a multitude of captives,—or literally, having "captivated captivity." From the passage under review, it is seen that these captives were those who throughout their whole lives were, through fear of death, in bondage; and who at death went into this prison-house, and were detained there

<sup>1</sup> For the subject of Hell, as referred to in the parable of Lazarus and the rich man, see the concluding essay on "Eternal Punishment."

until Jesus delivered them and led them up on high. The statement cannot refer to deliverance from the fear of death, of living persons. Those to whom it refers had finished their lives ; throughout which they had been in bondage by the knowledge that they must die, and were delivered when Jesus died. But who and what were they ?

In the Old Testament there is no intimation of going to Heaven at death, but always of going down into "Sho'hl." "Sho'hl" is the Hebrew equivalent of "Hades," by which it is rendered in the Septuagint, and of the English word Hell, whose primary meaning is that of a place roofed in or covered over. Jacob said, "I will go down into Hell unto my son mourning." Gen. xxxvii. 35. Also, "then shall ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow unto Hell." Job says, "So man lieth down and riseth not ; till the heavens be no more they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep. O that Thou wouldst hide me in Hell, that Thou wouldst keep me secret until Thy wrath be past, that Thou wouldst appoint me a set time and remember me ! If a man die, shall he live again ? All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. Thou shalt call, and I

will answer Thee; Thou wilt have a desire to the work of Thine hands." Job xiv. 13-15. God *did* hide Job in Hell, and kept him secret in that place of darkness, silence, and unconsciousness till wrath had been forever quenched in blood! Then Jesus called, and Job answered, as He said, "The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." John v. 25. Agur said, "There are three things that are never satisfied, yea, four things that say not, It is enough; Hell, and the barren womb, the earth that is not filled with water, and the fire that saith not, It is enough." Prov. xxx. 15, 16. King Hezekiah, in giving thanks for his recovery from sickness, said, "I said in the cutting off of my days I shall go to the gates of Hell; I am deprived of the residue of my years." Isa. xxxviii. 10. These are a few out of many passages in the Old Testament in which Sho'hl, or Hell, is spoken of as the common destination of all living. There is not one in which is expressed the idea of going to Heaven at death.

A little reflection will teach us that this must needs so have been. These ancient saints, though they were believers in God, and objects of His saving

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grace, were yet sinners, whose guilt had not yet been washed away by the blood of Christ. Until Jesus had accomplished on the Cross His work of atonement on behalf of the redeemed, they must be judicially excluded from the presence of God ; and they were in the grasp of Satan, the Prince of Death, to whom Adam had delivered over his whole posterity. Enoch and Elijah were " translated that they should not see death," but they could not form an exception to the rule above stated. They were preserved alive in the Heavens ; but there is no evidence that they went into the Place, which, until Jesus died and rose again, was not open to sinners.

Hell is declared to be a place of forgetfulness, darkness, and unconsciousness. " For in death there is no remembrance of thee ; in Hell who shall give thee thanks?" Ps. vi. 5. " There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in Hell, whither thou goest." Eccl. ix. 10. " For the living know that they shall die, but the dead *know not anything*, neither have any more a reward" (literally, *wages*). Eccl. ix. 5. And Job describes it as follows: " Let me alone that I may take comfort a little, before I go whence I shall not return, even unto the land of



darkness and the shadow of death; a land of darkness, as darkness itself; and of the shadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkness." Job x. 20-22. How different this from the modern idea of Hell, borrowed from the heathen idea of Tartarus!

From that place God called up Samuel, to pronounce doom on Saul. The soul of Lazarus went there, when he died, and thence Jesus called him. Lazarus was *really* dead, which implies the separation of soul from body. His soul could not have gone to Heaven, for its sin was not yet put away. The souls of the son of the widow of Nain and of the daughter of Jairus came back from there at the summons of the Lord of Life. It deepens our impression of the grandeur of these miracles, when we know that the voice of Jesus penetrated the dark and silent and chaotic realm of death, in the heart of the earth, and reprieved the souls that it had made its prey.

The position of God toward the sins of the ancient saints is explained in the following passage:

“Whom (Christ) God hath set forth to be a Mercy Seat through faith in his blood for the declaration of His

righteousness in the passing over<sup>1</sup> of the sins formerly committed, during the forbearance of God; and for a declaration of His righteousness at the present time, that He may be righteous and justify Him that is of the faith of Jesus." Rom. iii. 25, 26.

Here are two distinct declarations of God's righteousness. One is, of His righteousness in *passing over* the sins formerly committed, during which He *forebore* to judge them; the other of His righteousness in *now* justifying the believer in Jesus. The distinction between two different eras and two different sets of circumstances is strongly marked. The believer in Jesus is now made judicially blameless. The Old Testament saint could not be, because Atonement had not yet been made; but during the forbearance of God, his sins were "passed over," until the Seed should come. For the blood of bulls and goats could not take away sins. Nor could the ancient saints possess the new immortal nature, which is the present portion of believers now. The Seed could not bring forth fruit until it had fallen into the ground and died. Resurrection

<sup>1</sup> Πάρεσις,—“The act of letting pass.”—DONNEGAN. This word does not mean forgiveness or remission, but overlooking, or passing over.

life could not be imparted until Christ had risen. They possessed a divinely inspired confidence in God, which waited for the fulfilment of the promises; but they had not a spiritual capacity to receive and apprehend spiritual things. Therefore it is said of them, that "these all died in faith, *not having received the promises*, but having seen them, and saluted them from afar, and having confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." Heb. xi. 13. Also, "And all these having been attested through faith, *did not receive the promise.*"

We who believe, *have* received the promises. We have now, as present possessions, justification and eternal life. We are now "in Christ," and are "blessed with all spiritual blessings in the Heavens, in Him." Into the full realization of these blessings we have not yet entered, but they are, nevertheless, as much *ours* now as they will be when we are with and like the Lord. The ancient saints saw redemption afar off, but Noah, and Samuel, and Moses, and David, and all the rest of the ancient worthies had to go down into the territory of death, and there await a kinsman, who should break their prison-bars and lead them forth. This was what Job

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meant, when he said, "I know that my Redeemer (kinsman) liveth." Jesus, when He went down there, quickened them into immortal life, even as He now quickens those who believe on Him, and led them up on high. But they had actually *to die*, and through fear of this were in bondage all their life long. Since Jesus rose no believer has gone down into that place. They depart instead to be "with Christ," and are "asleep in Jesus,"—that is, in blessed conscious repose, in His keeping. When God brings Him again into the world, He will also bring those sleeping saints with Him; as it is written, "For since we believe that Jesus died and arose, so also will God, through Jesus, lead forth with Him those who fell asleep." 1 Thess. iv. 14. At the same time we "who are alive and remain shall be caught away in clouds to meet the Lord in the air." *Ibid.*, v. 17. We and they shall then be invested with our spiritual bodies, "like unto His own glorious body;" but not till then; "for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." 1 Cor. xv. 52.

Since Jesus led out these captives no believer has really died. To depart and be with Christ is not

to die, in its proper sense,—the sense in which the ancient worthies died. The dissolution of the body is but a circumstance. The new, immortal nature is not touched by death, nor can it be. The human soul with all its affections and faculties to be then brought into perfect harmony and balance of proportions, like the human soul of Jesus, is indissolubly united with the spiritual nature, and with it clothed upon with the spiritual body, our “house which is from heaven.” Therefore the word of the Lord, “He that liveth and believeth in Me shall NEVER DIE,” is an actual fact, and no mere flight of Oriental imagery. When the Lord Jesus visited Hades, He conquered Death on his own territory. “*He abolished* Death, and brought life and immortality to light (*illuminated* them) through the Glad Tidings.” 2 Tim. i. 10. As the conqueror of Satan He took away the keys of the prison-house, and retains them unto this day. The risen and glorified Lord said to the beloved disciple, “Fear not, I am the First and the Last and the Living One; I was dead and lo! I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades.” Rev. i. 17, 18. The prison is kept for some, “for

whom has been kept the blackness of darkness unto the Age." Jude 13. It is there that the Lord knoweth how to reserve the unrighteous for a day of judgment to be punished (literally, *cut off*). 2 Pet. ii. 9. It is eventually to be destroyed, as it is said, "O Death, I will be thy pestilence; O Hell, I will be thy destruction!" Hos. xiii. 14. Death and Hell shall be cast into the lake of fire.

## VI.

## THE SEED OF ABRAHAM.

“For not in any manner does He lay hold of angels, but He lays hold of the Seed of Abraham.”

THE Son did not lay hold of angels. We repeat the remark made a few pages back, that human reason may wonder why He should pass by beings of such might and intelligence, and who might rather be deemed *worth* saving, to take on Himself the nature of so insignificant a creature as man. When the Lord Jesus, looking upon the starry heavens, exclaimed, “What is man, that Thou art mindful of *him*?” He was not making a comparison between man and the mere physical vastness of the Universe. All this might be as nothing in value, compared with one human soul. The comparison was of like with like. That the worlds are peopled we cannot doubt, since both Scripture and analogy teach it. The prodigality, so to speak, with which God has filled this earth with life in multitudinous varieties and forms, would tell us that He has not

left unpeopled the orbs and systems with which He has abundantly filled space; and it is also revealed in Holy Scripture that there are governments, authorities, principalities, and powers in the *heavenlies*. Not in "Heaven itself," where Jesus went to appear in the presence of God for us, but in the heavenly spaces of the Universe. The beings who constitute these governments and principalities are all mentioned under the comprehensive title of angels. Therefore when the Son of God became for a little while lower than the angels, He took His place at the foot of God's intelligent creatures. There was among them all none so low as Man. Of angelic might and dignity we have some glimpses in the Scriptures. Man is very proud of the results of his investigation into the facts of nature, and of the limited extent to which he has been able to apply those facts. A modern writer<sup>1</sup> says, "There is no difficulty in conceiving how a complete knowledge of all natural laws would give, if not complete power, at least degrees of power, immensely greater than those which we now possess." . . . "No man can have any difficulty in believing that there are

<sup>1</sup> "The Reign of Law," by the Duke of Argyll.



natural laws of which he is ignorant; nor in conceiving that there may be beings who do know them, and can use them, even as he himself now uses the few laws with which he is acquainted." This would seem to accord with the Scripture conception of the knowledge and power pertaining to the inhabitants of "other worlds than ours." Judging also from analogy, the population of the earth must be almost infinitesimally small, as well as insignificant in personality, as compared with that of the entire Universe. These considerations may enable us more fully to apprehend the force of the comparison implied in the words, "What is man, that Thou art mindful of *him*?"

But it is only in consideration of the fact that of this immense and mighty population, a considerable portion is under the sway of Satan, that we can understand the words, "He laid not hold of angels." We have already seen that there are governments, authorities, and potentates of wickedness, the "rulers of worlds<sup>1</sup> of this darkness, in the heavenlies." Eph. vi. 12. The extent of this defection from the authority of God will be seen when Satan, mani-

<sup>1</sup> Κοσμοκράτορας.

fested in the assumption of perfect wisdom,—unlimited authority, and crowned with the insignia of complete sovereignty,—is cast down from Heaven, and draws after him *one-third* of the stars of heaven. Rev. xii. 4. In the figurative language of the Apocalypse, stars represent angels; as the Lord explains to John, that the seven stars which He holds in His right hand are the angels of the seven churches. Rev. i. 20. Satan himself is represented as a blazing star falling from heaven; and to him is given the key of the pit of the abyss, which he opens, and lets out an army of locusts, headed by their king, the angel of the abyss, whose name is Apollyon. Rev. viii. 10; ix. 1–11. The Lord Jesus Himself takes the title of “The Bright and Morning Star.” At the dawn of creation, the “morning stars” sung together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy. Beyond conception, indeed, are the numbers and the might of the hosts of wickedness; and the magnitude and importance of the conflict undertaken by the Heir for the acquisition of His inheritance.

But Jesus passed by Lucifer, the fallen Son of the Morning, and all his host of wandering stars,

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doomed to the blackness of darkness forever. His mission was not to restore angels; it was to *save* sinners of Adam's race. "He takes not hold in any way of angels, but of the Seed of Abraham He takes hold."

In partaking of the common nature of flesh and blood, He chose a line in which to be born. The common nature of which He partook was that of Adam; the special seed of which He laid hold was that of Abraham.

The fact that the earthly ancestor here mentioned is Abraham instead of Jacob or David has a special significance. It brings into prominence, and emphasizes the principle of faith. In taking upon Himself earthly relationships, He chose to be announced as the descendant of the father of the faithful. For the great and prominent characteristic of Abraham, which looms up through the simply-told history in Genesis, is, that he believed God.

But where faith is, there must be a promise and a promiser, as well as a believer, who receives the promise. To Abraham was the promise made, and it was related to his Seed. Gal. iii. 19. It was absolute and unconditional. As it antedated by four

hundred and thirty years the law and its conditions, it could not be invalidated by them. The promise was of blessing to come upon all nations. The Seed, in whom all nations were to be blessed, was Christ. Gal. iii. 16. It was therefore necessary that the Son, in coming into the world to fulfil God's promise of blessing, should come of the Seed of Abraham, in order to be the inheritor of the promise.

In Isaac, God's promise to Abraham was typically fulfilled, and the type was fulfilled in Christ. Isaac was the child of promise, and so was Christ. Isaac walked in the obedience of faith, and laid himself a willing sacrifice upon the altar; so also did Christ. Isaac figuratively rose from the dead, so actually did Christ. From Isaac sprung Jacob, who stands in the Word as the most conspicuous instance of the grace of God. Jacob was mean, deceitful, treacherous, untrustworthy, and untrustful. His highest conception of God was to try to make a bargain with Him; which business transaction is now often mistakenly set before people, as the way to obtain divine blessing. He sought to extort blessing from the Angel of Blessing; and we are told now that the way to get blessing from God is to wrestle for it.

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He was in all things a contrast to his frank, manly, and generous brother Esau; yet God passed by Esau and made Jacob the distinguished subject of most undeserved favor. He exalted him from being Jacob (supplanter) to be Israel, a prince of God.

The many sons are all more or less like Jacob in natural character, and completely like him in one respect,—the entire absence of deserving of blessing. But grace took them up on the basis of the unconditional promise made to Abraham and to his Seed; and has made them princes of God,—incognito now, but to be manifested in due season.

Thus, the eternal security of every believer has its foundation in the unconditional promise of Jehovah, confirmed in the precious blood of Christ. Every one who trusts Christ is, in the view of God, of Abraham's seed, and an heir according to promise, inasmuch as he is one with Christ.

If then the salvation of the believer be the result of absolute promise, of what value is the law? The promise being unconditional, and having priority of law, and the believer as one with Christ receiving the full benefit of that promise, why should the law have been given?

It was given "*for the sake of offences until the Seed should come.*" Gal. iii. 19. Also that overt sin might be brought to a standard of comparison, and thus be made known in its true character, "for through the law is the acknowledgment of sin." Rom. iii. 20. It also "supervened (literally *entered from one side*<sup>1</sup>), that the offence might abound; but where sin abounded, grace superabounded." Rom. v. 20.

These passages show the intent of the law. It could in nowise affect the fulfilment of the promise; but it served to bring out into full relief the sin which was in contrast with the promise, that thereby might be displayed the abundance of the riches of grace. It stood as the standard of God's holiness; and he who comprehended its spirit, and measured himself by it, found that all it could do for him was to condemn and kill him. Moreover, the prohibition, like any prohibition, stimulated the desire for disobedience. It thus caused the offence to abound. It brought out into manifestation before the angelic audience whom God was teaching, what was in the heart of man. It condemned him and deprived

<sup>1</sup> Παρεισέρχομαι,—see Gal. ii. 4.

him of hope, and was thus the child-leader<sup>†</sup> to bring him to Christ. Thus it is said, for the *sake of offences* it was given, *i.e.*, that inward sin might be manifested as outward offence, brought into comparison with holiness, and the sinner condemned by it. But this was *until the Seed should come*. That is to say, until a new and holy nature should be manifested, whose obedience should spring from within instead of being demanded, on penalty of death, from without. This was the principle of obedience brought to light by the Lord Jesus Christ, and that for which He looks in His members. It is the obedience of faith; a higher, better, and fuller obedience than that of law. It was never intended that life should be earned by the law; on the contrary, the law demonstrated that *that* could only come by absolute promise and grace. Nor is the law ever set forth as the standard of Christian obedience. The only standard for a *life*, is a Perfect Life. The obedience of the Lord Jesus is the only pattern for His saints. The exhortations of the Epistles are all based on the fact that saints are dead and risen with Christ, and have left on the other side of His cross

<sup>†</sup> Παιδαγωγός.

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and grave all that state of things of which the law is a part. The power of all true Christian obedience is in looking to Christ and drinking out of His fulness. The man who goes to the law for his standard of obedience, will only be barren and unhappy. "Christ is the *end of the Law* unto righteousness, to every one believing." Rom. x. 4. "Sin shall not lord it over you." (And why?) "Because you are not under the Law, but under grace." Rom. vi. 14. The believer is one with Christ, and is therefore the heir of immutable promise. His standing before God is not in legal enactment, but in *Love*, which has eternally justified and made him complete in Christ. Instead of working to conform to the Law, he brings forth fruit from the life within. Angels behold with intensest interest the contrast between sin as developed by means of the law of God, and holiness resulting from the love of God.

The Saviour was born as a descendant of Abraham, and identified Himself with the race of Abraham. His immediate mission was only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. It was not till after His final rejection by His own people that God's fuller purposes of grace were made known. Till then, God



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had never declared His intention of saving anybody outside of His chosen nation. The prophecies of the Old Testament speak only of Israel (though often dreadfully misapplied to the Church), and of Israel when in its own land. We have spoken of the times in which we live as being an interregnum in the course of prophecy, and of being called on the one hand the "evil day," and on the other the "day of grace." When the Messiah was finally rejected (which did not take place till the stoning of Stephen), the clock of prophecy stopped. The glory predicted to follow the humiliation of Christ could not be forfeited, for it was unconditionally promised; but it was deferred. The mandate went forth, "Go to the highways and hedges and compel them to come in that my house may be filled." But prior to this gathering in of Gentiles, was the calling of the crippled and blind and lame of Israel, after the national rejection of the Messiah.

Israel having failed under the law, had been put under a probation of love, by the personal presence and invitation of the Son of God Himself. He told out to them the love of the Father: He healed their sick and raised their dead; He made them "offers

of mercy," which they slighted; and they at last ignominiously slew Him. Even then He offered to return if they would receive Him; and they replied by the martyrdom of Stephen. This closed the account; and thenceforth they were set aside until the "fulness of the Gentiles" should be brought in.

It had now been demonstrated that neither could man earn life by law, nor would he respond to love. We have seen that the object of God in redemption was to make known to principalities and powers in the heavenlies, through the Church, the manifold wisdom of God, according to a *Plan of the Ages*, which He before formed in Jesus Christ our Lord. In the progress of these ages, He had now reached the time for the disclosure of the Secret which had been hid from previous ages, that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs and a joint-body, and partakers of the promise in Christ through the Gospel. The heavenly intelligences now saw the fruitless vine laid aside; and God seeking fruit from other peoples, whom He had previously called "not a people," and who had never been deemed worthy of cultivation. They were worthless and vile, going on in sin unto death in their own way, without law, strangers to

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the covenants of promise, godless in the world, and not having a hope. They had no claim and no pretension. Now, therefore, a *new* principle is brought in, the principle of absolutely free and sovereign grace, to save those who were in every way unworthy. No offer of mercy was made, no terms of salvation were proffered; but a proclamation of absolutely free pardon was made, which God made effectual to as many as it pleased Him to save. He was "*taking out* of the Gentiles a people for His name." The proclaimed pardon was received purely in the way of believing God, and by those who neither did nor could work for it, nor deserve it.

It is therefore that this present era is called "the day of grace," the "accepted time," and the "day of salvation." God was working from the beginning in this principle, else He could never before have had a people; but it is in this age, and not until this age, that it has been brought out into manifestation. This period is also called "the evil day," because it is the day when man's self-will and opposition to God are mounting up to their height. God is doing nothing to improve the world. That came to an end judicially, when Christ was rejected and

crucified. It will continue only while God gathers out of it His elect; and when the iniquity of the nations, like that of the Amorites, is filled up, its doom will be executed.

But the promise that Judah and Israel shall again occupy their own land is unforfeitable and immutable. When the Messiah comes again to succor them in the extremity of their distress, they shall say, "Lo! this is our God, we have waited for Him!" Their conversion will be after the pattern of that of the Apostle Paul. A Nation shall be born in a day. Then shall God fulfil to them His ancient promise: "I will put my laws into their mind and write them in their hearts, and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people; and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." Jer. xxxi. 33, 34; Heb. viii. 10-12.

Thus God will save Israel on the same principle on which He is now saving sinners of the Gentiles. Meanwhile all our blessing comes through the Jew;

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he is broken off temporarily from the Abrahamic stalk, that we may be grafted in. Our salvation stands on the ancient promise to Abraham, and we are its recipients because we are one with Christ, the great Heir of God's immutable promise; and are by faith the sons of believing Abraham. Had the Son of Man come as the heir of Jacob, it would have limited His mission to the Jewish nation. Had He come as the heir of Moses, His blessings would have been bestowed only under the conditions of law. Had He come as the heir of David only, He could only have been the subjugator of the nations. But the seed of which He laid hold was the seed of Abraham, to whom unconditional promise was made, antedating the birth of Israel as a nation, the giving out of the law, and the establishment of a throne. Therefore sinners of the Gentiles are not brought into the relationships and conditions implied in either of these, but are brought under absolute, unconditional, unforfeitable promise and grace.

## VII.

## THE GREAT HIGH PRIEST.

“Hence He was obliged in all things to be made like the brethren, so that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest as to things relating to God, in order to expiate the sins of the people, for by what He has Himself suffered, being tried, He is able to render aid to those being tried.”

WE have now the announcement of the main subject of the Epistle to the Hebrews. The particulars that we have learned concerning the Son of God, have been unfolded that we might understand His fitness for the office to which God has called Him, an office which has special relation to the needs of the many sons while they are being conducted to glory; we mean the office of the priesthood.

It was for this purpose, we are told, that “He was obliged to be assimilated to the brethren in all things.” We have already seen, or have faintly apprehended, how thorough and perfect is this as-

simulation. It is a real man with whom we have to do ; one who in the very feebleness of flesh encountered trials and temptations of the same nature as those we have to meet ; and conquered, even as we may conquer, only in the power of faith in God.

The absence, in the original Greek, of the possessive pronoun "his," unnecessarily supplied in the common version, is most significant here. Those to whom He is assimilated are not now spoken of as *His* brethren, but as "*the* brethren." Though they are indeed most surely declared to be His brethren, that relationship is not in view.

All along, ever since He was spoken of as the First-Born, the thought of kinship with the many sons has been prominently before us. Now, however, He is introduced to us in a new relation, which is not one of consanguinity (if we may use that word in a higher sense than with reference to mere earthly ties of blood) but of *office*. It is the priest on the one hand, "the brethren" on the other. The fact that He is made priest does indeed spring from the fact that those in whose behalf He exercised priestly functions *are* His brethren ; but in His official character as the High Priest, He stands dis-

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tinct from them, having certain duties to perform for and to them. As the First-Born, the Prince of their salvation, and the Kinsman, we have seen Him closely identified with them. Now, however, that His work is done, and He is seated on the right hand of the Majesty on High, while they are still left on the scene of His humiliation, He is made known to them as their merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God.

The Scriptural definition of a priest is one who, "having been taken from among men, is appointed on behalf of men, over things relating to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins." Heb. v. 1. Dr. Arnold, of Rugby, writes: "The essential notion of a priest is this: that he is a person made necessary to our intercourse without being necessary or beneficially to us morally,—an unreasonable, unmoral, unspiritual necessity." That is to say, the functions of a priest are strictly official. He is appointed to do certain duties, and the performance of those duties is not optional with him. This is the primary and ideal conception of priesthood. Deity appoints the priest, and his functions are toward God on behalf of men. When, therefore,



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a Jew came to the priest in the appointed way, and under the prescribed conditions, bringing his gift or his sacrifice, the priest was bound to offer it. It being thus offered by God's appointed priest, the offerer *knew* that it was accepted of God. It was not a question of consciousness or feeling, but simply of complying with a prescribed ordinance.

The duty of the priest having been accomplished, the anxieties of the offerer were set at rest. To such an office God appointed the Son, on behalf of the brethren; and the duties of the office became incumbent upon Him.

The idea of priesthood is inseparable from that of sacrifice and atonement. The holiness of God, on the one hand, and the sinfulness of the one approaching Him on the other, are implied. Hence the Jewish priests were continually offering sacrifices year by year, both for themselves and the people, which could never make the comers thereunto perfect. The one who approached came either in the knowledge or confession of his own personal unfitness to draw near. The priest was appointed of God to offer, on behalf of the one thus coming, a sacrifice also ordained by Him, the effect of which

was to take out of the way the barrier of sin which prevented approach. All this was entirely external to the worshipper. He had nothing whatever to do with the appointment of the priest, nor could he help him in the slightest degree in the performance of his duties. Whatever part he may have taken in the ceremony was in the way of confession or avowal. He had but to bring his offering according to his means, whether of a pair of doves worth a farthing or of a costly bullock. All was done *for* him.

All this is, of course, typical. That the worshipper brought his own offering, expressed the real interest we possess in the sacrifice of Christ; and its varying in value according to the wealth of the worshipper, typified the different degrees of apprehension which Christians have, of the value of their great Sacrifice. But the dove and the bullock were alike acceptable and alike effectual. It is not the extent of our appreciation of the sacrifice of Christ that puts away our sin. The whole value concerning our sins, as toward God, is in Him; not in our estimate of Him, be that great or little. Only the higher our appreciation, the richer we are in our present conscious possession of Him.

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The duty of the priest, it will therefore be seen, had a twofold aspect. Toward God, it was that of fidelity; toward man, that of mercy. He was responsible toward God to discharge faithfully the duties placed on him. In the exercise of that fidelity he had to show mercy—God's mercy—to man. He could not turn away from the altar the vilest sinner who brought his trespass-offering; but was bound to offer his sacrifice for him, and bid him depart in peace. Therefore it is said of Jesus, "that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest." The mercy flows from the fountain of the Father's ever-loving heart, and it is committed to the Son to be dispensed. He has taken the place of responsibility, as the Faithful One, and the bestowment of mercy is indissolubly linked in with His fidelity to God. Now mercy is something to which one can have no title. Its very idea implies ill-desert or need on the part of the recipient.

The declaration, therefore, on the faith of God Himself, that Jesus has taken upon Himself this office, should be full of comfort. As already said, the whole matter is external to the worshipper. The priest is appointed, the sacrifice provided for

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him. It is something to which he can contribute nothing; his only, but sufficient, qualification is in the sense of need. The only inquiry which a Jew might make in approaching to God was, whether the priest was divinely appointed, and whether the sacrifice was that which God had ordained. These questions being answered in the affirmative, he was, and must have been, satisfied, and his anxieties were set at rest. But the blood of bulls and goats could never take away sin. The sacrifice offered year by year, could never make the comers thereunto perfect. But now we see One, co-equal with the Father in eternal Godhead, who has identified Himself with humanity, in order to take this office, and discharge its duties. His responsibility is to God alone. To meet that responsibility, He must exercise mercy,—God's mercy, in its fullest and freest sense, on behalf of those for whom He was appointed, and from among whom He has been taken. There is therefore everything that the heart can desire to satisfy us as to the appointment of the Priest, and as to His fitness for His office. When *He* says, "I absolve thee," a worshipper may indeed go in peace.

An essential part, however, of the function of

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priesthood, was the offering of sacrifice. It was that which laid the basis of intercourse between God and man. If the heart is satisfied with the appointment and with the character of our great Priest, it must also be with the sacrifice which He offered ; and the ground of this satisfaction is in the fact that God has declared Himself to be satisfied. It is not a question of my estimate of the value of this sacrifice, but to know what God thinks about it, that can give me peace. When God declares for my comfort—for the comfort of every one, who has fled away for refuge, to lay hold of the hope set before him—that “ I have made Thee a high priest unto the age ;” and when He has also manifested in the sight of the Universe His entire satisfaction with the sacrifice which the priest offered, by raising Him from the dead, and placing Him on His own right hand, there is nothing left to ask. My petty questions of personal fitness, of feeling, of experience, dwindle into nothingness in the presence of this supreme fact in the history of the Universe ; and that the word and oath of God are pledged, and His honor engaged, to save every one who avails himself of the offices of this great Priest. It is said of Him, that He offered

Himself without spot to God, and that He entered in by His own blood into the Holy Place made without hands. There is an allusion here to the type presented on the great day of Atonement in Israel,—that day of the whole year in which the High Priest entered into the Most Holy Place, and sprinkled upon the Mercy-Seat, and within the Holy Place, the blood of the victim slain upon the altar without. This typifies what the Great Priest did on behalf of His saints. He was His own sacrifice. His offering was Himself; and when He had laid down His life, His first action was to present Himself in the immediate presence of God, as having accomplished the priestly duty which God had devolved upon Him. When He did that, every question of sin, as to those for whom He died, was settled forever. They were then and there, and eternally, adjudicated guiltless. The High Priest of Israel, in the performance of his duties before the people, wore his robes of glory and beauty. These were of various colors, symbolic of the attributes of God, which were to be manifested in the true High Priest. He bore upon his shoulders the names of the children of Israel, signifying that he sustained

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them by his power, and upon his breast he bore their names, typifying that they were also upon his heart. But when the High Priest entered into the Holiest of All, all these were laid aside, and his garments were only of the purest white. White is the combination of all colors. Indeed, the analysis of light only partially detects the elements of the pure white sunlight, since at each end of the spectrum there are rays of powerful effect, which are entirely imperceptible to the eye. When the priest was in the presence of the people, the different constituents of the white were brought into manifestation before them. It was for our comfort and instruction that this was done. But when he went into the manifested presence of Jehovah, his garments were of that color which included them all, and included in addition that which human senses are not able to apprehend, but which God could apprehend. We see in Jesus, His love, His power, His fidelity, His mercy, His sympathy, His grace,—we see a little of the value which God sets upon Him; and the little we see is comforting and strengthening to our hearts. But our safety, independently of our comfort, rests only on God's estimate of Him; and God

sees in Him all that is typified in the pure white robe, or in the white sunlight, which, as we have before said, is the shadow of God. We see now only in part. God sees all; and in what God sees in the Priest, in the value which He sets upon Him, and upon His sacrifice, our eternal security is founded.

Another priestly function is that of intercession; and this is also inseparably connected with sacrifice, since it is only by means of sacrifice that intercession can be made. The intercession of the Jewish priest did not consist in personal appeal, but simply in the offering of sacrifice. So, when we read of the eternal intercession of our Great Priest, we are not to think of Him, as some imagine, as continually praying and pleading on behalf of His saints. His intercession is in the sacrifice which is ever present before God, and which is ever effectual. We must not confound His intercession, or indeed His priesthood, with His mediatorship, or with the fact that He is our advocate, or, as it should more properly be translated, "patron,"<sup>1</sup> at the right hand of the Father. The mediation of Jesus is a matter between God and man, *as man*, without special rela-

<sup>1</sup> Paraclete.



tion to His saints. There is one mediator between God and man,—the man Jesus Christ. This mediation is, it is true, based upon His death upon the Cross, which, as already said, has many relations; but it has no reference to the salvation of sinners. It is that by reason of which the sun shines and the rain falls upon the just and the unjust; by reason of which those who know not God are daily fed and clothed, and all their wants supplied, and by reason of which, also, evil in the world is restrained, and its affairs progress under the control of God. Were it not for this mediatorship, God could do nothing with the world but to destroy it.

The priesthood of Jesus by far, however, transcends the primary and ideal conception of priesthood, which was stated a few pages back. He does not merely represent man before God,—is not merely an eternal intercessor, but in the fulfilment of the official duty conferred upon Him of God, He exercises active functions toward those for whom His intercession is made. His work *on behalf* of them is accomplished, but His functions *toward* them are still active. Among them are the suffering, and the sinful,—sinful still in practice, although their

sins have been judicially put away forever; unrec-  
onciled in thoughts and ways, although God has  
forever reconciled them to Himself. There are  
among them those who are weak, who are ignorant,  
and are erring. To restore, to instruct, to succor  
such as these, is the mission and the official duty  
of the Great Priest, discharged in fidelity to Him  
who appointed Him to the office. For such an  
office He is fitted by His real humanity. Hav-  
ing been assimilated to the brethren in all things,  
He is able to succor those who are tempted, for-  
asmuch as He also was tempted. He is not only  
a faithful, but is also a merciful High Priest. We  
have tried to trace His fidelity to God as manifested  
along the pathway of His earthly career. That  
same fidelity is now in exercise in His office of  
priest, and as He is faithful, He is also merciful.  
He must be merciful in order to be faithful; and  
the mercy which He exhibits, is the mercy of God-  
head itself. It is higher than the heavens above the  
earth. It is from everlasting to everlasting.

To go fully into the subject of His priesthood  
would be to write an exposition of the whole Epistle  
to the Hebrews. We must content ourselves with

reference to two of its more prominent characteristics. The first is, that it is in His resurrection life. If He were on earth He could not be priest, because His descent was outside of the line of God's ordained priesthood. God could not violate His own order. The priests of Israel were ordained in connection with a carnal commandment; that is to say, a commandment addressed to the flesh, or Adam nature of man. This commandment utterly failed to evoke good from the flesh to which it was addressed: but only proved its evil. The priestly service, with its offerings and sacrifices, which were but shadows of Him that was to come, were used of God to alleviate the condition of His people during the period of His forbearance. But this Priest, whom we are now considering, is not constituted according to any such commandment, but in the power of an endless life. These words concisely express the whole contrast between the legal relation under which those priests were ordained, and the living relation into which the Prince of their salvation has brought the many sons. His sacrifice forever settled on their behalf all question of sin. His intercession renders them constantly

acceptable before God, and gives them access into His presence ; but His active interference with them, so to speak, has reference to their new and spiritual nature. It is the building up of the new nature that it may conquer and put to death the old. The active exercise of His priestly functions towards His saints was immediately illustrated on His resurrection from the dead. The first instance was that of Mary Magdalene, who mistakenly went to His tomb to render to His dead body the last service of affection. He had then just risen. Mary's error was an error of the head, and not of the heart. She was ignorant, and Jesus there enlightened her ignorance by making Himself known to her. We have previously seen that on His death He must immediately have entered into the presence of God by His own blood. We have also seen that He must have descended into Hades, and on the third day, the day of His resurrection, led thence a multitude of captives, whom He took up into Heaven. It must have been upon His passage from the nether world to Heaven, while leading this delivered and quickened throng, that He paused to dry Mary's tears. She evidently was about to cast herself down and embrace His

feet; but He said to her, "Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended unto my Father; but go to my disciples and tell them I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God." He could not allow Mary to detain Him on His way upward; but He sent by her to the disciples the announcement of a new relationship, a relationship which until then had not been constituted. Until that hour they had received authority *to become* the children of God; but it had not till then been possible that they should be born again, and that they could really and truly call God their Father and their God. The next instance of priestly function was when He appeared to Thomas; and it is His priestly grace which meets Thomas's unbelief. On the evening of the same day on which He met Mary, He presented Himself in the midst of the disciples. He is no longer in haste, but presents Himself with the announcement of "Peace be unto you." It was a real and constituted peace which He announced,—the eternal peace which He had made by the offering of Himself. He then breathed upon them and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." This signified the impartation of His resurrection

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life, in a similar manner to that in which psychical life was imparted to Adam. But Thomas was not there, and Thomas did not believe. When again the disciples met, and Thomas with them, the Priest presented Himself in their midst, and by the presentation of Himself to Thomas, He at once and forever quelled his unbelief, even as He had dispelled the ignorance of Mary. The third instance was in His restoration of Peter. Peter had still in remembrance the fact of his denial of the Lord, and we do not hear of him, though present, taking any part in the conversation at the previous meetings of the Lord with the disciples. He returns to his former avocation, as though the Lord had never said to him, "I will make you a fisher of men." There is that in his heart which separates him from his Lord,—the remembrance and consciousness of sin; and he does not know enough of the Lord, and of His grace, to know how freely it can all be forgiven. Mark how tenderly the Priest deals with him in his restoration. He never speaks to him of his sin; He makes no demand upon him for repentance or amendment; but He touches the very centre of his heart with the question, "Lovest thou me?" Our

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translation but very inadequately gives the beauty of this conversation. In Peter's answer to the question, he uses a very different word from that employed by the Lord. He does not say that he loves Him; he does not indeed dare to say this. The word which he uses is one expressive of friendship only. The Lord repeats the question, and Peter replies in the same way. In the third repetition of the question, Jesus comes down to Peter's level and uses Peter's word,—the friendship word,—as if he would say, "Art thou indeed my friend? I must be content with that if thou hast nothing better to give me." He then, as to one who is restored and brought again into confidential intercourse with Himself, charges him with service and with duty. In Peter's career, we can see exhibited in vivid contrast the workings and failure of the flesh in the very presence of Christ before His resurrection, and the energy of the Spirit in the same weak vessel, after it had been filled with the power of God, even with the resurrection life of Christ. We mention these three instances because we believe them to be put on record as illustrative of the way in which the High Priest deals now with the ignorant, the

unbelieving, and the erring. They are full of comfort to those who would look to Christ alone, and find no resource or refuge in themselves.

The last particular concerning His priesthood which we shall notice, is that it is unto the "Age." The authorized version renders these words "forever," as it says, "Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek." The word here is, however, exactly the same as in the verse, "Thy Throne, O God, is unto the Age," and the meaning is similar. The priesthood of Jesus is on behalf of those who are weak and are in the midst of trial and temptation. Its occasion will cease when these have been brought to glory, and are no longer the subjects of temptation or sorrow. The object, therefore, of His priesthood, and the limit, so to speak, of His term of office, is the "Age." It is to bring in that crowning Age of all ages, when the Son having subjected all things to Himself, shall deliver the kingdom to God, even the Father, that God may be all in all.



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## THE EPISODE OF EVIL.

THE view of Scripture Truth presented in the foregoing pages will be highly distasteful to two classes of readers: first, to the exponents of that which is called modern liberal thought, who banish altogether a personal God from the affairs of the Universe; and, second, to the inheritors of Creeds, nominally Christian, but which are the heterogeneous accretions of centuries through which Truth and Error have been combating with varying fortunes. Our appeal is therefore to the student of Holy Scripture, who, with the simple and submissive desire to know what "God has spoken," will calmly and prayerfully investigate His inspired Word, to ascertain facts and the relations of facts; in a word, will study the Science of Scripture as men study the science of material things. This will induce the conviction that God is working on a symmetrical and comprehensive Plan of the Ages; and that into this Plan Evil has temporarily been admitted, in order that the perfections of Deity might be more fully mani-

fested, and the highest blessing of the whole Creation be eternally secured.

We do not propose to speculate concerning the Origin of Evil. It is enough that the reason why it exists, and its ultimate destruction, are explicitly disclosed in Holy Scripture. Yet there are some thoughts concerning its origin which are within permissible limits, and which may afford rest to some who are disturbed by the subject.

It has been a difficulty in many thoughtful minds to reconcile the origin, or indeed the existence of Evil in the Universe at all, with the fact that God is infinitely powerful, and at the same time infinitely good. It will help our thoughts to have before us a clear idea of what Evil actually is.

Evil is a negation. As Darkness is the absence of Light, and as Death is the absence of Life, so Evil is the absence of Good. True, its manifestations appear to us to take a positive form, just as the deprivation of food causes the very positive sensation of hunger, or the absence of certain constituents from the blood produces intense pain. But it is, nevertheless, true that sins and their effects, positive as they may seem to us, are but results of

the absence of Good. On the other hand, Good, like Life and Light, is a positive reality. Good is infinite, Evil limited. Good is eternal, Evil temporary.

We now formulate the proposition, "God is the highest Good." All realized Good proceeds from Him, but it is only in the possession of Himself that the highest blessing is experienced. It is not merely that He possesses and exercises goodness, or that He is essentially good in character, but that the highest happiness consists in the knowledge and enjoyment by His creatures of Himself. This fact is virtually confessed even by those who deny His personal existence. For instance, the late J. Stuart Mill, who adopted as an object in life the reformation of mankind, says in his autobiography, "It occurred to me to put the question directly to myself, Suppose that all your objects in life were realized,—that all the changes in institutions and opinions which you were looking forward to could be completely effected in this very instant, would this be a very great joy and happiness to you? And an irrepressible self-consciousness distinctly answered, 'No.' At this my heart sank within me; the whole foundation on which my life was constructed fell

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down. . . . The end had ceased to charm, and how could there ever again be any interest in the means? I seemed to have nothing left to live for." †

Could all the dreams of philosophy concerning the development of the race and the brotherhood of man be fulfilled, the result would still be pain. The work that men do to escape the results of evil is in itself an amelioration of those results. But suppose sickness, death, and sorrow banished from a world without God, and poverty and its attendant evils reckoned among the things of the past. That which is now ardently desired would soon cease to satisfy, and satiety would produce an anguish keener than that of want. The being supplied with pleasures up to his fullest capacity of enjoyment, in the course of years or centuries would tire of them all, and begin to gnaw his own heart with still unsatisfied longings. But God is Infinite. Let all the mysteries of the Universe be exhausted, and all the external manifestations of His Love and Wisdom be explored, the creature can still turn to Him, and find in Himself an inexhaustible supply of blessing. Quite correctly, therefore, does the Westminster

† Quoted from Mallock's "Is Life Worth Living?"

Shorter Catechism state man's chief end to be "to glorify God, and enjoy Him forever." Eternity would suffice to dry up every finite source of happiness, and leave a blank and barren eternity still beyond. But,

"Though all created streams were dried,  
His fulness is the same."

So, to him who has God for his portion, while God lives there will always be "something to live for."

God is infinitely Benevolent. While the creature's highest happiness is to glorify and enjoy Him forever, it is His object to bestow blessing upon His creatures. He is not, as He is often painted, a selfish God. The principle announced by the Lord Jesus and repeated by the Apostle Paul, "It is more blessed to give than to receive," finds in Him its highest example; it is that which lies at the foundation of His Plan of the Ages. His infinite Wisdom is called into exercise to devise means for the greater blessing of His Universe. It is in the exercise of this infinite Wisdom, carrying out the desire of infinite Benevolence, that the temporary existence of evil has been permitted. By means of this temporary permission, Heavenly Compassion, divine Self-sacri-

fice, and infinite Love have been manifested. Without it, they never could have been made known.

We may carry our proposition a step further, and say that not only is God the Highest Good, He is the only Good; since all that is Good is from Him, and must be traced back to Him.

It follows therefore that all holy beings must be occupied with God alone. Their love, adoration, and dependence for blessing must find their centre in Him. God does not need these, nor demand them for His own gratification. The self-abnegation which Jesus manifested while on earth was not a trait temporarily assumed; but in this, as much as in anything, was He the effulgence of the Father's glory and the express image of His substance,—the revelation of what God *is*. God is Love, as to the very essence of His being, and the law of love is that it delights in giving, but makes no demands. But inasmuch as giving is a higher form of blessing than receiving, it is necessary that holy beings, in order that they may know the better blessing, should give *all* back to God in entire self-surrender, in implicit obedience and adoring praise. And these must find their centre in Him, not merely because

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He is the source of all blessing, but because He alone is worthy to receive them. The order is therefore that of Infinite Goodness employing its resources for the highest blessing of the creature; and the creature responding by entire devotedness to the Giver. No thought of self or selfish desire is possible here, without turning the harmony to discord.

To God is due the absolute and entire devotion of His creatures; not only as the righteous tribute of duty, but because on no other plan is the harmony of the Universe possible, or the highest blessing attainable. Evil, therefore, in its last analysis, is simply the putting of self in the place of God. If one thought of self apart from God is allowed, Sin has entered. "Lust (selfish desire) having been conceived produces sin, and sin when it is perfected produces death." James i. 15. This is the order in which Sin entered and is progressing to its consummation. It began in the conception of a selfish aim instead of entire devotedness to God; it has progressed to the ruin we see, and will find its ultimate consummation in utter death. Death is as certainly the result of sin—the absence of Good—as corrup-

tion of the absence of life. God need not destroy sinners, for they would, if but left to themselves, "utterly perish in their own corruption." He has, however, declared his intention, preparatory to the renovation of the universe, of burning up all its offal and corruption.

Evil or sin is also defined by the Apostle Paul as including everything that is not of faith. The reason is obvious. Faith has to do with God, and self, therefore, immediately becomes of no consequence; it is put out of sight. In receiving salvation, the heart is occupied with God, because self is confessedly utterly helpless. Neither its supposed goodness nor realized evil is of any account in the matter; it is God who must be trusted entirely irrespective of these; and it is therefore God who fills the vision of the believer in the moment of his conscious reception of the forgiveness of sins. The same process is continually repeated through his subsequent history. As we have tried to show in previous pages, just so far as this principle becomes dominant; *i.e.*, just so far as he habitually puts God in the place of self, so far does his practical sanctification progress.

It is only as God is received into the heart, as the



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Giver of all blessing, that self can be thus set aside. Men have fled into the desert to escape from themselves, but have utterly failed. J. S. Mill, from whose autobiography we have already quoted, makes the sad confession that the discovery that the success of his schemes for renovating the world would not bring him satisfaction was a death-blow to his happiness. His benevolence was not self-abnegation. On the contrary his plans, when reduced to their essence, meant only self-gratification. When he found that the happiness of the world would not gratify him, "the end had ceased to charm." And such, apart from practical Christianity, is the true character of human benevolence. Mill also thought out as the result of his plans, that they would still fail to secure human happiness, for the simple and sufficient reason that self would still reign among men.

We have now, and we think indefeasibly, arrived at the conclusion that as God is the highest and Only Good, so the source and sum of all Evil is in the setting aside of God by the creature, resulting in the putting of self in the place that rightfully belongs to Him. Self-dependence separates the soul from God; self-seeking, and self-assertion make discord with the

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harmony which centres in Him who is alone worthy. It was therefore in the entrance of selfish desire that sin, which has now brought forth death, was first conceived in the Universe; that Good became absent, and the negation which we call Evil became present. But how could the entrance of selfish desire take place?

No creature can stand apart from God and in his own power. As the worlds are sustained by the Word of His Power, so angels stand in holiness by virtue of His omnipotence. And this must needs be so. If God be the Only Good, all holiness must have its source in Him. Creatures are not made to be self-dependent, else would the harmony of the Universe be destroyed. The Apostle Paul charges Timothy concerning his duties "before God and Christ Jesus, and the *elect angels*." Some angels, therefore, were *chosen* and have been sustained by Divine Power, while others have fallen. The ground we have now reached can be trodden safely only by one who knows something of the Love of God, and whose heart is in sympathy with the tenderness of Christ. In treating of this theme, mere reason will fail to give us an adequate conception of the truth; it is

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only the heart that is informed by Divine Love that can rightly apprehend it. Suppose God left an angel to stand in his own power. To charge upon God the fall of that angel would be to cut down at the root all idea of the moral responsibility of the creature to the Creator. God did leave some angels to stand alone. Their thoughts, perhaps at first a single fleeting thought, turned from God to self, and sin had entered. Shall we blame God? Men pretend to be able to stand in their own uprightness and to work out their own salvation. How much more should those who were untempted, who were created upright, whose intelligence surpasses our conception, and to whom God had directly revealed Himself have kept their first estate? Were they not responsible for their fall? If not, what man in the world is responsible for any act of his? Nor was God, having endowed them with wisdom, intelligence, and conscience, and surrounded them with holy influences, bound to put forth His direct power to sustain them. As well might one say that a father, having given to a son a farm with all its appliances, in order that he might support himself, should be bound afterward to furnish a certain

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weekly sum for his maintenance. It was necessary, in order to carry out the purpose of infinite Benevolence, that the ability of the creature to stand alone should be tested. God foreknew the result of the test.

Nor was God otherwise than infinitely benevolent in leaving these angels to stand alone. Though infinitely benevolent, He is also infinitely wise, and absolutely sovereign. The distribution of the gifts of His benevolence is made "according to His will." The lot of men in this world, apportioned by Him, varies greatly, but who can therefore complain of Him? So also with angels. Some He destined for immortality. Others He created for a certain purpose "whereunto also they were appointed," and destined them to cease to exist when that purpose should have been fulfilled. But Life is in itself a gift,—a positive good bestowed from God. Inherently, it is "worth living." Upon these angels God bestowed life, with a multitude of added blessings. Should they complain because God did not also bestow upon them immortality? As well might I complain, because, having received a free, undeserved gift of a thousand dollars, and my neighbor having

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received ten thousand, I did not receive as much as he. Even the eventual suffering resulting from their voluntary sin would not balance the good received from God, and an account made up at the end of life would show that it was still better for them to have lived. How many years or centuries of previous happiness they enjoyed before their experience of evil began we do not know. Sin is sin; the creature is responsible, and deserves punishment for his sin. But it is inconsistent with the revealed and manifested character of God that He should have created multitudes of beings with the knowledge that the sufferings of their existence would outweigh their happiness. On the hypothesis that sin and conscious suffering are eternal, the problem of Evil is insolvable. It is only when we view Evil as an episode, and understand that in His dealings even with the sinful, God, though just, is merciful and beneficent, that we can reconcile its presence in the Universe with His character.

The extent of evil in the universe is much greater than is generally supposed. It, moreover, long antedated the creation of this earth. When we read of "governments, authorities, and world rulers in the

heavenlies, who are the spiritual things of the Wicked One," we learn that a very large portion of the universe is under the sway of Satan; that, indeed, there are confederacies of worlds under his dominion. We also learn from the Apocalypse that when the crisis comes, and he is cast out of Heaven, he will draw after him a third part of the heavenly powers. We are not, however, to suppose that the effects of evil have been manifested among these heavenly beings, fallen though they be, as we have seen them in the earth. There is no reason to believe that when Satan fell he was immediately invested, according to the common superstition, with demoniac and repulsive appearance, with horns, hoofs, and tail. Doubtless on the contrary, he is still, in appearance and majesty, in wisdom and might, Lucifer, Son of the Morning. Creatures, whether heavenly or earthly, are the subjects of education. The first appearances of sin are subtle; its morality is often indistinguishable by human scrutiny from the morality of holiness. Its essence is, independence of God. As the hosts of Satan are still in the heavenlies, we are not to suppose that their sin has taken the form of open immorality. Some there were

who, before the flood, came in to the daughters of men; and we identify these as the angels who are mentioned by Peter who "rebelled in the days of Noah, being disobedient," 1 Pet. iii. 19, 20, and are "reserved under chains of darkness unto judgment." 2 Pet. ii. 4. Open disobedience called for immediate dealing. But we should rather suppose that like Huxley, the great mass of evil beings avow that though they disown God, "there is no resolve of duty, no work of mercy, no act of self-renouncement, no solemnity of thought, no joy in the life and aspects of nature that would not still be theirs." Doubtless, too, many of them speak of the possibilities of angel nature, under proper self-development. Shall we doubt that they have their ethics and their philosophies; that the argument taught to Plato by Satan, and skilfully engrafted on the creeds of Christendom is current among them,—that as the thirst for immortality is quenchless, and the processes of angelic minds require eternity for their development, they must live for ever, God to the contrary, notwithstanding? The Devil's falsehood, "thou shalt not surely die," was probably not new when propounded to Eve. If Satan has been adroit

enough to incorporate his lie in the belief of every important sect in Christendom, why should he not also have imposed it upon his angelic followers?

We must remember that we are speaking of a large portion (the Apocalypse says one-third) of the inhabitants of the worlds which revolve in space. The question at issue is, the Rights of the Individual against the Despotism of God, the democratic principle which has become so popular in these last days. As the evil angels are neither cast down, imprisoned, nor destroyed, we may conclude that God is acting toward them on the principle announced concerning the Amorites; He is delaying judgment until their "iniquity is filled up."

That this must be so, we know from the fact that one object in the creation of man was to manifest sin in all its hideous foulness, in the sight of the Universe. God has dealt with angels, as since with men, with long forbearance, and waits to execute doom until the results of self-dependence have been so made known to the Universe, as to demand its utter destruction. Had sin been revealed in its true character it would have been unnecessary for God to provide means in His dealings with mankind, "that the



offence might abound" and that "sin might become more exceeding sinful."

One purpose for which this earth was created, was that sin might be developed, so that the worlds should recognize its exceeding sinfulness, and that the justice of God might be manifested in making an end of it forever. This has been accomplished by showing in man, what the creature left to himself would become, and the futility of all efforts to restore him by training or moral suasion; and at the same time by bringing into overt action the malignity of Satan and his hosts, and thus justifying God's final judgment upon them. When this earth was created, "the morning stars sung together and all the sons of God shouted for joy;" not because an insignificant planet was added to the countless worlds already existing, but because it was understood that the question of evil was here to be settled forever.

Man was created innocent and upright. He knew neither good nor evil, and was therefore a fitting subject for the test about to be made. He was made in the image and after the likeness of God as to his sovereignty over creation. This does not infer his immortality, any more than it does his omniscience.

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His moral qualities were in perfect harmony of balance and proportion, and he had a *capacity* to live forever. He had also a "pneumatic capacity"; that is, he was so constituted as to be capable of receiving a spiritual life, in addition to the psychological one with which he was created. He was therefore perfect, but neutral. His life was capable of being perpetuated, but he was not immortal. He was upright and innocent, but not holy. Holiness implies the knowledge of good and evil, with the choice and exercise of the former and the rejection of the latter. So constituted, he was placed under responsibility to his Creator. No severe test was imposed, but merely simple obedience in a single and easy thing. It was like the exaction of a peppercorn rent for the sovereignty of the earth.

The principles of divine despotism against creature individualism, of dependence on God against self-dependence, and of obedience against self-assertion, were then on trial. To this lord of the earth came Satan, the great Liberal leader. His temptation consisted in an appeal to self-interest, and it was successful. It was now demonstrated to holy angels that the creature, though perfect, and though guarded by

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prohibition and penalty, could not stand without God. The fact is, that God is the only independent being in the Universe. Independence implies the self-contained ability to live forever. The claim for inherent immortality put forth in behalf of the human soul, implies incorruptibility. It says that God has made that which He cannot destroy. But if Omnipotence can destroy it, it must require Omnipotence to sustain it. We are speaking now, not of years, or centuries, or ages, but of eternity. Destruction is disorganization, the separation of constituent elements. Decay is incipient disorganization. That which can be destroyed at all, therefore, contains within itself the principle of decay. We talk of the "tooth of time," but how shall created and corruptible substance, whether of mind or matter, stand the test of eternity? Only that which is uncreated can be eternally self-sustaining. The word "incorruptible" is applied in the Scripture to God, and to men who have been made "partakers of a divine nature;" never to angels, Satan, or to men not born of God. Nor is immortality ever predicated of any but God, and of those to whom He has imparted the resurrection life of His only-begotten Son.

It is possible that Satan may have believed his own falsehood,—“thou shalt not surely die.” The outcome of evil was no clearer to him than to the rest of the Universe. His aims may have been phil-angelic; he knew that what was good could not perish, and may have believed the Platonic doctrine that the aspirations of his spirit were unquenchable. His doom had never been declared till the words were spoken, “The seed of the woman shall *crush* the serpent’s head.”

The penalty of disobedience had before been pronounced in the words, “In the day thou eatest thereof to die,—thou shalt die.” The idiom denotes intensity and certainty, but not immediate execution. David used the same words to Shimei, “In the day thou passest over the brook Kedron, to die—thou shalt die.” But not till long after Shimei’s disobedience was the sentence executed.

But in the special punishments pronounced upon the man and woman, a difference is made, according to the difference in their guilt. The Apostle Paul says, “Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived became a transgressor.” 1 Tim. ii. 14. Both had the common doom of death. But to Adam

it was said (and this part of the sentence appears to have been to him personally), "That *thou* shalt return unto the earth, for out of it wast *thou* taken: for dust (elemental atoms of the earth), *thou* art, and unto dust shalt *thou* return." We are reminded here that the psychical man (1 Cor. xv.) is out of the earth, earthy. Adam was created in the "lower parts of the earth." Ps. cxxxix. There his soul formed for itself a body, according to the laws of gestation, and when God brought him forth from his mother earth, He breathed into his nostrils "the breath of lives," the breath common to all animals. To assert of this merely physical action that man thereby received a portion of the life of God, is the wildest stretch of inference. Now, however, he, himself, his soul and body, were to return into the earth from whence he was taken. The personal pronoun is not used of the body alone in Scripture, though it is of the soul. The sin of Adam was wilful, intelligent lawlessness, and his doom was utter death. When he was returned to earth, it was without hope of resurrection. He was a type of Antichrist, according to Rom. v. 14: "But death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's

transgression, who is the figure of one to come." It will be noticed that the type is with special reference to the transgression. The Antichrist is pre-eminently the Lawless One, and "he goeth into destruction."

The special punishment of woman was her having to take the place of subjection to man, and the multiplication of her sorrow and her conception. Nothing in this sentence placed her outside the pale of mercy. The result of sin, it will be seen, has been to immensely increase the human race. Not the sorrow of conception, but sorrow *and* conception were multiplied. Apart from the sentence, this increase would be the natural effect of sin. It is also a merciful provision to prevent the earth from being depopulated, by reason of wars and avarice, the outcome of reigning self. This vast surplus population was also to have its use in the purpose of God. In it sin was allowed to reign that its evil might be manifested, and that the elect of God might be trained and developed by means of the contradiction of sinners. Will it be seriously argued, that because of sin, God multiplied the emanations of His own nature, and that these emanations showed inherited and inbred sin from their earliest intelligence? He

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must indeed, if this were the case, have desired to populate hell, and to find objects for His eternal and implacable vengeance. Before the flood the world must have contained an immense population. A simple calculation of natural increase, based on the then length of life, will show it to have been vastly larger than now. And the earth was filled with cursing and violence. All flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth. Were these the souls which were "immortal as their Sire"? But if immortal like Him, why not holy like Him? The two attributes are as inseparable in God's economy as sin and death.

Souls are propagated, not made. God is not conducting a factory in heaven, from which to send baby souls whenever required by physical conditions, and thus to "co-operate with the incontinence of the adulterer and the whore." Nor is He making depraved souls, to manifest, as soon as they can talk, the evil traits of their parents: When David says, "I was born in sin, and in iniquity did my mother conceive me," it was a confession of innate and inherited depravity. It is said of Levi that "he was yet in the loins of Abraham (his great-grandfather)

when Melchisedec met him." His body was not there, but his soul was, though not yet developed into separate individuality. So also, "All the *souls* that came out of the loins of Jacob were seventy *souls*." The soul of Levi, which had come down from Adam through Abraham, was one of these. The same law of reproduction—the building out of elemental atoms, of a material body by an immaterial vital principle or soul—is common to plants, animals, and man. For every seed that germinates, a hundred die. For every embryo soul that is quickened, a thousand perish.

We may thus understand how in Adam all sinned. The entire race was in him, and was developed out of him. Eve, herself, was taken out of him, as it is said that God "took *one* (rib is a fancy of the translators) out of his side, and built it up into a woman." That is, he took a vital germ—a soul—out of the body of Adam, and built up a material body.

The traits which in Adam as created, were in perfect harmony and balance, and which if centred upon God would have been holy, were thrown out of harmony by his sin, and that which would be holy, having God for its centre, became evil—*i.e.*, out of



harmony with God and holy beings—when centred upon self. This disproportion and resultant evil became more manifest with years, and culminated, as early as the second generation, in murder.

With this capital crime commenced the history of the material progress, of which the present age is so proud. It was man seeking to make the best of a cursed earth,—to be happy and comfortable apart from God. Thus the first city had its origin, and the descendants of Cain became proficient in mechanic and æsthetic arts. The world to-day, applauded and encouraged by the visible Church, is walking in the “way of Cain,” and professed disciples of Christ proclaim that this way leads to the Millennium. But, as Ruskin says, “railroads and telegraphs are not righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.” The day in which we live finds its picture in that before the flood; and its end, according to the words of the Lord Jesus Himself, will be similar.

In that early day, God reserved to Himself a seed. The names of Seth and his descendants are significant of the way in which they walked. Seth means “Foundation.” From him descended “Enos” or

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“Enosh,” signifying mortal, miserable man; a name many times applied characteristically in Scripture to the whole race. To the confessedly poor God gives freely; so the son of Enosh was named Cainan, signifying Possession. Possession leads to thanksgiving; and Cainan called his son Mahaleel, meaning the Praise of God. The son of Mahaleel was named Jared, signifying “Descent.” He was the possessor of inherited blessing. From him sprung Enoch, signifying “Consecration.” “Enoch walked with God and he was not, for God took him.” These names tell out the way of Seth, and the proper way of the believer in Christ,—a way in utter contrast to the way of Cain, both then, and as manifested in our own time. The end set before the believer is shadowed in Enoch. It is not death, but translation “that he should not see death.”

We pass over the manifestations of evil after the flood. The story is that of man, combining as now to promote self-interest, instead of seeking God. Through these ages man was left to walk in his own ways, but God had mercifully set a limit to his evil by shortening the term of human life. At length he called *one man* (Abraham) out of the universal

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corruption, and made him and his seed the subjects of absolute promise. The descendants of this man were separated from the rest of mankind, and successively subjected to legal enactment, to moral suasion, and disciplinary judgments. The law "entered from one side," but only with the effect of causing "the offence to abound." Self-dependence, self-interest, self-gratification, with all their evil results, were only brought more fully into view, and culminated in the murder of the Son of God. But Israel was the subject of absolute and unconditional promise, and the Jew shall yet be "the praise of God."

Cotemporaneously with this history of Israel, Satan tried his hand at the development of humanity. The culture of Greece, its philosophy, art, and religion of demon worship, were his. To Plato he dictated the doctrine of the immortality of the human soul, and in Socrates counterfeited the divine ethics of Jesus Christ. The Roman Empire foreshadowed the dominion which he will yet assume over the earth. And all these three,—the self-righteousness of the Jew, the self-culture of the Greek, and the self-aggrandizement of the Roman, met at

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the Cross, and united in the crucifixion of the Son of God. "And the superscription (upon the Cross) was in letters of Hebrew and Greek and Latin."

Just here, it is proper to notice that while the moral nature of man was being tried, the problem of human government was also being solved in the sight of angels, preparatory to the enthronement of Jesus as king over the whole earth. In all God's dealings with mankind, the evil has patiently been allowed to develop, before God has applied the remedy. When the failure of all human government has been made fully manifest, the rightful king will take His place upon the throne of David. When Israel had failed under Judges and Kings, God sent the nation into captivity, and conferred dominion upon Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon. From him all earthly empires now existing within the limits of the prophetic earth trace their descent, as foretold in the dream of the king, interpreted by Daniel. The dreamer saw an image with head of gold, breast, shoulders, and arms of silver, abdomen and thighs of brass, legs and feet of iron, and toes of mingled iron and clay. The interpretation of the prophet was, "thou, O King, art this head of gold." The

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government of Nebuchadnezzar was an absolute despotism, and this God typified by the most precious of metals. God's idea of government is absolute autocracy, but an autocracy which implies self-abnegation on the part of the ruler, and implicit obedience on the part of the governed. With a properly qualified ruler, seeking only the good of his people, this is the highest ideal of government. It is authority, in place of self-will; a centre of dutiful obedience harmonizing and preserving all interests, instead of self-assertion and compromise of interests. The maintenance of rightful authority and dignity is very different from the seeking of the personal benefit of the ruler. In such a government, there is no self-seeking, either on the part of the monarch or his subjects. Such is a type of the Divine Government. The assertion of self-interest on the part of either ruler or subjects, is fatal to the harmony of the whole. When, therefore, Nebuchadnezzar began to exalt himself, God sent him out to graze with oxen, and when he was restored to his throne, his self-exaltation was gone. The values of the metals of which the image was composed, signify God's estimate of the value of the succeeding gov-

ernments. The breast and arms of silver represented the monarchical oligarchy of the Medes and Persians,—a government in which power was largely shared with the nobles. The abdomen and thighs of brass represented the dominion of Greece, a military and intellectual aristocracy. The iron legs and feet represent the Roman Empire, Eastern and Western,—a democratic imperialism, stamping the nations to pieces. The ten toes, of mingled iron and clay, represent the nations now formed or being formed from the territory comprised in the Roman Empire. They are of mixed monarchy and democracy,—the latter the most incoherent and unstable of all human governments, but praised in this age as the perfection of them all. The assertion of Self in man has worked the decay of empires, and now shows itself in republics, which, from the working of self-interest in districts, neighborhoods, and individuals, must inevitably fall to pieces. In the United States there is less respect for law and authority than in any other civilized nation the world has ever seen; and it is on the decrease. The tendency is to universal democracy; and this the world calls “progress.” Its result would be universal disintegration and anarchy,

but that it is soon to be arrested. The "stone cut out of a mountain without hands" is to strike the feet of the image and destroy it, and it will then "become a mountain and fill the whole earth." The Lord Jesus is the stone,—that which is rejected by the builders,—disallowed indeed of men but chosen of God and precious, the tried and sure and precious foundation-stone; every one believing in whom shall not make haste.

The ancient document called the Book of Daniel has been faithfully verified by the course of history down to the present time. That part of it which relates to Israel is written in Hebrew, and that relating to Gentile dominion in Chaldee. Its antiquity is undoubted. In it, under other figures than the Image, are faithfully depicted the characteristics of the successive empires of earth; and the fulfilment of its prophecies is faithfully progressing toward completion. We have referred to it here, because it shows how self, the principle of evil, has been developed and manifested in the history of human government, as well as in the moral history of man. There is absolutely no hope for the political future of the race, except in the setting up of a wise, powerful,

and beneficent despotism; and this is the promise of Scripture to the oppressed and toiling millions. Satan, like the first and third Napoleons, is a professed "friend of the people." He sets before them as the fulfilment of their hopes "a government of the people, by the people, and for the people." But, like earthly potentates, he is intensely selfish. Like the Napoleons, his democratic views will result in seizing supreme power for himself, incarnated in the Antichrist. From this tyranny the world will be delivered by the personal advent of the Son of God.

Concurrent with the history of evil upon the earth, a heavenly history of good has been progressing. Step by step, as the former has been manifested, the latter has been brought out to meet it.

No man on earth could be found to do the holy, complete, and perfect will of God. Then said the Son, "Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do Thy will, O God." The successional epochs or ages, during which the problem of evil was to be worked out, were planned and constituted of God. The Son, having received His appointment as Heir of the Universe, became at the appointed season the self-emptying One, took the



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servant's form, was found in condition as a man, and thus met upon the designated arena, the earth, the Prince of Evil. It was as David, descending into the valley, armed only with the pebbles of the brook (a symbol frequently used in Scripture for the Word of God) to encounter the Philistine giant, while from surrounding heights the hosts of good and evil awaited the result of the combat.

Entire self-abnegation, perfect obedience, and unwavering faith in God, characterized the Second Man. Self-abnegation, in its truest and highest sense, is, as already intimated, an attribute of Deity. It is this which claims self-abnegation on the part of the creature. The same self-abnegation which belongs to God as Ruler was displayed in Jesus as the Subject. In this, as in His holiness, mercy, and truth, was He the brightness of the Father's glory, and the exact image of His essence. In this, His character shone in exact contrast to that of man, as developed during the ages prior to His advent. In opposition to His presence and teachings, Satanic and human self-will reached their climax.

The Cross was the crowning development of Evil, both in angels and men. When just about to die,

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Jesus said with reference to His death, "Now is there a judgment of this world, now shall the ruler of this world be cast out." John xii. 31. The self-seeking of Satan, plausible and moral at first, and carried out by wiles and sophistry, was now to reveal its true character in the murder of God's Son. Not that he desired Jesus to die,—far from it,—but he had exhausted every effort but this to overthrow the faith of the Son of Man. Would He not, in the presence of utter death, forsake His place of self-abnegation and self-surrendering trust, and fall back on self-dependence by resorting to His own divine might? To this end was shouted in His ear when left alone and helpless under the load of guilt which He had assumed, and the hiding of His Father's face, "Destroyer of the temple, and builder of it in three days, save Thyself. If Son of God Thou art, come down from the Cross! . . . He saved others, Himself He cannot save. Is He the king of Israel? Let him now descend from the Cross, and we will believe on Him. He trusted in God; let Him rescue now if He delights in Him, for He said, 'I am God's Son.'" Matt. xxvii. 40-42, 43. But all Satan's efforts failed. The shout of victory, "It is

finished," proclaimed the triumph of feeble but trusting humanity over the concentrated might of confederated worlds.

It is written of Jesus, that "He cried aloud with tears to Him who was able to deliver Him out of death, and was heard *for His devotion.*" Heb. v. 7. There was entire self-surrender, absolute and implicit submission to the Father's will, and perfected obedience. Thus man vindicated by the obedience of faith his right to the possession of the earth, which man, by the disobedience of unbelief, had betrayed to Satan.

But what was the result of this victory as toward Satan? Simply this, that it demonstrated his guilt, and sealed his doom. God has not dealt arbitrarily with the problem of evil. He dealt with it on the principle of forbearance, till the sinfulness of sin was fully manifested; and this was accomplished at the Cross. Satan, like many another murderer, seeking his own selfish aims, had only succeeded in committing a crime. And this was the Crime of crimes; the most gigantic and heinous possible. Now was made manifest in the sight of the Universe the justice of God in the destruction of all evil. From that

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hour its extirpation was judicially and morally assured. No work remained to be done; only the simple fiat of God was necessary to carry the judgment into effect. This was the "purification of sins" effected by the Heir of All Things. His work assured the elimination of all evil from the entire Universe.

But the Son had a special and higher object than merely the cleansing of the Universe. God's purpose was to reveal to His intelligent Creation treasures of Love and Wisdom, which they had never before apprehended. A New Race of beings was to be brought into existence, through whom this purpose should be accomplished. In the wisdom of God, He did not choose angels, whose intelligence and might would seem to make them worth saving, but chose human sinners instead. The selfishness of Man, with its developed evil and utter impotence for good, had now been shown. Now the way was prepared for absolute and free mercy and grace to be bestowed. There was no place for these, so long as any room was left for self-assertion on the part of man. But now he was brought in guilty, and shown to be utterly helpless. In the counsels of eternity, the Father had given to the Son a great multitude

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which no man can number. The sins of these were laid on Him while hanging upon the Tree. They were transferred to Him, and He assumed them as His own. In the words of quaint old Christmas Evans, "Justice called upon Holy Fire to descend and consume the sacrifice. Holy Fire descended; it would have consumed His humanity, but when it touched His Divinity it was extinguished." But when that Holy Fire went out, it had consumed the sins that were laid upon Him. They were gone forever; nor shall they ever be found or brought into the light again.

When these sins were made an end of, the Great Priest, like the high priest of old, who entered, not without blood, into the Holiest of all once every year, went before the Throne of God, bearing the evidence of the completion of His work. He carried up with Him a single trophy,—a thief who had hung upon a cross beside Him, justly dying for his crimes,—to whom He had said, "To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise."

By His perfected self-surrender, also, the Son of Man vanquished him that had the power of Death,—that is, Diabolos, or the accuser. Till then, as the inevitable consequence of sin, all the subjects of

God's promise, toward whose sins He was exercising forbearance until the Seed should come, had been compelled to submit to Satan's power. They did not "depart to be with Christ, which is far better;" but well knew that they must descend into a place of silence and darkness, where there is neither knowledge nor remembrance nor giving of thanks; where the dead know not anything. But their sins also had now been laid upon Jesus. The sting of Death is sin; and death without his sting is powerless. It was sin, which gave the accuser power to hold these souls in his prison-house. As in the case of Job, he stood at the bar of God with his accusation, and justice remitted these souls to his custody. Thus they actually died, and through fear of death were throughout their whole lives subject to bondage. When, however, sin was made an end of, Justice was satisfied, and the Devil was thus deprived of his power. He was vanquished,—“brought to nought,”—“rendered powerless.” Jesus went into the prison and led out and up a multitude of captives. Since then no saint has died. To depart and be with Christ is not to die.

But the Cross has still other aspects. It laid a

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foundation on which God could exercise mercy toward, and bestow blessing upon the whole race of man. The vilest denier of the Lord Jesus Christ draws every breath and receives his daily bread on account of the blood which he despises. The sun shines and the rains descend upon the just and the unjust, because Christ has died. In this relation, He stands as the "One mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus."

The Cross also made, judicially, an end of the present earthly Cosmos, or "order of things." Hitherto, God had been dealing with man on the hypothesis that there was something in him which would respond to His love. The final response of the world was the crucifixion of the Son. This simply demonstrated the incorrigible evil of the human heart. We do not mean by this that all persons are alike in sinfulness, or even in original sin. Propensities are less developed, elements of character less inharmonious in some than in others. There are some who still seem, in our sight, morally beautiful in the midst of surrounding ruin. Such was the young man of whom it is written that looking upon him, Jesus loved him. But when the test—one that may

truly be called crucial—was applied to his character, it was shown that Self, and not God, reigned there. He was called upon to give his riches to the poor; and he went away sorrowing, for he had great possessions. So self-love lies at the basis of all human character. It is incorrigible and ineradicable. It needs but temptation and absence of restraint to develop into hideous moral evil. This was demonstrated at the Cross. Angels could now see that no training, not even God's, could change the tiger into a lamb. Do what you would, the tiger was there still, and even though for a time he became lamb-like, he only needed to be left alone to relapse into tigerish ways. The verdict went forth from the Throne, "There is none righteous, not even one; not one understands, not one seeks out God; they are all turned aside, they are together unprofitable; none does good, not even one." This is God's estimate of every descendant of Adam. Not, as we have before said, that all are alike in developed iniquity; but that in all self-love has taken the place of God-love; and the intrinsic character and inevitable result of this principle was demonstrated in the slaying of the Son of God.



It is an old and true saying that "Man's extremity is God's opportunity." The culmination of evil was made the occasion for the display of the exceeding riches of Divine Grace. Prophets had foretold the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow, but they never hinted of the nineteen centuries that have now elapsed between the sufferings and the glory. Nor did they dream of the mystery which had been hidden from ages and generations, but which God had reserved for this parenthesis in prophetic history,—the mystery of the New Creation. That concealed purpose was, that from the grave of Jesus Christ should spring a New Race, partakers of a holy and incorruptible nature,—even the resurrection life of the Son of God. The Old had been demonstrated worthless. God was now to reveal the New.

The company thus saved have in the New Testament their special designation as the Church of the First-Born. The adjective is plural, belonging to the members of this Church. They constitute together the Church of the First-Born Ones. In Heb. xii. 22, 23, the relations into which these saved ones have been brought, in contrast with the circum-

stances connected with the giving of the Mosaic Law, are thus particularized: "You have come unto Zion, a mountain and city of the Living God,—the heavenly Jerusalem; and to myriads of angels—a full assembly; and to the Church of the First-Born Ones, having been registered in the heavens: and to a Judge, God of all; and to spirits of just ones having been perfected; and to Jesus, Mediator of a new covenant; and to the blood of sprinkling, speaking a better thing than Abel."

As in the resurrection of the just, "every one in his own cohort,"—so now in these cohorts of angelic myriads, and perfected righteous men, the Church of the First-Born is seen to have its special place.

The world has been proved morally worthless. Judicially it has come to an end. The sufferings of Christ have been completed and His victory won,—why, therefore, is the glory delayed? He has been here, giving sight to the blind and deliverance to the captives, but "the day of vengeance of our God" is still deferred. The course of prophetic history *waits*, while God is executing a purpose, hidden hitherto, and far above the thought of the highest angel who has watched the plan of the ages. That purpose is,

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the overstepping of the hitherto declared limits of mercy, in the salvation of Gentiles and Jews upon one common basis, and the incorporation of both into the "one body,"—the corporate Christ, which in the ages to come is to be the expression to the Universe of the riches, both of the Wisdom and Love of God.

The age, during which this purpose is being fulfilled, is unique. It was neither foretold by prophets nor anticipated by angels. The Sun of righteousness set in blood on Calvary, and has not yet risen on the world. Satan, though brought in guilty of the supremest crime, is still alive and active. Evil, though judicially annulled, still exists. The world, judicially ended by the Cross, still goes on in the way of Cain. It builds cities, it heaps up wealth, it searches the mysteries of Nature and boasts its boundless ambition as sufficient reason why it should endure forever. Its toils and pleasures, its politics and philanthropies, its enterprises and religions, go on with tenfold the energy of the days of Cain.

But it is a dead world. Dead, as the criminal is judicially dead, when the key has been turned in the cell-door, that is not to be opened again until he

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is taken thence for execution. It is condemned, because it has not believed in the only-begotten Son of God. It is past amendment and past reprieve. The day of execution, unknown either to men or to holy angels or to Satan, is imminent, and has been momentarily impending for nearly nineteen hundred years.

This present age is therefore declared to be the "evil day," the "night,"—the "darkness," the "last hour." Its close will be marked, according to the prophetic words of Paul and John, with an outbreak of *religious* evil corresponding to the outbreak of *moral* corruption which characterized the days before the flood.

But this failure of the race gives opportunity for the highest display of God's infinite Benevolence. Sovereign mercy is being freely bestowed on those who are dead in trespasses and sins. *Sinners* are being saved by *grace*. Those who are morally dead are being made alive together with Christ; being made one with Him in His resurrection life. Thus is being formed the Body of Christ, the developed fulness of Him who filleth all things in all. Thus is being constituted the Bride of the Lamb, whose

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life is developed out of the Second Man, as Eve was out of the first. Thus is being built of living stones the Temple, of which Jesus Christ is the Head of the Corner, and in which God shall dwell forever.

Those who are thus being saved, were given by the Father to the Son, in the counsels of eternity. They were redeemed unto God by the Son. They are now being quickened into union of life with the Son by the Holy Spirit. The principle upon which they realize their salvation is that of faith, which takes for nothing that which God gratuitously gives. The power of their walk on earth is faith, which ignores self entirely, and rests in God alone. The fruit of their life is that of faith, which crucifies the flesh and its works, and brings out into manifestation divine attributes, growing on the stalk of feeble humanity. Their path on earth is that of humiliation and rejection, where Jesus the Captain of their salvation walked by faith only. Their Hope and His are one. When God brings again the Son into the world with the fiat, "Let all the angels of God worship Him," they are to be glorified together with Him.

This Church of the First-Born, it will be seen,

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therefore, is distinctly heavenly in its standing and relationships. It is now looked at of God as "seated in the heavenlies in Christ." Its life, as to its source and power, is at the right hand of God, and is "hid with Christ in God." Christ is now hidden from the world which rejected and slew Him, but "when Christ our Life shall be manifested, then shall we also be manifested with Him in glory."

The manner of their salvation is after that of the thief upon the cross. He died with Christ, and was made alive together with Him. When he thus died he had done with his old self. He had also done with the world. His interests thenceforward lay only on the *resurrection side* of the grave of Christ. He was crucified to the world, and inasmuch as the Cross of Christ was the condemnation of the world, the world was crucified to him. So the Apostle Paul glories in the Cross of Christ, by which, as he says, he is crucified unto the world, and the world unto him. "I am," he says, "crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."

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Such is God's estimate concerning His saints. As the thief on the Cross *really* died with Christ to the world and the world unto him, so the saints are considered of God as having died, and are called upon so to reckon themselves. But not only so, they are also risen with Christ, by virtue of the new life which they possess, communicated from Him, as the First-Born of the Dead. They have, therefore, so far as all questions of their standing and interest go, done with this present Cosmos; and have become constituents of another, which is not earthly, but heavenly; the law of which is "not imputing their trespasses unto them;" and in which "all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ."

They have thus two natures, an earthly and an heavenly,—flesh and spirit,—one derived from the first man, out of the earth, earthy, who was a living Soul; the other from the Second Man, the Lord out of Heaven, who is a life-giving Spirit. The one is mortal, the other immortal. The one is sinful, the other holy. The impartation of the new nature does not render the other quiescent, but the contrary; for the "spirit lusteth against the flesh, and

the flesh against the spirit, and these are contrary the one to the other." Hence the young Christian is often troubled by finding evil propensities which he hoped had been subdued, more active and virulent than ever. But for this God has provided a remedy. It is not in self-consecration, self-examination, self-conquest, or in anything else that begins with self. It lies first in the actual possession of a "divine nature" in and through which the same power which raised Jesus from the dead works mightily in us to will and to do of His good pleasure; and, second, in the fact that the old nature is according to God dead and done with, and set aside forever; never to be accounted of any more. "How shall we, who have *dic'd* unto sin," says the Apostle, "live any longer therein? . . . Our old man was crucified with Him that the body of sin should be rendered nugatory, that we may no longer be enslaved to sin; for he that is dead is justified from sin." Rom. vi. 2-6, 7. The "body of sin" alias "the flesh"—alias "self" is no more actually dead than Satan is; but it is like him, judicially dead. The death of Christ—our death with Him—has annulled and set aside all that bundle of selfish desires and



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aspirations which is called the "old man"; as truly as in the case of the thief upon the Cross. He that is *dead* is justified from sin. By the death which I died with Christ, I am eternally separated from it. I, who live, in whom, rather, Christ lives,—left it on the other side of his grave. Perhaps my consciousness does not correspond to this statement,—what then? God says that the old man is *dead*, and whom am I, that I should dispute God? But though I am made dead to sin by the Cross of Christ, sin is as yet by no means dead to me. But so long as I do not make it allowance nor give it place, I know it can never harm me. God says I have died to it. It cannot make me guilty, nor destroy my peace with Him. If I willingly permit it, then trespass is produced, which must be confessed and forgiven, in order to the restoration of my conscious peace with God. The actual peace—that which Christ constituted upon the Cross—it cannot touch, because that in no wise depends upon me, but was made and constituted independently of any act or volition of mine.

The power of God working in and through the new nature, and the divinely declared abrogation of

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the old, must both be apprehended in the way of faith. As this comes to pass, God takes the place where self had hitherto reigned; the believer learns how to practically "put to death" "his members which are upon the earth;" and to the despondent cry, "Who shall deliver me from this body of death?" will come the answer, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

The Church of the First-Born, considered as an institution, is not earthly, but heavenly. Its inception, its relationships, and its destiny are heavenly. It does not belong to that order of things of which the Mosaic Law was a part. It has to do with the New,—not with the Old. A minority of its members are on the earth, which is the appointed scene of their service and discipline, but they are constantly departing "to be with Christ;" and thus joining the great body of the Church. As they depart, their places are taken by others, whom God has called out from the surrounding moral death; and this process must go on till the number of the elect has been completed, when the Head and the members are to be manifested as one body, in glory. The Hope of the Church, therefore, is not the con-

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version of the world, but the coming again of its Lord and Head. Nor are its efforts directed to the improvement of the world which is dead, decaying, and about to vanish away.

It is One Body, and is "seated in the heavenlies in Christ." None of the voluntary organizations which call themselves churches of Christ represent it or correspond to it. It was at first shown upon the earth as a living organism, whose functions were those of life, not of office; of which Christ was the acknowledged Head, and of which the Holy Spirit, in recognized presence, was the only earthly sovereign. This was placed in charge of men, to be maintained and kept pure; but, like everything committed to men, it was soon spoiled. They could not spoil the heavenly Church: God had taken care of that; but its earthly representative no longer exists. The associations which profess to represent it, and which claim to possess divine authority, are mere human societies, whose organization is founded on human self-will,—whose offices ~~are~~ filled by human election, instead of by the sovereign appointment of the Holy Spirit. They form a mass of incoherent sects, whose highest thought

of oneness is alliance, not homogeneity ; those who claim to be "The Church," being most sectarian of all, by very reason of that claim. We do not write this in bitterness, but with great tenderness of heart toward the beloved Christians who are within the pale of these organizations. It is a matter for thanksgiving that all such belong to the true church in the heavenlies, and that all the present adventitious connections will by and by drop away from them.

Great error and spiritual poverty result also from the all but universal failure to recognize the heavenly standing of the true Church. "If," says the Apostle Paul, "our glad tidings be veiled, it is veiled by the things that are done away, by which the god of this age hath blinded the minds of them that believe not." <sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. iv. 3. Satan was termed by the Lord Jesus before His death, the "ruler of this *world*" (Cosmos); but over this present *age* he exercises a more comprehensive sway,—he is its

<sup>1</sup> *Ἐν τοῖς ἀπολλυμένοις.* The Apostle in the previous chapter has been speaking of the veil on the hearts of the Jews, consisting of "the things done away." The pronoun *τοῖς* here refers to *those*, not to the unbelievers. The change substitutes a clear statement, in harmony with the context, for the awkward and involved rendering of the A. V.

*god*. It is now the *religion* of the world that he has taken specially in hand, and he will in due time claim and be accorded divine honors. He now takes the things of the earthly Cosmos; things good in themselves, and ordained of God for a purpose now fulfilled, and makes of them a veil, to hide the light of the gospel of absolutely free, unconditional salvation, bestowed on absolutely helpless sinners.

The Law of Moses, which "entered from one side"—*i.e.*, was brought in to serve a temporary purpose—"that the offence might abound," is thus used to veil the gospel of Christ. In itself "holy, just, and good," it was a reflection, though only a reflection, of the holiness of God. It was addressed to human nature, as such; that is to say, to "the flesh"; hence it is called a "carnal commandment." It served its purpose when it brought to light and demonstrated the offence. The whole order of things to which it belonged came to an end at the death of Christ. A new "Cosmos," or order of things, was instituted in His resurrection; and of this new order the believer is a part. He is therefore to live, not according to a carnal command-

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ment, but in the power of an endless life. He is not to sin, *because* he is not under law, but under grace. The pattern and the power of his obedience are not in a Code, but in a Person. This Person is to occupy his heart and control his life. The "carnal commandment" is out of place here. It was not made for the new nature, and the old is to be reckoned as dead. The Apostle Paul exhorts the Colossians, "Let no one spoil (make a prey of) you, through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, *according to the elements*<sup>1</sup> (or constituents) *of this Cosmos*, and not according to Christ." How perfectly this characterizes much of modern theology! The vain philosophy of Greece, the traditions received from a corrupted Church, and the elements which make up this present earthly order of things form the sum of modern religious beliefs. The Apostle advances as a reason why Christians should not be "spoiled" by that which is according to the elements of *this* world, that they died with Christ, and have been made alive with Him. Therefore he says, "Let no one

<sup>1</sup> Peter uses the same word (*στοιχεῖα*) in a physical sense. The "elements shall melt with fervent heat."

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judge you in food or in drink, or in respect of a festival or of a new moon or of Sabbaths, which are a shadow of things about to come, but the body is Christ's." These things,—eating and drinking, festivals, new moons, the Sabbath day itself, all belong to the world to which you died with Christ. But *the body* is Christ's. You are members of that risen body ; your concern, therefore, is with your relationships in and to that body ; not to the things which belong on the world's side of His grave. This reasoning is further enforced by the question, " If you died with Christ from the elements of the world, why, *as though living in the world*, are you subject to ordinances ?" (" touch not," " taste not," " handle not," etc.) It seems as if nothing could be plainer than this, " You don't live in this world, you died to it with Christ, and you live in Him,—therefore do not be subjected to ordinances according to the commandments and teaching of men." We have thus hurriedly traced the teaching of the second chapter of the Epistle to the Colossians. The opening of Chap. iii. sums up the matter. " If then you are risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God.

Mind the things above, not the things on the earth. For you died and your life has been hidden with Christ in God. When Christ our Life shall be manifested, then shall you also be manifested with Him in glory. Put to death therefore those members upon the earth; fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry."

This last list forms a sad picture of the moral constituents of the merely psychical and earthly man. These are the members of self, and the description is of man in essence. But the force of the exhortation lies in the statement that the position of those addressed is no longer earthly, but heavenly. The *things on the earth*, refer not merely to vanities or sinful pleasures, but to all the elements which compose the present order of things,—its religions, its politics, its philosophy, its ambitions, its wealth. From all these you, like the saved thief, are separated by the Cross. In the Epistle to the Galatians (iv. 9) the apostle characterizes legal observances, based on the Mosaic Law, as "weak and beggarly elements," and he specially refers to the observance of days and months and seasons and years.

It will have been observed that the Sabbath was



included with eating and drinking, new moons and festivals, as a thing about which the Colossians were not to allow themselves to be judged. This fact most forcibly illustrates the truth that the Christian has been taken out of relation to the present world, and made a member of a new creation. God saw that His work was very good, and rested on the seventh day and hallowed it. But when sin entered, God could no longer rest in creation. The Sabbath was again given to Israel, as a special distinction from other nations (to none of which, by the way, was the Decalogue *ever* given). When the Son of Man came, He deliberately, repeatedly, and apparently without necessity, *violated* the Sabbath day. Such was His action in walking through a field of grain on the Sabbath, with His disciples, and they rubbing the ears in their hands and eating. On that occasion He announced Himself as the *true* Sabbath, in opposition to that which had become worthless, by reason of the world's being no longer a fit resting-place for God. "Come unto Me," He cries, "all ye that are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." God could no longer rest in a sin-corrupted world, but did rest in His Son, and the weary and

heavy-laden are invited to rest there too. When the Pharisees raged at Him because of His working on the Sabbath, His reply was, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I *work*." That is, when sin entered God ceased to rest in His creation. As He had worked six days in creating the world and then rested in His work, because it was very good, He must now work again to bring in a New Creation. God never patches up that which is defaced. Out of the affluence of His resources, He replaces that which is Old with the New. In the salvation of sinners, He does not repair the old nature. The words of the hymn,

"His hands infected nature cure,  
With sanctifying grace,"

are entirely untrue. He does not cure that which is infected, but He makes "a new man in Christ Jesus."

The trouble with Sabbath observance is, that it takes that which is the special sign and stamp of the Old, and makes of it a veil to hide that which is New. The Christian needs to be occupied with Christ, and to find his rest in Him. Just so far as this is the case will his whole life be a Sabbath,

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because his thoughts and resultant actions will be all "unto the Lord." What need is there of a Sabbath to one who can say, "For me to live is Christ"? But this is the standard, and the only standard, of Christian living. As to his time, he is directed to redeem it—to *buy it back*—for the service of Christ, because "the days are evil." This is the Evil Day, and all the days in it are evil; and that day is most evil of all which, originally hallowed to commemorate God's rest in His good work, is now used to hide from the believer the truth that "if any man be in Christ Jesus,—a *New Creation*; the old things have passed away; behold, *all* things have become new."

Thus, in a special sense, the observance of the Sabbath on the ground of the Fourth Commandment, is a virtual annulment of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. If one day of the week is still holy time, the old things have *not* passed away, all things have *not* become new. God still finds rest and satisfaction in a defiled creation, and the death and resurrection of Jesus were unnecessary.

We dwell upon this, because the freedom, happiness,

and true usefulness of the believer are dependent upon his deliverance from the "law of commandments contained in ordinances," and upon his knowledge of his true standing in Christ Jesus, in resurrection life. He is *now* "come to Mount Zion, the City of the Living God;" but he cannot be there and at Sinai at the same time. The controversy between the Lord Jesus and the Pharisees was almost entirely on the question of Sabbath observance. In the whole New Testament there is not one word of command or exhortation to keep the Sabbath, while there are many passages of contrary tenor. The reformers and Christian ministers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Luther, Zwingle, Calvin, Doddridge, Baxter, and many others, held the view here advocated. The "American Sabbath," so called, is an inheritance from the fierce Puritans of Cromwell's day; who took the Old Testament, rather than the New, for their guide; and who fancied themselves in the place of Israel, with the same mission to slay the unbelievers.

As really as the dead thief on the Cross, the Christian has done with all the elements which make up this present world. One of these elements

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is the Law of Moses. This was addressed to the flesh (and only to Jewish flesh, at that, since it was expressly stated, by Paul at Lystra,<sup>†</sup> that God had left other nations to walk in their own way); but the flesh is called of God dead; and the believer is therefore freed from the Law (see Rom. vii.). Another of these elements is human philosophy,—the wisdom of this world,—which values man very much above God's estimate of him, and has prearranged a very different destiny for the race from that predicted in God's Word. These two elements, the Pharisee and the Sadducee of modern times, join to hide the light of the Gospel of the Grace of God. For the present, God suffers it; but His purposes of mercy and grace are steadily advancing to fulfilment through it all, and in spite of all.

We must still briefly notice the religious aspect of the age in which we live.

The church of the First-Born is heavenly; but as we have already noticed, it was at first represented as the earth by a body of believers, who were to manifest its principles among men. This Church was recognized and accredited by the descent of the Holy

<sup>†</sup> Acts xiv. 16.

Ghost in visible manifestation, and by miraculous gifts possessed by its members. The maintenance of these principles was committed to this visible Church. The Sun had gone down, the night had set in, but the Church was left as a secondary light "to rule the night." The Holy Spirit was its sole ruler; its principle of cohesion was that Christ was all and in every one, thus setting self aside entirely; its testimony was to the Person of Christ, the saving grace of God, and the constantly expected return of its Lord. The maintenance of all this was committed to the fidelity of its members themselves.

When the infant Church was first born into the world, Satan was filled with rage at this new and unexpected manifestation of the wisdom of God. As Herod thought to slay the infant Jesus, so he endeavored to destroy the infant Church by the fires of persecution. Failing in this, his next step was one of consummate cunning. *Satan joined the Church*,—not, indeed, in person, but by his emissaries. Not, of course, the true Church of the First-Born, seated in the heavenlies in Christ, but its visible representation on the earth. Into this he introduced his own chosen men, energized by his own power. When, therefore,

the seed of truth first came to life on the earth, the tares were seen springing with it. Then was it said, "The enemy hath done this," and the tares were recognized as the children of the Wicked One. The population of the earth is now made up of three classes, viz.: 1st, the children of men, composing the irreligious world at large. 2d, the children of God, who are born of God, and possess a real and immortal life in addition to the mortal life derived from Adam; and, 3d, the children of the Devil, who are possessed and energized by him. The two latter classes make up the professedly religious part of Christendom. The true and the false, like the wheat and the tares, have an outward resemblance. One, however, trusts and exalts Christ, while the other trusts and exalts Self. From the latter you will hear much of the dignity of Human Nature, and of the material and moral progress of the race. The one grows from incorruptible seed, while the other contains within itself the principle of inevitable decay and death.

The religious history of the Evil Day has been sketched by the Lord Himself in the series of parables contained in the thirteenth chapter of the Gospel

of Matthew. The parable of the Sower mentions the sowing of the good seed only. That of the wheat and the tares, above alluded to, tells of the admixture of evil seed with the good. In the next, the visible Church is seen as a great tree having sprung from a very small seed, but it has become the home of evil things, of which the birds of the air are a constant type. Next, the pure meal of which the Levitical meat-offering was composed, is mingled with leaven, an invariable symbol of evil, which was not allowed to touch the altar of God. The mixing is done by a woman, the symbol of ecclesiastical authority. The effect of leaven, if allowed to go on to completion, is corruption. The whole mass of the pure meal becomes thus corrupted. History shows that these prophetic parables have been fulfilled. The Tree of nominal Christianity now overshadows the area of the Roman Empire, which is the bound of the prophetic earth; and it is the home and the shelter of all conceivable evil. It embraces the Romish and Greek Churches, with the myriads of falsehoods and corruptions which, in different countries, flourish under the name of Protestantism. The leaven which the visible Church inserted



in the pure meal of God's truth has corrupted the whole body of truth. In the sixteenth century, God raised up Martin Luther to testify to the truth of salvation freely given, and received only in the way of simply believing the Divine testimony. With him a great multitude of the saints went out from the Romish Church, and were persecuted unto death by the children of the Wicked One. But where is there now any church which proclaims the truth of "justification by faith" as Luther held and taught it? We do not know of *any*.

Apostolic prophecy foretells the consummation of all this. The Apostle Paul writes to Timothy, his beloved son in the faith, "But know this, that in the last days perilous times shall come, for the men shall be self-lovers, money-lovers, boasters, haughty, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, devoid of natural affection, implacable, accusers, without self-control, fierce haters of good men, treacherous, rash, self-conceited, pleasure-lovers rather than God-lovers, having the form of godliness, but having denied the power thereof." 2 Tim. iii. 1, 5.

The concluding words point out those to whom these epithets are applied. They have the *form* of

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godliness. They are therefore *professors* of Christianity,—the children of the Devil, who will ultimately, should the return of the Lord be delayed much longer, possess and control all of the organizations which now call themselves Christian churches. Very many New Testament Scriptures fully set forth and confirm this truth; but space forbids us to quote further.

All that is said in the Christian Epistles about evil, has reference to its rise and progress *in the Church*. The world is reckoned as dead and done with. “What have I to do with them that are without?” exclaims the Apostle Paul, “God judgeth them that are without.” But it is *in the Church on earth*, which God constituted pure and holy, that evil has arisen and will develop till the end. It is, as to the world, the Night and the Darkness. There is no question as to finding good there. That was settled at the Cross; and the whole order of things was set aside to await destruction; God meanwhile calling out of it the objects of His sovereign grace. But it is with the failure of the light which was left to shine in the darkness, till the Sun should return, that the Christian Scriptures have to do. Those who bear the Name

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of Jesus are to be judged at His return on the basis of their profession.

To earnest and thoughtful Christians, the condition of the Protestant churches at this day is a subject for most solemn consideration. It is declared by some such, that without a great increase of vital piety over that now apparent, the churches, so far from converting the world, must in a short time cease to exist. In their worldliness, carnal philosophy, and denial of the faith once delivered to the saints, one looks in vain for a trace of the lovely organism which stood on the day of Pentecost, as the Bride of Christ, endowed with all the graces of the Spirit.

From present indications the day is not far off when Satan will in the Heavenlies assume the insignia of Divine authority, drawing after him a third part of the heavenly powers. Rev. xii. 3, 4. They will be cast down to the earth, which will then come entirely and manifestly under the rule of Satan. He will seat his own representative on the throne of the Cæsars, who will also, as God, receive divine honors in the Temple of Jerusalem. Christendom is now preparing to receive and welcome him. The tide of modern religious thought is setting in that direction.

His appearance will be the climax of culture, civilization, and moral progress, which men are now eagerly anticipating. But the Son will rise up from His temporary session on the right hand of the Majesty on high, and come with His saints to vindicate His title to reign. The Antichrist shall be "consumed by the spirit of His mouth, and destroyed by the brightness of His presence." Satan himself shall be seized and committed to prison. The door of the "pit of the abyss" shall be opened, and the Enemy thrust therein, under sentence of confinement for a thousand years.

But before then, the sleeping saints will have been raised incorruptible, the living saints changed; and all "caught up in clouds to meet the Lord in the air," and will be seen coming with Him "in the Glory." Their bodies of humiliation, subject to corruption, will have been put off, and their spiritual bodies, like unto His own glorious body, have been put on. Then will the Son be seen as the First-Born, among many brethren, all conformed to His likeness. Then shall the fiat go forth, "Let all the angels of God worship Him," and the Universe shall resound with His praise. Then shall the Son take up, at the head

of the innumerable host of the redeemed, the song, "In the midst of the Church will I praise Thee."

But this is but the first step in bringing the Episode of Evil to an end. Hitherto, since He judicially made an end of sins forever, the Son has been seated on the right hand of God, subordinate, expectant; waiting for the decree which is to place His enemies beneath His feet. That decree is to be announced, in the words, "Thy throne, O God, is unto the Age." He takes His seat upon the throne, which has been set up for the express purpose of bringing in the Age of the Ages,—the dispensation of the fulness of times,—and proceeds to put all enemies beneath His feet.

The problem of evil, once settled, is to be settled forever. Therefore God has not dealt hastily with it. Its full hideousness must be manifested. Force has not been used, nor punishment inflicted, till they have been clearly shown to be necessary and just. Even now, though Satan has been found guilty of a capital crime, and though he has in most flagrant rebellion assumed equality with God, his final punishment is yet delayed. He is only shut up in prison for a thousand years,—a long time to such an insect as man; but only a brief span in his history.

During these thousand years Christ will rule, not only in the heavens, but also as the Seed of Abraham, the Son of David, and Messiah of Israel, over the whole earth. He will occupy the throne of David; and the law shall go forth from Zion, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem. His rule will be an absolute and firm, but beneficent, despotism. Judgment will have been executed upon the children of the Devil. He himself will have been rendered powerless. The empires and republics of the earth will have been dashed in pieces, as a potter's vessel with a rod of iron, and all rule and authority and power shall be centred in Christ, the King of Kings. Under this absolute dominion great blessing shall prevail upon the earth. The nation of Israel, gathered into their own land, having been tried and purified as gold in the furnace, shall be a nation of saints, all of whom, from the least to the greatest, shall know the Lord. All nations shall go up to Jerusalem to worship. The duration of human life will be greatly prolonged. There shall be no more wars nor fightings; even the natural ferocity of brute beasts shall be subdued. Among the Gentiles, the Gospel of Christ will be preached with great success, and vast

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multitudes shall be saved with an everlasting salvation. Will it not be thought that all men, under such an experience of blessing, would become heartily loyal to Christ the King? Surely, is not this the Golden Age of which poets and philosophers have dreamed, when the good that is in man shall have opportunity for unimpeded development, when length of life and opportunity for culture unhindered by poverty or pain shall bring out into manifestation all the majestic possibilities of the human soul? We shall see.

At the end of the thousand years Satan will be loosed from his prison, and the restraint upon the nations be taken off. Then shall Satan go forth to deceive them. As nothing will make man good, so nothing will make him permanently happy. The gratification of his selfish desires brings ultimate misery, and he chafes under absolute, though beneficent authority. So the nations will respond to the wiles of Satan, and they will gather together for war, in number as the sands of the sea, and encircle the camp of the saints, and Jerusalem, the beloved City. God's answer will be their utter destruction. Fire shall descend from heaven and consume them. The

Devil himself shall be cast into the lake of fire, whither the beast and the False Prophet have preceded him.

The setting up of the Great White Throne which immediately follows the suppression of this final rebellion, is the exhibition of God in His holiness. "Our God is a consuming fire." In His presence, Evil Things and Evil Persons must be utterly destroyed. So all that remains of Evil, both persons and things, beings and systems, material and immaterial, physical, psychical, and spiritual, are said to be cast into the lake of fire. The evidence of this consummated judgment will remain forever in the presence of the Universe, just as it is said concerning the destroyed city of Bozrah, in Idumea, that "its smoke ascendeth up for ever and ever." <sup>1</sup> In that lake of fire, "Death, the last enemy, shall be destroyed." Hades, the place of darkness, must pass away also, for "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all;" and all the Universe shall now be light.

Upon the Cross, Jesus has reconciled all things to

<sup>1</sup> For fuller remarks on the lake of fire and brimstone, and the eternal condition of those who are cast therein, see the following essay on "Eternal Punishment."



Himself, both things on the Earth and things in the Heavens. As the result of this, all things, both things on the earth and things in the heavens, will be gathered together under one head in The Christ. The relations instituted at the Cross between the Creator and the creature will then be fully effectuated.

As the era in which we are living, commencing with the crucifixion of the Lord, and ending with His return in glory, is described in Holy Scripture as the Evil Day; so the thousand years beginning with the judgment of professing Christianity, and culminating in the destruction of all Evil, are called the "Day of the Lord," and the "Day of Judgment." It will end, according to the Apostle Peter, in the destruction of the present material universe. "But the present heavens, and the earth, . . . being kept for fire unto a Day of Judgment." 2 Pet. iii. 7. "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief, in the which the Heavens shall pass away with a *rushing sound*, and the elements, burning intensely, shall be dissolved; and the earth and the works therein shall be burned up." Ibid., verse 10. "The heavens, being on fire, will be dissolved, and the elements burning intensely will melt." Ibid., verse 12. So also it is said

concerning the Heavens and the Earth, "they shall perish, but Thou remainest, and they shall all become old like a garment, and like a mantle Thou wilt *fold them up*, and they shall be changed." Heb. i. 11, 12. Also, in the Apocalypse, the visible Heaven is seen "disintegrated,<sup>1</sup> being rolled up as a scroll." Rev. vi. 14. The picture presented is that of the worlds rushing from their orbits upon their suns, and these blazing centres whirling with a mighty rushing sound upon the central sun of all, and thus burning together. Thus will they be "folded up," "rolled up as a scroll," and "dissolved with fervent heat." The whole material universe has been polluted by the fact that sin has existed in any portion of it, and it must be purified by fire, reconstituted and reorganized. This grand conflagration, we believe to be the Lake of Fire into which all evil persons and things are to be cast. Material fire cannot destroy immaterial life, but the frown of God and the material fire will act simultaneously. The material universe is but the garment of the spiritual. Like a garment, it will be folded up and thrown aside.

<sup>1</sup> Ἀποχωρίζα, translated in Acts xv. 39, *departed asunder*, one from another. See also Is. xxxiv. 4.

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As the spiritual universe is to be reconstituted under the Headship of Christ, free from every taint of evil, so also there will be a material New Heaven and a New Earth, in which dwelleth righteousness. Not mere creature righteousness, but the righteousness of God shall fill the infinitude of space. Throughout its height and depth and length and breadth, Love will reign eternally, as the power of government and the principle of obedience. There shall never anywhere be a sin or a sorrow or a tear, for God has declared, "Behold, I make All Things new;" and the answer comes, "It is done." Satan, the Accuser and Tempter, Death and Hades, the devouring and never satisfied, the Beast and the False Prophet, emblems of all political and moral opposedness to God, shall have perished in the general conflagration. More than this, Self, which though wounded to death on Calvary, has been active and virulent, Satan's greatest aid, will have perished also. God will be the centre of all affection and of all desire; and in the enjoyment of Him, His creatures shall experience infinite and eternal blessing.

What, then, has been gained by the temporary admission of Evil into the Universe?

God has been glorified, and His whole creation has been blessed. Angels, principalities, and powers in the heavenlies, have seen evil in its full development. Their holiness consists in its intelligent rejection by them, and the intelligent and earnest choice of God instead as their portion forever. They have also seen and admired the justice of God in the punishment and destruction of the wicked, and have watched with wonder the goodness and long-suffering with which He has dealt with them. They have seen the mercy of God bestowed in wondrous fulness upon the helpless and the vile. In all these things, they have discovered heights and depths in the character of God which they had never before explored.

Much of this they had understood before the death and resurrection of Christ. But God's purpose included a yet higher manifestation of His love and wisdom. This purpose was hidden from ages and generations; and only came into view when, after the resurrection of Christ, resurrection life was imparted to those who were manifestly dead in trespasses and sins. It was then, for the first time, evident that "if any man be in Christ Jesus, there is a New Creation;

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the old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new, and all things are of God."

In the bringing into existence of a new order of beings, distinct from and far above all God's previous creations, the plans of infinite Wisdom carried out the purposes of infinite Love. This wisdom and love are now being revealed to governments and authorities in the heavenlies; and will, in the ages to come, continue to be revealed through the Church. This New Creation is the expression to the Universe of the mind and heart of God. His love is in the first place displayed in His "exceeding kindness" toward such creatures, and His wisdom is shown in raising them from their low condition to that of regnant glory. And through these, who have been raised from the very lowest estate, will God tell out to all eternity the story of what He is. The Son is the "brightness of His Glory, the express image of His substance." They are constituted one with Him in glorified immortality. As their immortal life is derived from Him, He is the Head, and they the members of One Body, which is the developed and manifested fulness of "Him who filleth all in all."

Well may the Apostle Paul echo the prophetic words, "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard the things that God hath prepared for them that love Him." But it is also true that "God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit." And these things can only be apprehended by spiritual persons. It is because too often mere psychical reason has been applied to their discussion that they are so little known, even to the saints of God.

Those who have received and apprehended these things, become by this very fact strangers and pilgrims on the earth. It is but reasonable that one to whom Heaven is a near reality, who expects to be in a few months or years raised to a place of highest exaltation in the Universe, should be occupied with his permanent destiny, rather than with the temporary affairs about him. The ambitions and excitement of men become very little in his eyes. For that high station, too, he knows that his training-place is down here. He is to be fitted—by suffering it may be—that he may reign. Therefore, to grasp that for which he also has been apprehended,—to gain the full knowledge—the *Epignosis*—of Christ, will be an object beside which the pursuit of wealth,

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power, or any of the objects which minister to mere personal happiness, will seem small and contemptible. Besides, the knowledge of his present standing as one who is of the kindred of the Son of God, will lead him to walk after the pattern of Jesus on the earth. From the very moment of his first look of faith to Christ, self, with all its virtues and all its sins, was set aside forever. Holy living will result, not from external command, but from an inner life, nourished and built up by the Head. He who has Christ, the whole fulness of the Godhead bodily, to draw from, and who knows himself complete in Him, can well afford to be abundant in all good works.

The common thoughts concerning God's dealings with man, and the latter's part in his own salvation, cannot afford any such stimulus to holy living, and true, unselfish benevolence, as those which God has thus put before the believer. The power of true obedience is not in the self-consecration so much vaunted nowadays; that is, in giving one's self to God; but in the heart-realized knowledge that Christ is already ours, by the free and unmerited gift of God the Father. Nor can it avail to give ourselves to Him, since that gift was made by the Father to the

Son, before the worlds were made. The apprehension by faith, of the immutable fact, that Christ is ours and we are His by eternal decree, is one thing. To seek to rise up to a better or happier religious condition by giving ourselves, by an act of volition, to Christ, is quite another. In the one case, the believer receives everything for nothing, and responds by a holy life, as naturally as the flower responds to the sunshine and the rain. The other sets aside the work of Christ, in one of its most important aspects, and puts human volition and human effort in its place. Evil begins and ends with self. Good begins with God, and its fulness is in God for evermore.

Both the religionist and the rationalist reject the truth of the destruction of all evil. The thought of the native immortality of the soul is very dear to them both. It is here that the professor of religion and the avowed infidel meet and clasp hands on common ground. They labor alike for the amelioration, improvement, and exaltation of a supposedly immortal race. The writer a few years since heard a Presbyterian clergyman declare from his pulpit, in explaining Christianity to a large number of converts then being received into his church, that he



believed that Plato and Zeno and Socrates, and other heathen philanthropists had gone to heaven, because they worked for the good of their fellow-men. Thus the object of the Christian and the infidel has become one and the same.

But the teaching of the Holy Scriptures is but a true form of the doctrine recently advanced under the title of the "Survival of the Fittest." Man is not fitted to live forever. Eternal life, with the full gratification of his selfish desires, would, in the course of ages, make him unutterably miserable. Take, for illustration, a very common instance, a man now passing the confines of middle age, whose life has been devoted to the acquisition of wealth. He is moral, frugal, industrious, very correct in all the relations of life, and prudently benevolent. He has been successful in the pursuit of wealth, and he cannot stop the pursuit, because he doesn't know what else to do. His character is fully crystallized; he has no other dominant desires. He is too old to acquire new and higher tastes. Will his character, think you, be changed by the mere fact of passing into another state of existence? Such a change would be nothing less than a change of identity.

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He cannot continue to amass wealth forever, if even that were possible in the future state, for the time must come when he would be satiated to the point of anguish, and utterly tired. The same is true of science, of art, of all sources of human enjoyment. Nothing can entirely satisfy, but God. But the majority of men have no appreciation for God, and they do not want Him. They are willing to patronize Him once a week, but an eternity in His presence would be, to their conception, dreary enough. To such, immortality would be nothing but a curse. While, therefore, God has chosen out of the race certain persons from the class known as sinners, and has endowed them with a special fitness to survive, He does not perpetuate a race whose immortality would be only misery. But though He does not bestow on men a gift for which they have no use, He deals with them in great beneficence. Life, though not immortal, is in itself a gift for which to thank God. The blessings of His Providence are constant and abundant. To the benevolent, the moral, and the philanthropic, virtue is its own reward. Men are happier for living such lives, but they are not thereby entitled to immortality. Eter-

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nal life is the gift of God. It is absolutely free to "whomsoever will," but it cannot be purchased. The Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, is lifted up in the sight of men. The proclamation has gone forth that "Every one believing in Him, shall not perish, but have eternal life." "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." "Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely." Men turn from this proclamation. The world treats it with contempt. The visible Church has hidden it beneath a veil of tradition. Since, then, it pleases God to make this proclamation effectual to "whom He will," who shall find fault with Him?

Those who, by the grace of God, have been called out of this present evil world and born into a New Creation, are, in a most important sense, workers together with God in carrying forward His plans. To them He has intrusted the manifestation of Good in the midst of Evil; of Light in the midst of the Darkness. So far as their practical ways manifest the fruits of the holy nature of which they have been made partakers, just so far is God vindicated and honored. Every earnest, faithful Christian is a source of joy to holy angels, to the Son who died

for him, and to the Father who chose him in Christ before the world began. He is the living embodiment of Christ's victory over sin, the demonstration of the wisdom and love which are carrying out through the Ages the Divine Plan to its consummation. It was for this reason that the Apostle Paul numbered among the objects, for the attainment of which he bent his utmost energies, "the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ," and to be "made conformable to His death."

By death and resurrection the believer is separated from the world, and unto God. The Christian can therefore properly take no part in those schemes which have for their avowed object the reformation of the world. Yet, as one who lives no longer to himself but unto Christ, his ways will be full of practical beneficence. As he has freely received, he will freely give; and the mainspring of all his actions will be that "it is more blessed to give than to receive."

But, in order to such a life, it is necessary that the heart be occupied with Christ. No effort of the will can set self aside. It is only when the sun rises that the fog leaves the valley. It is only when Christ enters that self is expelled. The earnest

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effort of every believer should therefore be, to know more of Him. By the intercourse of the closet through the Word and prayer; by constant trust in spite of all that seems contrary; by the cultivation of a simple, childlike, obedient faith, shall the believer rise to the sublime heights of realized fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. The object of this book is not religious controversy, but to so unfold to Christians the true relations into which the grace of God has brought them, as to make them possessors of the blessing and the usefulness which are properly theirs.

Our opportunity is but brief. Human life itself is but brief. In the days of John, the beloved apostle, the "last hour" had already set in. Its darkness has ever since been growing denser. At any moment the glimmer of the Morning Star may herald the sunshine of a new day. Till then, there are lives to be lived, seed to be sown, victories to be won, crowns to be gained—for Eternity.

## ETERNAL PUNISHMENT.

THE saintly Archbishop Whately, in his lecture on Rewards and Punishments (Future State, Eighth Lecture), writes as follows. His statement of the subject is so clear and forcible that we quote at length :

“The Scriptures do not, I think, afford us any ground for expecting that those who shall be condemned at the last day as having wilfully rejected or rebelled against their Lord, will be finally delivered ; that their doom and that of the evil angels will ever be reversed.

“What that doom will be, whether the terms in which it is commonly spoken of in Scripture—‘death,’ ‘destruction,’ ‘perishing,’ etc. (see Matt. x. 28 ; Rom. vi. 21, 23, etc.)—are to be understood figuratively, as denoting immortal life in a state of misery, or more literally, as denoting a final extinction of existence,—this is quite a different question. It is certain that the words ‘life,’ ‘eternal life,’ ‘immortality,’ etc. (see John v. 21, 29 ; xi. 25 ; 2 Pet. iii. 7 ; 2 Cor. ii. 15, 16, etc.), are always applied to the condition of those, and of those only, who shall at the last day be approved as ‘good and faithful servants,’ who are to ‘enter into the joy of their Lord.’

“‘Life,’ as applied to their condition, is usually un-

derstood to mean 'happy life.' And that theirs will be a happy life we are indeed plainly taught; but I do not think we are anywhere taught that the word 'life' does of itself necessarily imply happiness. If so indeed, it would be a mere tautology to speak of a 'happy life'; and a contradiction, to speak of a 'miserable life'; which we know is not the case, according to the usage of any language. In all ages and countries, 'life,' and the words answering to it in other languages, have always been applied, in ordinary discourse, to a wretched life, no less properly than to a happy one. Life, therefore, in the received sense of the word, would apply equally as well to the condition of the blest and the condemned, supposing these last to be destined to continue forever living in a state of misery. And yet, to *their* condition the words 'life' and 'immortality' never are applied in Scripture. If, therefore, we suppose the hearers of Jesus and His Apostles to have understood, as nearly as possible in the ordinary sense, the words employed, they must naturally have conceived them to mean (if they were taught nothing to the contrary) that the condemned were really and literally to be 'destroyed,' and cease to exist; not, that they were to exist forever in a state of wretchedness. For they are never spoken of as being kept alive, but as *forfeiting* life: as, for instance, 'Ye will not come unto me that ye may *have life*:' 'He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath *not* life.' And again, 'perdition,' 'death,' 'destruction,' are employed in numerous passages to express the doom of the condemned. All which expressions

would, as I have said, be naturally taken in their usual and obvious sense, if nothing were taught to the contrary.

“That these expressions, however, are to be understood not in their ordinary sense, but figuratively, to signify an immortality of suffering, is inferred, by a large proportion of Christians, from some other passages: as, where our Lord speaks of ‘everlasting punishment,’ ‘everlasting fire,’ and of being ‘cast into Hell, where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.’

“This last expression of His is taken from the book of the prophet Isaiah (lxvi. 24), who speaks of ‘the carcasses of the men that have transgressed, whose worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring to all flesh’: describing evidently the kind of doom inflicted by the Eastern nations on the vilest offenders, who were not only slain, but their bodies deprived of the rites of burial, and either burnt to ashes (which, among them, was regarded as a great indignity) or left to moulder above ground, and be devoured by worms.

“From such passages as these, it has been inferred that the sufferings, and consequently, the life of the condemned, is never to have an end. And the expressions will certainly bear that sense; which would perhaps be their most obvious and natural meaning, if these expressions were the only ones on the subject that are to be found in Scripture. But they will also bear another sense; which, if not more probable in itself, is certainly more reconcilable with the ordinary meaning of the words



destruction,' etc., which so often occur. The expressions of 'eternal punishment,' 'unquenchable fire,' etc., may mean merely that there is to be *no deliverance*—no revival, no restoration—of the condemned. 'Death,' simply, does not shut out the hope of being brought to life again; 'eternal death' does. 'Fire' may be quenched before it has entirely consumed what it is burning; 'unquenchable fire' would seem most naturally to mean that which destroys it utterly.

"It may be said, indeed, that supposing man's soul to be an immaterial being, it cannot be consumed and *destroyed* by literal *material* fire or worms. That is true; but no more can it *suffer* from these. We all know that no fire, literally so called, can give us any pain unless it reach our bodies. The 'fire,' therefore, and the 'worm' that are spoken of, must at any rate, it would seem, be something figuratively so called,—something that is to the soul what worms and fire are to a body. And as the effect of worms or fire is, not to *preserve* the body they prey upon, but to consume, destroy, and put an end to it, it would follow, if the correspondence hold good, that the fire, figuratively so called, which is prepared for the condemned, is something that is really to destroy and put an end to them; and is called 'everlasting' or 'unquenchable' fire, to denote that they are not to be saved from it, but that their destruction is to be *final*. In the parable of the tares, our Lord describes Himself as saying, 'gather ye first the tares, and bind them in bundles to *burn them*; but gather the wheat *into my garner*;' as if to denote that the one is to be (as we know is the practice

of the husbandman) carefully preserved, and the other completely put an end to.

“We must not, indeed (as I have already said), venture to conclude at once, from our conviction of the divine goodness and power, that evil will ever cease to exist; since we know not how to explain the existence of any evil at all. We can only say there is some *unknown cause* for it; and that it is a foolish presumption to think of assigning a limit to the effects of an unknown cause, except where revelation guides us. But when we are told that Christ is to ‘reign till He shall have put all things under His feet,’ and that ‘the last enemy that shall be destroyed is *death* ;’ this does afford (as I have already observed) some ground for expecting the ultimate extinction of evil and suffering, by the total destruction of such as are incapable of good and of happiness. If ‘eternal death’ means *final* death,—death without any revival,—we can understand what is meant by ‘Death being the last enemy *destroyed*,’ viz. : that none henceforth are to be subjected to it. But if ‘Death’ be understood to mean everlasting life in misery, then, it would appear that Death is never to be destroyed at all; since, although no one should be henceforth *sentenced* to it, it would still be going on as a continuous *infliction*, forever.

“On the whole, therefore, I think we are not warranted in concluding (as some have done) so positively concerning this question as to make it a point of Christian faith to interpret figuratively and not literally the ‘death’ and ‘destruction’ spoken of in Scripture as the doom of the

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condemned ; and to insist on the belief that they are to be kept alive forever.'"

There is no intimation in Holy Scripture of the immortality of the soul, except as united to Christ. The entire doctrine of man's inherent immortality and endless suffering, with the eternal duration of evil, rests upon the inferential construction placed upon some eight texts. Against the construction placed upon these words—a construction which none necessarily, and most do not even reasonably bear—there are several hundred passages in which the utter destruction of evil persons and evil things is explicitly stated ; and a multitude of others in which life and immortality are declared to be the special gift of God, and the portion of the believer in Jesus. To support the inferences drawn from these eight "punishment" texts, as they are called, it has been found necessary to consider as figurative a vast number of the clearest and most explicit statements which can be formed by words. The admission of such principles of interpretation has led to endless theological disputes, has been the cause of manifold error and confusion, and has caused the denial of some of the most important truths of Rev-

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elation; such, for instance, as the Church's hope of her Lord's return; the doctrine of *actual* regeneration, and many others. Around the doctrine of regeneration by an actual new birth, clusters the whole system of Christian doctrine. With this, the truth forms a consistent and harmonious whole; without it, it becomes a mass of disconnected, sometimes unintelligible, often apparently meaningless, statements. This truth understood, Evil is seen to be merely an episode in the history of the Universe, and to have been made the occasion of blessing to the whole creation; the doctrine of God's sovereignty to be in harmony with the fact that He is Love, the Cross seen to have higher and broader relations than we could ever otherwise have conceived, and the Son of God invested with His highest glory as the head of a New Creation. The plain, unequivocal declarations of God's Word, in hundreds of passages from Genesis to Revelation, declare this doctrine and its correlated facts. But if the inferences drawn from the eight passages above referred to be correct, all these must be set aside. Evil and sorrow are then seen as having entered a once happy universe, never to be expunged, but to con-

tinue, even under the sunshine of God's love, to flow as a river down the ages eternally, with ever-increasing hatred of God and intensity of anguish. The sovereignty of God, which, according to the plain statement of His Word, has chosen some as vessels of mercy and others as vessels of wrath made up for destruction, then becomes the fiat of pitiless Omnipotence, consigning to unending, unappeasable, frightful, and ever-increasing anguish all but comparatively few persons among the vast populations, past and present, of the earth. If this be true: if, indeed, it is taught in the Word of God, we must accept it, and in dumb reverence wait for Him to explain in His own good time what seems to us so infinitely cruel and monstrous. But the gentlemen who call themselves "ambassadors for Christ" assure us that this *is* the teaching of God's Word. The fact that they can eat and sleep and laugh, shows that they do not realize what they are teaching. They *think* they believe it, but they do not. No man with a spark of humanity in his bosom has a right to believe such a doctrine and not become insane. The man who could really believe it, without being utterly crushed, is worse than Nero or

Caligula. The effect of this teaching has, therefore, been to drive many thoughtful and sensitive persons into the ranks of disbelief. To this, more than to any other cause is to be attributed the vast growth of practical infidelity with which three out of four non-religious people are tinctured, and with which the churches themselves are permeated. Just now, many whose attention has been called to the subject, who do not wish to let the Bible go altogether, have taken refuge in Universalism in some one of its many forms,—especially that called Restorationism. Hence, within the past few years, the outgivings of such teachers as Henry Ward Beecher and Canon Farrar. Their following among professed Christians is immense. An Episcopalian clergyman a few years ago avowed to the writer his belief in Restorationism. To the question, “But how can you hold such a belief, and still be a clergyman of your Church?” he replied, “Oh, that is my private and personal belief; of course, in my official capacity, I am bound to teach what the Church teaches.” Doubtless there are thousands like him. The rejection of the dogma of eternal torment is creditable to the human sympathies of such persons,

at the expense of their honesty; but their restorationist creeds show them to be anything but familiar with the Bible. No careful, intelligent, and submissive student of Scripture can be any kind of a Universalist, any more than he can be a Unitarian. Not only is there no ground in Scripture to sustain any such belief, but its teachings are most explicitly against it. The fire that destroys is eternal, the judgment is irrevocable, the destruction utter, or words fail to convey any meaning whatever.

Let us recur now to the question involved in Archbishop Whately's lecture. "Is the usual construction of 'eternal torment' placed upon the eight 'punishment' texts a valid one, and must all the declarations of God's Word concerning life, death, and immortality be considered figurative?"

To answer this question, we will first try to see exactly what these eight texts *do* teach, and will afterward look at a few other passages concerning the destiny of the saved and lost.<sup>1</sup>

The text most often and triumphantly adduced to prove the eternity of suffering and evil, and as a

<sup>1</sup> The remarks on these texts are mainly condensed from the very full and able discussion of them contained in "The Question of Ages," by William Morris.

consequence the innate, inherent immortality of the human soul, is Matt. xxv. 46. "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

What is punishment? It certainly does not necessarily mean torture. Punishment by torture is regarded as belonging to the barbarous ages, and is very rarely practised in countries which call themselves civilized. The modern judicial idea of punishment is deprivation. The criminal is deprived of his money, his liberty, or his life, according to the heinousness of his crime. Now in this passage there is an antithesis. Both the life into which the righteous enter and the punishment awarded to the wicked are eternal. There can be no doubt about that. The Greek adjective is exactly the same in both cases. But there is a contrast between *life*, on the one hand, and *punishment*, on the other. Whatever, therefore, the punishment consists of, it is not life, but something which is meant to be contrasted with it. Turning now to our Greek Testament, we find that the word here translated "punishment" is "*Kolasis*." Reference to the lexicon shows that the idea of torture or prolonged



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suffering does not attach to this word at all. It simply means "cutting off, excision, the act of cutting off or pruning." So then we arrive at the exact meaning of this sentence. The righteous are to go into eternal life; the wicked into eternal excision. They are to be eternally cut off,—but from what? Why, from *life*, the portion of the righteous. The contrast is between possession and deprivation. That of which the righteous are possessed and of which the wicked are deprived, is *life*. But were there any uncertainty about the meaning of this passage, the word punishment would be defined by other texts, such as "they shall be punished with *everlasting destruction*," "they shall utterly perish in their own corruption," "they shall be as though they had not been," and many others.

The next passage we will notice is the parable of Lazarus and the rich man in hell. Luke xvi. 19–31. In the first place, there is nothing whatever which intimates in the faintest degree that the condition of things therein described is eternal. The time of the parable was that then present; hence, of course, anterior to resurrection and to judgment. The actors in the scene are represented as *embodied*, and the rich

man as suffering physical torture. The construction commonly put on this parable would teach that the resurrection is past already, since both righteous and sinners are endowed with material bodies. It would deny the truth elsewhere stated, that "the Lord knoweth how to reserve the unjust unto a day of judgment to be punished," and would thus place the infliction of the penalty before the assize. If we accept the ordinary theological interpretation, that this parable teaches the destiny of the good and bad at death, it could at the most only refer to the intermediate, not the eternal state, of the dead; and would support the Romish doctrine of purgatory, rather than the Protestant doctrine of eternal suffering. In seeking the explanation of this parable we must look at the subject of our Lord's discourse in which it occurs. The Pharisees believed that the measure of a person's earthly prosperity was the measure of God's favor toward him, and the indication of his fate after death. Linked in with this belief was their doctrine concerning Hades.

A full statement of this doctrine will be found in Josephus's "Discourse to the Greeks concerning the Jewish doctrine of Hades," which the reader may

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find, if he chooses, in the latter part of any edition of the works of Josephus. The doctrine, in brief, was as follows: that Hades was a place in the underworld, divided into two portions, separated by an impassable gulf. One of these places was lovely with flowers and verdure, and filled with all manner of delights; and this was called "Abraham's bosom." The other was a place of torturing fire. Into Abraham's bosom went the rich and prosperous, therefore presumably good, after death; and in the place of fire, the poor and despised, therefore presumably bad, were tormented. The inhabitants of these two places were able to see and communicate with each other, but could not pass to each other across the gulf.

The Lord Jesus was contradicting the evil belief of the Jews that earthly prosperity was the seal of righteousness, and the indication of the favor of God. To emphasize His teaching, He took up and used as an illustration this superstition, adopted by the Jewish Rabbins from the heathen theories of Elysium and Tartarus. He reversed the places which the Pharisees would have given to these two men, placing the poor beggar in the bosom of Abraham

and the rich man in the tormenting flame. The whole scene of the parable is laid in Hades, in the heart of the earth. "And in the Hades, he lifted up his eyes, and saw Lazarus in Abraham's bosom."

Now the Lord certainly did not mean to teach that there is such a state of things existing in the heart of the earth: that the good go when they die, not to heaven, but down into the subterranean place which the Jews called Abraham's bosom. But this *must* be the force of his teaching if this parable be understood as descriptive of the future punishment of the wicked. He did not mean to teach that the spirits of the dead are immediately re-embodied, and are the subjects of physical enjoyment or suffering. His illustration most forcibly condemned the evil ideas of the Pharisees; but to treat it as more than an illustration, is to contradict all the other teaching of Holy Scripture concerning not only Hell, but Heaven also. Hades is a place of darkness, silence, and unconsciousness,—where there is no knowledge nor device, a "land of darkness and without any order." From it, the Lord Jesus delivered at His resurrection the souls of the righteous

who had saluted the promises afar off, who were persuaded of them and embraced them. With all its remaining inhabitants, it will by and by be cast into the lake of fire, and be utterly destroyed.

Another "punishment text" is Mark ix. 43 to 48 inclusive. We translate literally, "And if thy hand ensnare thee, cut it off; it is better for thee to enter crippled into THE LIFE than having two hands to depart into the Gehenna, into the inextinguishable fire, *where their worm dies not, and their fire is not quenched.* And if thy foot ensnare thee, cut it off; it is better for thee to enter THE LIFE lame, than having two feet to be cast into Gehenna, *into the inextinguishable fire, where their worm dies not, and their fire is not quenched.* And if thine eye ensnare thee, pluck it out; it is better for thee to enter one-eyed into the kingdom, of God, than having two eyes to be cast into the Gehenna of fire, where their worm dies not, and their fire is not quenched."

The portions of the above passage which are printed in italics, lack the authority of the best Greek manuscripts. They are not found in the Vatican manuscript. They are marked as doubtful by Griesbach, and expunged by Tischendorf.

The place called Gehenna, very improperly translated "Hell" in the New Testament, was a very different place from Hades, translated by the same word. Gehenna was the Valley of Hinnom, also called Tophet, outside of the City of Jerusalem. In it Sennacherib's army of fifteen thousand men were slain in one night. The heathen, and subsequently the Israelites, there made their children pass through the fire to Moloch. Josiah, when he reformed Judah, made this glen an abomination. Into it were cast the dead bodies of criminals and beasts, there to rot. To prevent the putrescence from creating a plague, huge fires were continually kept burning. There the worm rioted on corruption and the flame was continually fed. No better illustration of the doom of the wicked could be found, and none could more graphically portray their *utter destruction*. It corresponds to the words of Peter, "who shall *utterly perish in their own corruption*." Isaiah predicts concerning the Valley of Hinnom, that it shall be a "valley of slaughter" when the Lord comes to put His enemies under His feet. "All flesh" shall then go up to Jerusalem to worship, and "they shall go forth (saith Jehovah), and shall look upon the *car-*

*casses* (literally, *dead, putrefying carcasses*) of the men who 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." Isa. lxvi. 24.

It is hard to see how the doctrine of human inherent immortality and eternal misery can be constructed from this passage. If it proves the immortality of anything, it is of crawling worms and putrefying carcasses. The Lord uses Gehenna as an emblem of the doom of the wicked. He places it in contrast with entering into *life*, and the unquenchable fire and undying worm show the irreversibility of the doom. Certainly it does *not* teach that worms are immortal, nor that what is represented by death and putrefaction is eternally living and conscious.

The testimony of John the Baptist concerning the Messiah, that "He will thoroughly purge His floor and gather the wheat into His garner, but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire,"—Matt. iii. 12,—is also adduced by the advocates of the doctrine of inherent immortality.

The image is drawn from the practice of Oriental

agriculture. The chaff was driven by a fan into a fire, which constantly consumed it, and the wheat was carried into the granary. John compares the saints to wheat, and the sinners to dry, dead chaff; *refuse*, fit only to be consumed. But because the fire is described having the quality of inextinguishableness (*asbestos*) it is inferred that the chaff (which it is not only to burn, but to burn *up*, *i.e.*, *consume*) is *indestructible*. The teaching of the passage is plain enough, that sinners shall be destroyed, even as the chaff is consumed in the fire. The effect upon their souls of the fire of divine wrath will be, that "they shall be as though they had not been."

Isa. xxxiii. 14 is also offered as a proof that the wicked have eternal life. "The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with the everlasting burnings?" The fire which, as we have seen, is eternal and unquenchable, is now declared to be *devouring*. The text is the exclamation of sinners in Zion (professors of religion) and hypocrites, at the prospect of their doom. It implies, not that they *shall* dwell forever with devouring fire and eternal



conflagration, but that it is *impossible* for them to do so. It is like the question of the Psalmist, "If thou, Lord, wert strict to mark iniquity, who could stand?" The evident answer is, "No one." So to the question, "Who shall dwell with devouring fire?" the answer must be, "No one."

Just here we may observe that the word "eternal" is an adjective of quality, as well as of time. Thus Sodom and Gomorrah are spoken of as "suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." The fire did not conserve, but consumed these cities. It was eternal, in the sense that it came down from Heaven,—it was the fire of God. It was unquenchable, its effects eternal. So the chaff, the sinners and the hypocrites, will suffer, like the cities of the plain, the vengeance of eternal fire,—the same eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. "Our God is a *consuming* fire." Heb. xii. 29.

Another passage relied on as teaching eternal torture is Matt. v. 25, 26. "Agree with thine adversary quickly whiles thou art in the way with him, lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, thou shalt

not come out thence till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing."

To take this passage as having reference to the punishment of the wicked, we must understand that God is the Judge, and the Devil is the adversary. Therefore we are to receive these words of the Lord Jesus as meaning that we are to *come to an agreement with the Devil*, for fear that God will put us into hell, where we are to stay *till we have paid the Devil what we owe him*. This is such self-evident absurdity, that one would think no sensible person could entertain it for a moment.

The next passage which comes under review, is Rev. xiv. 11. "And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever."

The Apocalypse is, throughout, a dramatic and symbolical representation of persons, systems, and events. We must endeavor to interpret its statements in harmony with the principles of the book; but not to set aside by its figurative expressions the literal statements of other portions of God's Word.

The doom here spoken of is the *special* punishment of certain men who are guilty of a distinctly specified and enormous crime. "If any man wor-

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ship the beast and his image," is the condition of the penalty. No one has ever yet committed this crime. The same words—"The smoke ascendeth for ever and ever"—are used concerning the emblematic woman called Babylon the Great. Rev. xix. 3. But it is said also concerning her, that "she shall be *utterly burned* with fire, for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her." It is also said concerning the city of Bozrah in Idumea, destroyed in the fifth century B.C., that "the smoke thereof shall go up forever." Isa. xxxiv. 9, 10. Now the events described in this passage and its context (to which the reader is referred) are described as happening *upon the earth, anterior* to the coming of the Lord, and therefore to the general judgment. Like the cities of the plain, the worshippers of the beast shall suffer the vengeance of eternal fire. Like the city of Bozrah, the smoke of their torment shall ascend up for ever and ever. As in the latter case, the smoke is the emblem of consummated destruction. In the process of that destruction, its subjects will "have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image." Their crime is seen to continue during their punishment. The details of this punishment will be found in Chap. xvi. of this same

book. We are then told concerning its subjects, that "they repented not to give Him glory," ver. 9. "They repented not of their deeds," ver. 11. The reader will bear in mind that all that is spoken of in these verses is upon the earth, and prior to the advent of the Lord, which is described in Chap. xix. The final doom of the ungodly is not at all the subject here. The words "for ever and ever" are employed concerning these earthly events in exactly the same way in which they are used concerning the destruction of Bozrah, and of Babylon.

We have deferred reference to the word "torment," because we have to consider it in another passage. This is Rev. xx. 10. "And the devil that deceived them (the nations) was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and they shall be tormented day and night, for ever and ever."

In the passage we were just now considering, the worshippers of the beast were seen to be punished *on the earth*, and before the visible advent of the Lord. Unless, as ancient Tyndale has forcibly observed, we study the *order, progress, and meaning* of the Sacred Book, we shall not understand it at

all. The book of Revelation, like all the rest of Scripture, is progressive. In Chap. xix. of this book we have the description in symbol of the personal advent in glory of the Lord Jesus. In the preceding chapters, commencing with Chap. xiv., we have the events which lead up to that advent. In the passage now under review we have one of its results.

Since the worshippers of the beast were cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, a thousand years have passed. Satan has been cast into "the abyss," confined during the millennium, and has been loosed out of his prison. He has gone forth and deceived the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, to assemble them together for war, and fire has come down out of heaven and *consumed them*. Immediately following is the final judgment,—that of the Great White Throne. The result of this judgment is, that the dead whose names were not written in the Book of Life are cast into the lake of fire. Death and Hades are cast into the same lake of fire. The immediate sequel is, a NEW Heaven and a NEW earth. Peter tells us of "new heavens and a new earth, *in which dwelleth righteousness.*" We are reminded of Heb i. 10, 11, 12: "Thou, O Lord,

in the beginning didst form the earth, and the heavens are the works of Thy hands. THEY shall perish, but Thou remainest, and they ALL shall become old like a garment; and like a mantle Thou wilt fold them up; like a garment also they shall be changed; but Thou art the same and Thy years shall not fail." So also Peter's second Epistle, iii. 10: "The day of the Lord will come as a thief, in which the heavens shall pass away with a rushing sound, and the elements burning intensely shall be dissolved." And Rev. vi. 14: "And the heaven being disintegrated was rolled up as a scroll."

The physical Universe is the garment, or material manifestation, of God. It has been stained by sin. God declares His purpose not to repair the stained garment by the insertion of a new piece, but to *destroy* it, and replace by *new* heavens and a *new* earth, in which dwelleth righteousness. The worlds in conflagration, rushing from their orbits to their common centre, and thus being "rolled up as a scroll," will constitute the Lake of Fire, which is "the death, the second." Into that will be cast all evil things, evil systems, and evil persons, and they will perish under the frown of God.

“But,” some one says, “they (the Beast, the False Prophet, and the Devil) will be *tormented* day and night for ever and ever. How then, can they be destroyed?”

To answer this question we must look at the Greek word here translated “torment,” and its usage. This word is “*basanizō*.” It is derived from the noun “*basanos*,”<sup>1</sup> meaning, according to Donnegan, a “touchstone to try metals.” It is the name of a stone found in Asia Minor. The primary meaning of the verb is “to try, by rubbing upon a touchstone; to put to the proof.” As, in former ages, it was customary to put prisoners to the proof by means of torture, the word came to be used in the sense of “torment.” But this meaning is by no means necessarily implied in the use of the word. An analogous use is found in the word “martyr,” which strictly means “a witness.” But as Christians in witnessing for Christ suffered and laid down their lives, it came to be applied distinctively to those who thus suffered and died. But the word, in the New Testament, has no such meaning, but always and only means, one who bears testimony, irrespec-

<sup>1</sup> *Lapis Lydius*.

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tive of whether suffering is incurred. So with the word "*basanizō*." It is here employed in its primary sense. The force of the expression is, that the Devil, the Beast, the False Prophet, and the disembodied souls of the ungodly, are *put to the proof*, unto the ages of the ages. That this must be its meaning will be evidenced by the consideration of who and what those are who are cast into the lake of fire. The Devil is an evil spirit. The Beast is a *political* system. It is represented as having seven heads, denoting seven distinct periods of power, and ten horns, meaning ten kings. The False Prophet, in like manner, represents, in the symbolic language of the Apocalypse, a *religious* system. These two systems, political and religious, will have been fully developed, and the whole Roman world or prophetic earth will have been brought under their sway. Then they will be submitted to the final test, the adverse aspect of the Holiness of God. If founded in righteousness, they would stand this test; but as they are not, they, with Satan at their head, must perish before the frown of the Holy One. Daniel says, "I beheld even till the beast was slain and *his body* destroyed and given to the burning flame." Dan. vii. 11.



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The dead who are cast into the lake of fire are disembodied souls. The teaching of Holy Scripture, concerning the resurrection of the body, applies only to Christians. There is not a word anywhere which intimates that the souls of the wicked shall ever again be embodied after death. In 1 Cor. xv. the Apostle Paul teaches the philosophy of the resurrection of the saints. This is, that the new nature—the *spirit*—which the believer possesses, shall be endowed with a body, on the same principle as that by which the seed of wheat in the ground, or the vital principle, or soul, of fish, bird, or animal in the womb of the mother, builds up for itself from the elements within its reach the body which God has been pleased to give it. Of the nature of the elements which will constitute the spiritual body, we are not informed, and can have no conception. But “of what kind the earthy, such like also the earthy ones; of what kind the heavenly, such like also the heavenly ones.” But the souls of the ungodly possess no such principle of resurrection. Paul’s philosophy of resurrection does not apply to them. Their resurrection cannot be with a spiritual body, for they have no spiritual life. If it is a physical

resurrection, their bodies must be entirely new, since those they had when on earth have been decomposed, and the constituents of many of them, thousands of times perhaps, have been constituents of other animal bodies. We are not told, nor is it anywhere suggested, that such bodies are to be given them. Neither is it supposable that they have the power to build up for themselves new bodies. Such a power would imply that they were not actually dead. Nor have they the materials at hand to form such bodies upon the principles which are usually called the "laws of nature," and God does not work outside of these principles. When Hades gives up the dead which are in it, it may well be asked, "With what body do they come?" Their souls, revived to consciousness, shall stand naked in the presence of the Throne of God, and before the frown of Infinite Holiness, shall shrink back into their original nothingness. Thus disembodied souls, evil spirits, false religions, and human political systems shall prove that "our God is a *consuming* fire"; while at the same time, the material universe—the garment stained by sin—shall be destroyed by actual flame, to make place for the

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New Heavens and New Earth, in which dwelleth righteousness.

The mention of brimstone, or sulphur, in connection with fire, is also significant of the symbolic character of the whole statement. The Greeks called sulphur divine. It was considered the type of divine reality, and, with fire, was used in their religious purifications. A burning torch with sulphur was carried three times around the person who was to be religiously purified. Thus "fire and brimstone" were the objects of their trust, and the Holy Spirit has seen fit in the Apocalypse to use them as the symbols of that which shall put Evil to the final proof. In the presence of the Divine Justice and Divine Reality which they typify, it shall be utterly destroyed.

It is impossible within the limits of this article to do more than sketch the outlines of an explanation of the symbolism involved in the passage now under review. To do more would require a treatise on the entire Apocalypse. Enough has been said, however, to give a general idea of the true meaning of the passage, and to enable the earnest student to examine for himself "whether these things are so."

It is usually conceded, however, that the expressions of the Apocalypse are figurative. There are very few who now contend that the damned will suffer physically, with literal fire and brimstone, to all eternity. But once admit the language to be figurative, and all its force as an argument in favor of the endless duration of torture is gone. No figurative statement can fairly weigh against the explicit and literal declarations of Scripture concerning the utter destruction of the wicked. Of one thing, however, we may be absolutely certain: that the use of the expression "unto the Ages of the Ages," denotes finality, irreversibleness, eternity. The soul which is cast into the lake of fire is *destroyed* as to its identity, personality, and consciousness. The doom is unto, or rather *for*, the Ages of the Ages. It can therefore never be exhausted or reversed. There is not a particle of support here for the theories of the Universalist or Restorationist; but, on the contrary, the most conclusive denial of them.

We have now gone over the eight passages commonly adduced in support of the doctrine of eternal torment, and the consequent inherent immortality of the soul. In none of them do we find anything to

support this doctrine, while some of them, when fairly examined, absolutely contradict it.

But granting (which we do not) that taking these passages as they stand, they would give some color to this doctrine; they would amount to nothing in the face of the many positive statements of the Bible to the exact contrary.

Of man, it is first affirmed that God *created* him, Gen. i. 27, then that God *formed* him, Gen. ii. 7, out of the dust (elemental atoms) of the earth. As to his personal being, man was first created out of nothing by the fiat of Omnipotence. As to his body, he was formed out of the chemical elements of the earth. The process is described in Ps. cxxxix. 15, 16. "My substance was not hid from thee when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought *in the lowest parts of the earth*. Thine eyes did see my substance, being yet imperfect, and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet *there was none of them*. . . ." The being thus created and formed was complex, consisting of soul and body. To him it was said, "In the day thou eatest thereof, to die—thou shalt die,"—the idiom denoting, as we have elsewhere

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observed, not continuity of dying, but intensity and certainty. He was excluded from the garden of Eden lest he should evade the sentence by eating of the tree of life, and *live forever*. We need hardly urge that the soul is the real person. Whatever doom was pronounced upon the man was not merely physical. It was upon his soul, as it is elsewhere written, "the SOUL that sinneth, IT shall die."

Now, unto this complex being—this immaterial Soul, possessing a material body,—the words were addressed, "In the sweat of thy face shalt THOU eat bread, till THOU return into the earth, for out of it was THOU taken; for dust THOU art, and unto dust shalt THOU return." The Apostle Paul tells us that the "first man *is* a living soul"; also, that "the first man *is* out of the earth, earthy." So then it is the *living soul* which (with its material body) was taken out of the earth, and which is to return thither. The words are either spoken of the whole personality of the man, or they are unintelligible.

We now present a few of the *positive* statements of Scripture concerning everlasting punishment.

Obadiah testifies concerning the wicked that "they shall be *as though they had not been*." Obad. 16.

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The Apostle Peter declares concerning such, that "they shall UTTERLY PERISH in their own corruption."

Isaiah, speaking of the wicked oppressors of Israel, says, "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." Isa. xxvi. 14.

Jeremiah, denouncing the sinners of Babylon, declares, "And they shall sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the king, whose name is Jehovah of Hosts." Jer. li. 39, 57. The Hebrew word here translated "perpetual" is the same which is elsewhere translated "eternal" and "everlasting": as for instance, in Ps. xc.: "From everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God."

The Apostle Paul testifies concerning the doom of the ungodly, "They shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." 2 Thess. i. 9. Here is a definition of eternal punishment. But some assert that destruction does not here mean destruction, but *banishment* from the presence of the Lord. But in what sense can they be banished from His presence? From His actual presence they can-

not be banished, for God is omnipresent. "If I make my bed in *hell*, THOU ART THERE." Ps. cxxxix. 8. *Morally*, the sinner is now at as great a distance from God as he can possibly be. It is only the believer in Jesus who is *brought nigh* in the blood of Christ. The word in question actually means "destruction"; but granting that it does not, there is no conceivable way in which the sinner could be banished eternally from the personal presence of God without being utterly destroyed.

The Psalmist says, "The wicked SHALL PERISH, and the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs; they shall CONSUME: into smoke shall they consume away." Ps. xxxvii. 20.

Again: "When the wicked spring as the grass, and all the workers of iniquity do flourish, it is that they shall be DESTROYED FOREVER. But Thou, Jehovah, most high, ART FOR EVERMORE." Ps. xcii. 7, 8. Mark the contrast here between the eternal destruction of the wicked and the eternal existence of God.

"Who redeemeth *thy life* from DESTRUCTION." Ps. ciii. "He will not always chide, *neither will His anger endure forever.*" Ibid. But our religious teachers



do not hesitate to flatly contradict this and to say that God's anger will burn eternally against the conscious objects of His wrath.

In Prov. xxiv. 20,<sup>1</sup> we find a formal declaration, though hidden by a mistranslation, that there shall be no future existence to the evil. The word translated "reward" occurs several times in the Old Testament; and is everywhere else given the sense of "an hereafter" or "consummation in an hereafter." The translators, not knowing, apparently, what to do with the word, translated it here "reward,"—a meaning which it does not bear in any other place. But this is absurd. It is superfluous to inform us that a holy God does not intend to bestow a reward on the wicked. Look at the entire passage. "My son, eat thou honey, because it is good; and the honey comb, which is sweet to the taste; so shall the knowledge of wisdom be unto thy soul: when thou hast found it, then there shall be an HEREAFTER (AH-CHAREETH<sup>2</sup>), and thy *expectation* (literally, *thy thread*

<sup>1</sup> "For there shall be no *reward* (literally "*hereafter*") to the evil." The "Speaker's Commentary" translates this text "there shall be *no future*."

<sup>2</sup> Refer to Englishman's Hebrew Concordance for use of this word in other places.

*of existence*) shall not be cut off." In contrast with this, he says, "Fret not thyself because of evil men; neither be thou envious of the wicked; for there shall be no HEREAFTER to the evil: *the lamp of the wicked shall be put out.*" Prov. xxiv. 13, 14, and 19, 20. So also in another place: "The expectation (TIKVAH,<sup>1</sup> the line or thread of existence) of the wicked shall perish." The Greek mythology represents human life as a thread, which the Fates were always spinning, and which was liable at any moment to be cut off. The Word of God here applies the same simile to the existence of the human soul. The thread of the wicked shall be cut off. To render the meaning of this symbolic phrase perfectly certain, we are told, *literally*, that to the wicked there shall be *no hereafter*.

Passing a multitude of passages in which the utter destruction of the wicked is declared (which, however, the reader is earnestly desired to look up in the "Englishman's Greek or Hebrew Concordance"), we quote the plain words of our Lord Himself: "And fear not them who are able to kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather

<sup>1</sup> TIKVAH, a line, or measuring thread.

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fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna." Matt. x. 28. The Lake of Fire, or anti-typical Gehenna, is here referred to, as every one will agree. Does the word "destroy" here mean to *destroy*, or to preserve eternally? The chaff is to be consumed with unquenchable fire, as the bodies of beasts and criminals were burned in the Valley of Hinnom. As these putrid bodies are destroyed, so God says He will *destroy* both the souls and bodies of the wicked.

Other words of the Lord Jesus furnish an explanation, if any were needed: "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" Matt. xvi. 26. "For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and LOSE himself, or be cast away?" Luke ix. 25. By comparison of these two passages we are confirmed in what we have already learned, that the soul of man is *himself*. To *lose* his soul, is the loss of all. But theologians assure us that man *cannot* lose his soul, but that he will possess it forever. Can the words of our Lord be made to bear any such meaning? These statements confirm what is meant by destroying soul and body in Gehenna. The soul that

is destroyed will be lost. The soul that is *lost* will be lost, because it is destroyed.

We have not begun to exhaust the testimony of Scripture on this subject. We have referred to the subject of Eternal Punishment, because the doctrine of the inherent immortality of the human soul stands only on the arbitrary construction of the Scriptures, which are supposed to teach that Evil, Sin, and Torment are eternal. But we believe that eternal life is the gift of God, and is derived only from Christ. All our relationships and duties as Christians spring from this fact. But if immortality is innate and inherent in all men, all that is said concerning our new birth, our union with Christ, and our new nature, must be deemed figures of speech. Evil, sin, and suffering we must understand to be eternal as the Throne of God.

That Evil exists, we know. That its existence is temporary, and for a purpose of ultimate blessing to the whole Universe, we can reconcile with the revealed ways of God. But to believe that it will exist eternally, requires us to ignore many direct and literal statements of God's Word, and to consider as figurative the whole basis of Christian

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ethics, as laid down by the Apostle Paul in his epistles to the seven churches of Rome, Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus (probably Laodicea) Philippi, Colosse, and Thessalonica. This basis is invariably that we are reckoned of God as having died with Christ, and have now a new and heavenly life, derived from Him, and in union with Him.

The works of the Devil are to be *destroyed*. "For this purpose was the Son of God manifested." 1 John iii. 8. These works are sin, suffering, and death. Death, the *last* enemy, shall be destroyed. When this has been accomplished, the Son shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father, that God may be all in all. In that renewed and reconstituted Universe, not a trace of sin or suffering shall exist. "The mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

## LIFE: TEMPORAL AND ETERNAL.

IN a recent article under the heading of "Readjustments in Theology," the Rev. Daniel Curry, D.D., one of the most prominent theologians of the Methodist denomination, says, "The whole field of eschatology, including the future life, the resurrection, the millennium, and the judgment to come, is badly out of order as to the conceptions of orthodox theologians, and in great need of thorough re-examination and adjustment." The admission is very significant. The department of eschatology includes all that relates to the future and to the eternal fate of man. It sums up the results of all that is taught in other departments of Systematic Theology. It is a sad commentary upon the stability of this edifice, that its dome, at so early a period in its history, should require rebuilding; and it suggests grave doubts as to the walls, nay, even the foundations themselves.

The question at issue is deeper and broader than that of the reconstruction of any one article of theology, however important. Dr. Curry, a little farther

on in his article, says, "The doctrine of the immortality of the soul would seem to be primary and essential in any religious belief; and yet this is called in question, not only by unlearned literalists, but also by distinguished Christian scholars, to whose positions the advocates of the traditional conceptions of the future life are not well prepared to oppose satisfactory objections."

"Unlearned literalists," in Luther's day, were those who believed that when the Word of God declared that "the just shall live by faith," it meant just what it said; and that the words were meant for the ignorant, not less than for the learned, to rest upon for eternal safety. Thousands of poor peasants went to torture and to death for this belief. To this was opposed the learning of the schools and the authority of the Church. The question is the same to-day,—whether the plainest and most explicit statements in relation to essential and principal truths are to be received by the common people in their plainly obvious meaning, or whether the Church (including the whole body of Protestant theologians) is to be allowed to impose on such declarations a meaning the exact opposite of that which they apparently bear. The

literalists of the sixteenth century trusted for the salvation of their souls to such words as, "He that *believeth* on me shall not perish, but shall have everlasting life." The question then between the literalists (learned and unlearned) and the schoolmen was whether "believing meant only *believing*, or whether it meant something quite different. The question *now* is in regard to the last part of the sentence. Does perish mean to *perish*, and does eternal life mean eternal *life*? Everywhere but in the New Testament, the Greek originals of these words mean exactly what they here seem to say. But modern schoolmen assure us that their New Testament meaning is entirely different from their use in profane literature. If this be true, then it is the authority of the Church, not that of Scripture, which is paramount; and in the jangling crowd of sects (Catholic and Protestant) which call themselves churches, we search in vain for one to which we can look as final authority. If this be true, no common, unlearned person has a right to rest on the very clearest declaration of Scripture without asking the Church's interpretation thereof. If this be true, Rome was right and Luther was wrong.



The conflict of the sixteenth century was mainly over the single doctrine of justification by faith. To this the attention of the Reformers was almost entirely directed, and they brought with them, out of Rome, a huge mass of error and superstition, part of which was incorporated into their written creeds, and part had from use and habit more than the force of the written creed. These errors have come down to our day, occasionally resisted and exposed, but in the main being developed till they have nearly buried the Truth of God out of sight. For instance, the doctrine of the personal and premillennial return of the Lord Jesus (though strongly held by Luther) has been nearly forgotten for centuries, and is only now again coming to light. But the principles of Scripture interpretation which support this doctrine, make an end at once of the eschatology of the schools. These principles are that the *obvious* meaning is, *prima facie*, the *true* one; that the Bible is to be studied with reference to the progressive character of its development, and to the relations of its several parts; that plain and literal statements are to be plainly and literally understood in the ordinary meaning of the words used, while symbolic state-

ments are to be interpreted according to the meaning of the symbols, as defined in other portions of the Book.

One of the gravest of the errors thus inherited from the corruption of Rome was the Platonic doctrine of the Immortality of the Soul, with a tail derived from the Tartarus of heathen mythology. Rome had borrowed the doctrine from heathendom in the third century, to use as the mightiest engine for her own aggrandizement. This doctrine has since poisoned the whole system of modern theology. There is no mere question of speculative belief at issue here; it is that of the actual personal relations, past, present, and future, of believers to Jesus Christ. The ethics of Christianity are as much involved as are its doctrines. The two are indissolubly bound together. It will, I think, hardly be claimed that the present worldliness and corruption of the professing churches recommend their teachings to acceptance.

The doctrines of the Deity of Christ, the Atonement, the work of the Holy Spirit, the Sovereignty of God, the return of the Lord, the resurrection of the just and of the unjust, are plainly enough taught in the New Testament. But the Immortality of the

Soul is nowhere stated in the Word of God. On the contrary, the utter destruction of the wicked, both soul and body, is many times affirmed; and the only immortality therein revealed is that of God Himself, and of a new Race, living forever solely by virtue of a new principle of being communicated from Him. These are the plain, simple, obvious statements of the Word of God. Yet such an eminent divine as Dr. Curry tells us, "The doctrine of the immortality of the soul would seem to be primary and essential in any system of religious belief." So far has the Church set aside the Scripture as her only rule of faith!

In the first edition of "Eternal Purpose," no attempt was made, beyond a bare reference, to meet the metaphysical arguments for the immortality of the soul. The object was merely to show what the Bible actually does teach on the subject; and it was assumed that its plain declarations would be final and sufficient to the Christian reader. That they have proved so to many minds, and that comfort and enlightenment have been thereby imparted to some who were perplexed and anxious, there has been such abundant testimony as to cause humble and

profound thankfulness to God for the use He is making of this book.

But by some of my critics in the religious press I am confronted with the authority of the Church. Plato has argued out the immortality of the soul, and a Church split into a multitude of factions, without concord and without authority, and divided on almost every other point of theology, undertakes unanimously to say that Plato is right. Plato's metaphysics outweigh such Bible declarations as "the *soul* that sinneth *it* shall die;"<sup>1</sup> "they shall be as though they had not been;"<sup>2</sup> "they shall utterly perish in their own corruption;"<sup>3</sup> "for the wicked there shall be no hereafter,"<sup>4</sup> etc. The absence from the Bible of all mention of so important a doctrine as that of the inherent immortality of the human soul is not sought to be accounted for, while the declarations of its mortality are set aside, because that doctrine is said to have been metaphysically proved to be impossible.

I have therefore thought it advisable to go a little outside of my original plan, which confined me to the presentation of the testimony of Revelation, and

<sup>1</sup> Ezek. xviii. 20.

<sup>2</sup> Obad. 16.

<sup>3</sup> 2 Pet. ii. 12.

<sup>4</sup> Prov. xxiv. 20, literal.

in issuing a second edition of "Eternal Purpose," to glance at man's claim to immortality in the light of Reason.

The claim is stupendous. It is, that what is limited in its capacities, faculties, powers, and in every attribute, is limitless as to its duration; that what is now affected by the ravages of disease, and is subject to senility and decay, is nevertheless indestructible; that what once was Not can never again Not Be; that what had a beginning can never have an end; and that God has created that which Omnipotence cannot destroy.

The claim is also stupendous in view of the littleness of Man, as compared with the vastness of the Universe. The Earth on which he is born and dies is one of the smallest in a system of planets revolving around a central Sun, and this Sun is but one out of *eighty millions* of similar centres of systems so far reckoned up by astronomers. Every new telescope of higher power reveals new provinces still farther away, so that all the worlds hitherto discovered may constitute only a very small portion of the entire Universe. Man, therefore, is far more insignificant, in comparison with the Universe, than an Ant, in com-

parison with the whole earth. All matter is subject to decay and change, and ultimately to disintegration,—that is to say, destruction. The history of the Earth, as related by geologists, tells us this, and the telescope shows us the same processes going on in adjacent worlds. The claim of this insect—this animalcule, comparatively speaking—which calls itself Man, is, that his individual, personal, conscious existence shall outlast this visible universe, and all that are to succeed it in the æons of eternity. It is that this immortality is inherent in the very constitution of his being; that it is impossible in the nature of things that his personal conscious existence should terminate. In view of his comparative littleness, of his mental, moral, and physical weakness and limitations, and of the fact that he once did *not* exist, the burden of proof of this claim must rest on those who assert it. It is too vast to be credited, unless supported by the most irrefragable evidence.

The proof that is offered is mainly based on certain assumptions concerning the essential nature of the human soul. It is said to be "*pure spirit*," to be "*indiscerptible*,"—that is to say, a simple substance, incapable of separation into constituent parts, there-

fore indestructible. It is claimed to be an emanation from Deity, to be of the essential nature of God Himself, therefore indestructible. It is argued that man has an inextinguishable thirst for immortality; that his mental processes require eternity for their development; therefore he must live forever.

In order to the proper consideration of this subject, we need to find out all we can about the nature and constitution of the Soul. There are two, and only two sources of information open to us. One is Divine Revelation, the other, the Book of Nature. From both of these we can learn something about the properties, attributes, and characteristics of the Soul, but neither of them give us any knowledge as to what its essence is. We only know that it *is*, and that it has certain manifestive attributes, but we neither know What it is, Why it is, nor How it is. This need not surprise us,—the same thing is true concerning Matter. Man's boasted knowledge is confined within very small limits. His investigation is only into the properties of things; he does not know the What, the Why, nor the How of anything that is. When, therefore, he asserts concerning the nature of the soul, that it is "pure spirit," or con-

cerning its constitution, that it is "indiscernible," he is assuming as fact that about which he knows nothing, and about which he has no means of information.

There are those who assert that the Soul, as a real entity, does not exist. According to them, what we call Soul is merely the result of the combinations and reciprocal action of Matter and Force. Intellect is sublimated beef-steak; emotion, etherealized egg. When the body dies, the condition of things which produces thought, memory, emotion, etc., comes to an end, and these, therefore, come to an end also. We hardly need consider this, since if it be true, the question of the immortality of the soul is answered at once. I will only remark that it fails so utterly to account for many psychological phenomena that it should be incredible even to those who do not accept the Bible, which entirely contradicts it.

The first step in our investigation is the Bible declaration that "Man is a living soul." Gen. ii. 7; 1 Cor. xv. 45. The popular theory is that man is a body, possessing a soul. The converse is the fact,—namely, that he *is* a soul, and *possesses* a body. The soul is the man. For reasons which will appear as



we advance, I cannot agree with the assertion that "soul and body constitute the true monad," any more than I can agree with that theory of creation which says that God made a body and conferred upon it a living soul. The words of Scripture and the analogies of nature unite in telling us that the "*psyche*," or immaterial life-principle of plants, animals, and men, is the *real* being, and that the body is only its expression and vehicle. I quote from Bishop Butler: "It follows that our organized bodies are no more ourselves or part of ourselves than any other matter around us. And it is as easy to conceive how matter which is no part of ourselves may be appropriated to us in the manner which our present bodies are as how we can receive impressions from or have power over any matter."<sup>1</sup>

Let us consider some natural analogies. Take, for instance, an acorn. Cut it open; it shows nothing to sight or touch of the oak-tree which it contains. Subject it to chemical analysis, and you find a few well-known elements. Put it into the ground and it will grow, and in time becomes a mighty oak. But neither microscopic inspection nor chemical

<sup>1</sup> Analogy, chap. i. p. 82. Lippincott's edition of 1880.

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analysis can tell what makes it grow. There is one condition antecedent to its growth, and that is, that while it was yet a flower, and before it was an acorn at all, the pollen of a male flower must have lodged within it and have become incorporated with it. If you compare an acorn which has thus been impregnated with one which has not, you cannot possibly discover the difference. The one does not weigh more than the other; it is not different to sight, taste, smell, or touch; there is no difference in constituents discoverable either by chemical or spectrum analysis. And yet there is the greatest possible difference. The unimpregnated acorn, if put into the ground, will only rot and perish. The impregnated acorn, while rotting and perishing as to its own identity, will live again in an oak-tree. The one is mere matter; the other contains something which the first has not, and that something is Life. That Life has been communicated from a living tree. It is imponderable, invisible, immaterial, but it is nevertheless *there* in the acorn, and is a real entity and real substance; as real as though you could weigh it, feel it, smell it, and taste it. The future oak-tree is in the acorn. The tree that shall be is only the manifesta-

tion of the immaterial substance that is in the seed. But the tree itself, as to the essence of its being, is as real before the acorn is planted as when it is manifested as a century-old oak.

I have spoken of this vital principle as *substance*, and some persons will take exception to this. It has been considered impossible to conceive of substance except as matter. But "God is spirit." He is omnipresent, immaterial, invisible, yet the Lord Jesus Christ is declared to be "the exact image of His *substance*." Heb. i. 3. Webster's definition of this word is as follows: "that which underlies all outward manifestations; substratum; the permanent subject or cause of phenomena, whether material or spiritual; that in which properties inhere; that which is real, in distinction from that which is apparent, of any existence, in distinction from any accident; that which constitutes anything what it is; nature; real or existing essence."

The life in the acorn is, therefore, *substance*,—*i.e.*, that which is real, and in which properties inhere. It is really the oak which is to be. The visible, material tree is only organized matter. The life-principle in the acorn organizes, builds it up out of inani-

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mate matter, and makes it the expression of itself. Either this is true or the materialistic theory is true, that life is the result of matter. Grant the latter, and you have granted the whole argument of the materialists. If it be true that the life in the oak-tree is a mere result of matter and force,—if it is not in itself a real entity, created antecedent to its visible manifestation in a tree,—what reason is there that the human soul may not also be the product of matter and force?

One Greek word (*psuchē*) is translated sometimes “soul,” and sometimes “life.” For convenience, I shall use the English form of this word (*psyche*) to designate the immaterial vital substance we are now considering.

The *psyche* in the acorn has certain powers and properties. One of these is power over matter. It takes to itself the constituents of earth, water, and air, separates them from their chemical relations, brings them into new combinations, and organizes them into a tree. The tree, when grown, conforms to a certain general type. You can tell the oak by its general form as far as you can see it. When you come to examine it more closely, you find that the

bark has the appearance and texture peculiar to the oak, that the leaf is of a certain invariable pattern, and the fruit or seed is always the same. What does this mean? Is it a mere fortuitous aggregation of atoms which thus repeats the same manifestation year after year and century after century? Is it not rather the *psyche*, the real but invisible and immaterial tree which God in beginning created, which thus manifests itself through matter?

This *psyche* also possesses an instinctive faculty of choice. It puts out its branches towards the sunshine, its roots towards the waters. It does not possess the consciousness, which is an attribute of life in its higher forms, but this instinctive choice is common to it, to animals, and to men. This *psyche* is also affected by education. The florist, by selection and cultivation, develops certain characteristics and represses others. Hence the great varieties of the same genus; but the genus always preserves its distinctive characteristics, and never permanently combines with another.

Take one step higher in the economy of Nature and examine the egg of the bird or the fish. It contains certain chemical elements suited to the suste-

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nance and development of life; but, unless impregnated, it does not contain life itself. Between the egg containing the vital germ and that which does not there is no appreciable difference in weight, taste, or chemical constituents. But the one is only matter; the other contains life. Subject both to identical conditions suitable for development of life, and the one rots and perishes, while the other brings forth a living bird. There is an actual something—a vital reality—in the latter which the other does not contain. This is the bird itself, at first immaterial and invisible, yet really in the egg. This immaterial entity has power to analyze, recombine, and organize the material substance of the egg, till that which was at first only a living psyche becomes a living organism, breaks the shell, and steps forth. This organism has higher faculties than the oak. It possesses consciousness, memory, intelligence. Yet when we come to look for the line which separates vegetable from animal life, it cannot be found. I do not overlook the distinction between vegetable and animal life, that the first absorbs carbonic acid gas and gives out oxygen, while this process is reversed with the second. Yet it has so far been found impossible to

discover where the one ends and the other begins. The lower forms of life merge into the higher by such imperceptible gradations that the scientist is unable to determine whether some forms of life belong to the vegetable or to the animal kingdom.

The same law of reproduction rules in animals which bring forth living young as in those which bring forth the egg. All animal life is developed from the egg, but in some cases it is within, in others without, the womb. In both the living germ takes to itself the substance of the mother, separates it from its chemical relationships, brings it into new relationships, and organizes it into a living body, which is at once the visible expression of its own essential nature, and the instrument adapted to its use. But the body is not the animal itself; it is mere matter, and is continually changing. The psyche, which dwells in it, and permeates it, is continually repairing its waste, and putting forth its power to heal its wounds and overcome its diseases.

The reader may possibly consider that much of the foregoing is mere assertion; but I submit that there are but two alternatives: either the materialistic theory is true, and life is but an accident or a result,

or the Christian theory is true which teaches that life is a creation and a cause. If the latter theory is true the psyche must be a reality, and Bishop Butler's theory that the soul, not the body, is the real creature, must be true. Then also the soul, or psyche, is *substance*, according to Webster's definition. It is that in which properties inhere. It has locality, identity, potentiality. It is that which God *created*, before He *made* it.

In the first two chapters of Genesis four different verbs are used to describe the creative work of God, viz.: 1, to create; 2, to make; 3, to form; 4, to build. We are told that "in beginning Elohim (the triune God) *created* the heavens and the earth." But the Gospel of John begins with the declaration concerning the Eternal Word: "All things were *made* by Him, and without Him was not anything made that is made."<sup>1</sup> When the work of God in creation was completed He blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because that in it He had rested from all His work which He had *created* and *made*,<sup>2</sup>—literally, *created*

<sup>1</sup> John i. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Gen. ii. 3.



to make.<sup>1</sup> The Vulgate renders this, "which God created that He might make it."

Comparing these declarations with the revelations made in Nature, we see that God first created the *Essence*, or thing itself. Its being made, formed, or builded,—that is to say, manifested through matter, was a subsequent and resultant operation. Reproduction is but the repetition of this original process. The thing created is endowed with power over matter, which is made, formed, and builded into the body designed for it of God. Creation is the original act; that which spoke something out of nothing. The narrative in Genesis begins at a point where matter is already existent. The earth was, but it was formless and empty,—an abyss, over which the Spirit of God brooded, like a dove over the egg in which life is being developed and matter organized.

To this chaos God gave force, form, and organization. The words "Let there be light," signify much more than the illumination of the scene. The root of the original word is to *flow*. Formative, organizing force was set at work. We now know that light, heat, electricity, cohesion, gravitation, attrac-

<sup>1</sup> See "Speaker's Commentary" *in loc.*

tion, and repulsion are convertible terms. It was this all-pervading Force which began to work on Matter, when God said "Be light, and light was." But Force and Matter do not constitute Life, nor are they capable of producing it. Then God said, "Let the Earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself upon the earth." The Hebrew word "*Zeh-rag*" here translated "seed" and the Greek "*sperma*" by which it is rendered in the Septuagint, mean "a germinal principle of life."

Matter, Force, and Life are a trinity, reflecting their Creator. Matter was created and is not annihilated. Its form and identity are from time to time destroyed, while its essence takes on new forms and attributes. But no particle of Matter ceases to exist. The original creation is neither increased nor diminished by the destruction or reproduction of its forms.

That which (for want of a better word) we call "force" is the power which propels the worlds along their paths, and holds them in their orbits; which keeps in constant motion every molecule of Matter, and at the same time keeps the molecules in their orbits; and which organizes the crystal, the plant, and

the human body. It comes from the sun, and reaching our atmosphere produces light and heat, in a manner analogous to that in which the electric light is produced, viz., by the resistance of Matter to the flow of Force. Scientists tell us of an ether by whose vibrations light is transmitted. These vibrations are, according to them, of inconceivable rapidity. This theory seems, notwithstanding its almost universal acceptance, to be open to question. The vibrations of substances are in proportion to their density. The greater the density, the more rapid the vibration. This theory makes the ether in which the earth is said to revolve more dense than the densest solid known, but assumes that it is no hindrance to the revolutions of the worlds. So dense a medium would also convey sound as well as light, and would render audible to us the ticking of the clocks in another planet,—if they have clocks. Again, this ether must occupy the same space as the atmosphere, passing through it, as has been said, with the same facility with which a breeze passes through a grove of trees. This would necessitate its extreme tenuity, in absolute contradiction to the extreme density required by its rapid vibrations.

The theory seems unnecessary. As we know nothing about Force except its manifestations and effects, it is as easy to believe that it is transmitted from the Sun to the earth's atmosphere without as with the aid of an intervening ether. It is only in connection with the atmosphere that its effects, which we know as light and heat, are manifested. Astronomers tell us that the interstellar spaces are perfectly dark and cold.

We only know that Force is the product of Will. In other words, it is created, and that God spoke it into activity when He said "Be light, and Light was."

As with Matter so with Force; it is merely changed, never annihilated. It is transmuted from heat to motion, from motion to electricity, from electricity to light, but no portion of it is lost. It is not matter, but is nevertheless reality. It was created, and is to-day no more and no less than when it was created.

The third constituent of this trinity is Life. This appears to be as universally present as force and matter. The earth, the air, and the waters teem with it. When one form of life has been destroyed,

another takes its place. When, for instance, a forest of pines has been destroyed, another, not of pines, but of oak and chestnut, springs up in its room. It does not appear, as the result of a great number of observations, that by the so-called processes of nature acorns and chestnuts were planted after the destruction of the pine-trees, but rather that the germinal principle was in the ground, waiting for the proper conditions to develop it. And that these conditions were furnished by the return to the earth of the material constituents of the pines, and the exposure of the soil to the sun, rain, and atmosphere, a multitude of similar instances of the spontaneous growth of new vegetation, replacing that which had been burned or otherwise destroyed, are cited by observers. Where earth has been brought up, as in the digging of a well, from a depth of many feet and from a place where it has not been disturbed perhaps for millenniums, and is exposed to climatic influences, it begins to develop life. But this life is not, as might have been supposed, the result of seeds lodged in it from surrounding vegetation. This newly exposed and subterranean earth differs from the surface soil, and will not nourish the vegetation

peculiar to the latter. It brings forth another form of vegetation quite peculiar to itself, and different from that around it. *Life* was there, invisible and immaterial, but nevertheless *there*.<sup>1</sup>

It would therefore seem that Life is coextensive with Force and Matter. Under certain conditions it manifests itself in certain forms, but under other conditions, in other forms.

This universal Life is either, 1, an emanation from God, or, 2, it is a created substance. It is not a mere *result* of the action of force and matter; in other words, a *nothing*, because it is that "in which properties inhere." It possesses qualities and attributes, which it manifests in strict accordance to Law. It takes identical materials and organizes them into widely differing forms. While the character of spontaneous vegetation is dependent upon conditions which might, at first sight, seem to give color to the materialistic theory; it is also true that two seeds, chemically alike, planted in the same soil, and under precisely the same conditions, produce widely differ-

<sup>1</sup> For many detailed instances of this kind I refer my reader to the very interesting and thoughtful work entitled "Life, its true Genesis," by R. W. Wright. G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1880.

ent plants. As we ascend in the scale of manifestive life, we see more and more of the energy, discrimination, and other attributes which teach us that this vital principle is a real entity, working out the law of its existence. Life is the agent, Force the instrument, and Matter the material.

Is, then, this universal, immaterial, vital substance an emanation from God? If so, the life in every plant, fish, bird, and animal, including man, would be a part of the Divine Essence. The tree and flower would be its partial, yet perfect and beautiful development. The animals that think and feel would be godlike, and Man, at the head of the mundane creation, would indeed possess a Divine Nature. The law is universal, that "like produces like." You cannot develop grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles. Granted that adverse circumstances may have so hindered the development in man of the Divine Life that he does not as yet possess omniscience and other attributes of Deity; yet this life, however fettered and hindered, must be *in quality and essence* like that of God. It is impossible for God to be other than perfectly holy, and perfectly unselfish and benevolent. If His life is in a sentient creature, that

life as developed into moral character must be exactly like God. It must work out the law of its being. The Divine Essence is impeccable, and could not become peccable by the force of any circumstance, such, for instance, as its being incarnated in an earthly body. This Divine Essence *was* incarnated in Jesus Christ. Temptation was not addressed to *that*, but to His human soul, derived from His mother. It was this human soul which triumphed by faith, and on which God conferred, in raising Him from the dead, the gift of essential and communicable immortality. But man is *not* holy, and even animals are selfish. We conclude, therefore, from absence of similarity in essential and necessary characteristics, that Life in none of its manifestations as seen upon the earth is an emanation from Deity.

It is, therefore, a Creation. This statement accords with the uniform teaching of Holy Scripture. I have dwelt somewhat upon the emanation theory, because, notwithstanding the plain declarations of the Bible, it is very widely taught and believed among Protestant and nominally Christian Churches.

As we have already seen, when Matter was created, but was yet formless and destitute of manifes-



tive life, God said "Be light, and light was;" and this was the calling into action of that Force by which the particles of Matter were brought into their proper combinations. There was Motion, the beginning of organization and arrangement. That motion has continued ever since. There is no particle of Matter, in any of its forms or combinations, which is not and has not been since the Creation, continually in motion. Until the Creation, there had been no manifestive life. But before this there had been seen in the Mosaic diorama the Spirit of God brooding over Chaos. The fiat of God had called into action Force previously created, to organize Matter previously created. The brooding Dove now quickens into activity the Life which God had previously created. That for the first time happened which has ever since been happening. The immaterial agent Life laid hold of Force, its immaterial instrument, and selected and organized Matter into an infinite variety of living forms,—living because permeated with life. On the third, the day always associated with resurrection, Life in its visible forms appeared upon the earth.

I shall be met here with an argument as to the

indestructibility of Life. It will be said that as Matter and Force are indestructible, Life, by parity of reasoning, must also be indestructible. But, as with Matter and Force, we know nothing about Life as to its essence. We know that it is, but we do *not* know *what* it is, *why* it is, nor *how* it is. Matter and Force have tangible properties which we can study. Life has none. It manifests itself only through the other two. We, therefore, do not know its analogies, and it would be dangerous to come to a fixed conclusion from a supposed analogy. Yet I am disposed to believe that the sum of Life upon the earth has remained the same from the beginning. The birth or death of a plant or animal cannot, I think, either take anything from or add anything to that sum. What we see of its manifestations are only the developments of an unchanged quantity.

We can *see* Matter and *feel* Force, but we can neither see nor feel Life.

All three are created. He who called them into existence out of nothing can remand them to nothing again,—in a word, He *can* annihilate them. But in the present condition of things neither Matter nor Force are annihilated. Their forms and

manifestations change, but their substance does not cease to exist. If we accept analogy as conclusive, we may say that Life also is incapable of annihilation except by the fiat of Him who called it into existence. But Life as to its essence is one thing, its developments and manifestations are quite another. The oak, by virtue of the germinal principle in the acorn, springs from the ground, grows, flourishes, and dies. Its matter returns to the elements from which the seed took it up and organized it into the tree. No particle of matter is annihilated in the process. That Matter which a few days ago was an acorn is to-day the flesh of a living animal. The Matter which was woody fibre is now either floating in the atmosphere as carbonic acid gas, ready to be combined with some other vegetable, or may be in the blood of an animal, being distributed for the building up of living tissue. But no particle of it has ceased to exist. Yet the Tree is destroyed. It has been deprived of its attributes. It has no longer identity, personality, or individuality. There has been utter destruction, but no annihilation. The Tree is "as though it had not been."

So with the immaterial germinal principle or

“psyche” of the Tree. Granting all that the argument from analogy requires, we do not need either to assume that it has been annihilated, or that the sum of Life in the Universe was either increased by the being of the Tree or diminished by its destruction. It has lost its attributes. It has neither identity, individuality, nor personality left. It is destroyed, but not necessarily annihilated. The same Life may be the vital entity of another Tree, or may be distributed among many living things, just as the Matter and Force which were in the Tree that perished have been distributed among new organisms.

All earthly life, whether of plants, animals, or men, is *psychical*. I do not say that all Life is the same, any more than I say that all Force or all Matter are one. The science of Chemistry so far has been able to reduce Matter to comparatively few simple substances, but is very far as yet from demonstrating its Unity. There is Matter, and there are materials, There is Force, and there are forces. There is Life, and there are lives. Materials, forces, and lives perish, while Matter, Force, and Life remain. But all lives, from the lowest vegetable organism up to Man,

have certain common characteristics, and these characteristics are *psychical*. In all there is a vital principle, which controls Force and organizes Matter. In all common laws of transmission, reproduction, and organization prevail. By all the same Matter and the same Force are employed for their manifestation. The psyche in the acorn, in the egg, and in the Man have many more points of analogy than they have of difference. There are genii, species, and varieties. There are different manifestations and probably different *kinds* of life, but all species and varieties come under the common designation of "*psychical*." They have similar relations to Force and Matter. In Holy Scripture all animals are said to be "living souls," and the germinal principle of plants is brought into analogous comparison with them. See 1 Cor. xv.

Of psychical life Man is the highest manifestation. He has consciousness and intelligence, which the plants have not, and his faculties are of a higher order than those of the brutes. Yet this statement must not be made without some reservation. There are whole races of men that are both intellectually and morally beneath the level of intelligent dogs, and which

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manifest even less aptitude for culture than the latter.<sup>1</sup> Man possesses, in common with the lower animals, the "breath of lives." His soul, or life (for the word in the original—*psuchē*—is the same), is, like theirs, in his blood. The processes of reproduction are similar; and in the womb he confesses in the several stages of fœtal development his kinship with them. In what, then, is he different from them? Is it in the possession of the faculty of Reason? This is said to be the godlike attribute which at one and the same time separates man from animals and allies him to Deity. But nothing is now more conclusively proved than that animals reason from cause to effect, oftentimes displaying great sagacity. Moreover, this characteristic proves not his likeness, but his *unlikeness* to God. Man reasons because he does not *know*; but the Omniscient and All-wise has no occasion for the slow processes of ratiocination.

Man differs from animals in being a higher form of psychical existence, and in the possession of the knowledge, speciallly conferred upon him, of God.

<sup>1</sup> "Mind in the Lower Animals," by W. Lauder Lindsay, M.D. Appletons, 1880.

He is adapted to know God, and so constituted as to be capable of continuous existence; and is capable also of apprehending his moral responsibility to his Creator. Yet he is only psychical. The bird has consciousness and intelligence which plants have not; the dog has affection and moral sensibility which some other animals have not. Man has powers, faculties, capacities, and moral attributes which no other animal possesses. But "they have all one breath,"—they are all "living souls." "God (Elohim) *created* man in His own image; male and female *created* He them." This image as to the first man was merely governmental, but it was also anticipative. Man, when "born from above," is in God's moral image, and a Man who is the "express image of His substance" will by and by occupy the throne of the Universe. Subsequently Jehovah Elohim—the Personal "Word"—*formed* man out of the dust (or atoms) of the Earth, and breathed into his nostrils the "breath of lives," and man became "unto a living soul." *Out of the ground* also Jehovah Elohim made every tree to grow, and *out of the ground* He formed every beast of the field and every fowl of the air. In the original act of creation, Man was con-

stituted male and female. But the male was first formed, and the female, who had been created at the same time with him, was taken out of him and was builded up into a woman.

To create is to bring into existence that which previously did not exist. To *make* is to take that which has been created and give it form and organization. A carpenter does not create a desk,—he makes it out of matter which God created. So, in beginning, God *created* the heavens and the earth, and afterwards *made* the sun, the stars, and the brutes, and on the seventh day rested from all His work, which “He had *created* that He might *make* it.” So in the day when God *created* man, in the likeness of God *made* He him, male and female created He them. So also it is said concerning man, “I have created him for my glory. I have *formed* him, yea, I have *made* him.” The *creation* of the male and female was simultaneous, but they were *formed* in succession.

From what has thus far been stated, it is, I think, clearly evident that the act of God in creating man was the creation of a soul. Man, as we have seen, is a living soul, and it is the soul which is the man.



In the 139th Psalm we have a description of the process of forming the first man, which is in strict accord with the established facts of Science. The theme of the Psalmist is God's thorough and intimate knowledge of man, a knowledge which extends to the very inmost constitution of his personal being. "For thou hast created my reins, thou hast covered me (clothed me with a garment of flesh, bones, and skin) in my mother's womb." Verse 13. Job makes a similar statement (ch. x. 10, 11), "Hast thou not poured me out like milk and curdled me like cheese? Thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh, thou hast *woven*<sup>1</sup> me with bones and sinews." From the thought of his embryonic formation the Psalmist is led to contemplate the original creation of man. "I will praise Thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvellous are Thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance (essence, potentiality) was not hid from Thee when I was made *in secret* and curiously wrought (as an embroidered garment diversified with colors) IN THE LOWER PARTS OF THE EARTH. Thine eyes did see my embryo (or invisible atom) yet being unformed, and in Thy book

<sup>1</sup> See "Speaker's Commentary," *in loc.*

all of them were written; what days should be fashioned, when as yet none of them was." Verses 15, 16.

God is here declared to have beheld the invisible germ or created essence of man in the lower parts or centre of the Earth. There was woven and embroidered that wonderful garment, the human body. The process is seen to have been the same—indeed the comparison is direct—as that which takes place in the womb of the mother. The psyche took the material substance of our first Mother, the Earth, and organized that substance, according to the law of its being, into a living body. Gestation is only the repetition of this original formation. When the body had thus been formed and brought to the surface of the Earth, God blew into its nostrils the "breath of lives." The result was that which has since happened at the birth of every child. Conscious life came with breath. Without breath there is no conscious life. The man became a "*nephesh cha-yah*,"—in strict literalness, "a vigorous breather." A process of combustion began, requiring a constantly renewed supply of fuel, the means of all the activities of the soul and body. It is this constant

oxidation which puts in the hand, so to speak, of the Soul the Force by which it maintains and uses the material body. The process which the soul commenced in the womb is continued throughout physical life. Matter is separated from its chemical relations, brought into new relations, and organized into living tissue, muscle, bones, veins, nerves, and brains. This is no mere chemical operation; neither is it the unguided operation of Force upon Matter. There is a Life—a Psyche—present throughout the whole physical system and presiding over it. It takes from the food the carbon, oxygen, lime, iron, and other elements; and of some of these it makes blood, of some bone, of some brain, producing from identical substances widely differing forms. It governs the external traits of the countenance and of the whole body, reproducing the characteristics of its ancestry. In sickness or injury to the body, it puts forth the power to sustain or repair the diseased or injured part. Physicians speak of assisting Nature, or leaving Nature to do her work. But what do they mean by Nature? Where is it,—within or without the body? Is it an impersonal influence or a personal entity? Is it not the *Soul*, which, like the life-prin-

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ciple of the oak, permeates the whole body, carrying on a wonderful and varied work ?

The question now before us is, does this soul possess inherent deathlessness and indestructibility? It is urged in support of the affirmative that it is a simple substance. But simple substances can be destroyed. A diamond is a simple substance. Burned in a jar of oxygen gas it ceases to be a diamond. It is not annihilated, no part of it has ceased to exist, but it has lost all the attributes which constituted it a diamond. So the soul, if a simple substance, may lose all its attributes, though its essence continues to exist. It loses consciousness every night in sleep, and may lose it permanently. We see in people who become depraved the loss of affection and moral sense. We frequently see the decay and loss of reason, memory, and desire. By training, some attributes of the soul are increased in power, and the increase is transmitted to posterity, while others, from want of use or training become impotent, inert, and practically non-existent. Whatever, therefore, may be the essential nature of the soul, and whether its essence will or will not cease to exist, the loss of its attributes is virtually its destruction, as a living, individ-

ual, personal, and potential entity. Like the diamond, it may lose all that distinctively constitutes it a soul.

But we are by no means sure that the soul is a simple substance; indeed, the contrary would seem to be the case. That which is so complex in its functions is probably also complex in its nature. Part of these functions are analogous to the life of plants. Many of them are automatic and unconscious, many others instinctive, while in that part of the soul which we call the mind there is a great variety of function. There are reason and memory, love and desire, appetites and faculties. The soul hears, sees, smells, tastes, and feels. The organs through which it does these have no power, when the soul is not in action, or is otherwise engaged. A picture may be formed upon the retina, or a sound strike the drum of the ear, but they convey no impression to the soul if its attention is engaged elsewhere. From such complexity of function, complexity of organization may fairly be inferred. But while we can *only* infer, and have no actual knowledge on the subject, it is at any rate impossible to say that the soul is "indiscernible," since its powers,

faculties, and attributes are so varied. The argument, moreover, proves too much. It proves not only the immortality of animals, which some of Bishop Butler's later commentators are disposed to accept as a fact, but it proves as well the immortality of the egg which you ate this morning for your breakfast. Either the life which was in the egg is a vital entity, or it is not. If not, it is a product of matter. If life in its lower forms is a product of matter, the same thing is true of its higher forms. The great thing in question is the origin of life itself. It is this first step which costs, and degrees are of comparatively small importance. Grant that life in the egg is a result and a product, instead of a created and transmitted substance, and you grant all that the materialist claims. But if the life in the egg be a created entity, it is immaterial and invisible substance, and, from the simplicity of its functions, far more likely to be simple and indiscerptible as to its essence than the soul of a beast or of a man, and therefore more likely to be indestructible and immortal.

But it is also asserted that man's thirst for immortality, and his capacity and desire for intellectual de-

velopment, prove his eternal conscious existence. In common with the lower animals he does possess the love of life, and the dread of death. In many men the love of riches is stronger than the love of life; but it does not always follow that they become wealthy. Nor have all men the thirst for knowledge or for mental development. In many cases the development of human intellectual power and the acquisition of knowledge would make only refined and powerful devils. It is better for themselves, and better for the Universe, that such men should cease to be. It is a striking fact in this connection that suicide increases with the increase of civilization.<sup>1</sup>

The egg that you ate has been destroyed. The vital substance within it, which under favorable conditions would have changed the inert matter in the egg into a living bird, has evidently perished also. I do not say that it is annihilated, or could be, except by the Power which originally created it. But it has lost locality, identity, and potentiality. It was, in substance, a living bird, though yet unmanifested. *As such*, it has ceased to exist. The acorn which contains in substance a living oak, requiring only

<sup>1</sup> Morsell on Suicide. Putnams, 1881.

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opportunity for development and manifestation, often perishes without germination, and the tree within it ceases also to exist. So also with the seed of animals and men. The germ of which the Psalmist speaks, failing to secure the conditions and material necessary for its work, perishes. Thousands thus perish for every one that is manifested as a living creature; Job says, "Wherefore hast Thou brought me forth out of the womb? Oh that I had given up the ghost, and no eye had seen me! *I should have been as though I had not been!*"<sup>1</sup>

From all that we can learn from Nature and its analogies, we are compelled to conclude that the soul of man is not indestructible, and does not possess inherent immortality. From analogy we learn that other immaterial vital existences perish. The soul itself, even in this life, loses some of the properties and attributes which constitute it a soul, especially the consciousness, intelligence, and moral qualities which make it differ from lower forms of life. More than this, we have seen that the vital germ, the living seed, possessing all the powers and qualities which under suitable conditions would enable it to build up

<sup>1</sup> Job x. 19.



a body, does perish by millions for want of those conditions. We have also seen that the soul is probably not "indiscernible," and that even if it were it is subject to destruction as to its identity, personality, and energy. The answer of Nature, therefore, to the question, "If a man die, shall he live again?" is emphatically "No."

What is the reply of Revelation to this question? It was asked by Job, and implies a deep sense of the hopelessness of such a restoration. He had just said (ch. xiv. 7-10), "There is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, . . . but man dieth, and is *cut off* (*perishes without retaining any vitality*):<sup>1</sup> yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?"

The Scriptures abound with testimony to the mortality of man, and they as clearly speak of the soul, and not the body, as the real man. Adam was re-manded to the earth out of which he was taken. In multitudes of passages the soul is identified as the person. It is the soul which sinneth that shall die; the soul which shall be "destroyed," "utterly cut off," shall "perish." It is the soul which eats (Lev. vii. 18), which is rendered unclean by touching de-

<sup>1</sup> See "Speaker's Commentary," *in loc.*

filement (Num. xix. 22), which loathes the light bread (*ibid.*, xxi. 5), which longs to eat flesh (Deut. xii. 20). The righteous eateth to the satisfying of his soul (Prov. xiii. 25). Throughout Scripture the usage is uniform and consistent, which speaks of the soul as the real man. It is the soul which feels whatever is felt, which does whatever is done, and which either suffers the death which is the wages of sin, or lives as the result of righteousness. The Hebrew word most frequently translated "man" is *enosh*, meaning "weak, mortal, evanescent." Man is at one and the same time *nephesh* (a living soul) and *enosh*. "As for *enosh*, his days are as grass." Ps. ciii. 15. "Thou turnest *enosh* to destruction." Ps. xc. 3.

We have already observed that the word *psuchē* in the Greek is sometimes translated "life" and sometimes "soul." The same is true of the Hebrew word *nephesh*. Our preconceived notions of the distinctive meaning of the words "life" and "soul" are liable to obscure to our minds the Scriptural meaning conveyed by the original. It is only when we understand that a man is man because he *lives*,—that his soul is his life and is himself,—that we can understand such words as "Take no thought for your *soul*"

(*psuchē*), what ye shall eat. Is not the soul more than meat?" Matt. vi. 25. "Whosoever will save his *soul* shall lose it, but whosoever shall lose his soul for my sake shall find it." Mark viii. 35. "The good shepherd giveth his *soul* for the sheep." John x. 11. "The first man Adam was made a living *soul*." 1 Cor. xv. 45. "He laid down His *soul* for us, and we ought to lay down our *souls* for the brethren." 1 John iii. 11. In all these and a multitude of other passages the word translated soul or life is *psuchē*.

The English language, with all its wealth of vocabulary, is comparatively poor in power of distinctive expression. Thus the word "life" is represented in the Greek by three words of perfectly distinct meanings. The confounding of these meanings, resulting from there being but one English word by which to translate them, has been a fruitful source of error, especially on the subject of human immortality.

Holy Scripture is wonderfully exact in its use of terms. In the Greek, as in the English, the meanings of words were changed or corrupted in the course of ages, but as a rule the primary meaning

is always kept in view in Scripture usage. In defining these three words I have followed that usage.

One of these words is *psuchē*. It is used of individual, personal life,—that which is in a man, and which is himself or his soul. Another is *bios*. This is applied to temporal, visible, and physical life, including its possessions and enjoyments. For instance, “the riches and pleasures of *life*.” Luke viii. 14. Here the translators have inserted the word “this” to make plain the meaning to the English reader,—an addition which is unnecessary in the Greek, because the word itself shows *what* life is referred to. So, also, “the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eye, and the pride of *life*” (*bios*). 1 John ii. 16.

The third and most important of these words is “*zōē*.” As *psuchē* means individual, personal life, and *bios* visible and material life, the word *zōē* designates life in its absolute and abstract sense. Some study of the way in which this word is used in the New Testament will throw a flood of light upon the question under discussion.

First. It is used in relation to God Himself. “As the Father hath life (*zōē*) in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life (*zōē*) in Himself.”

Second. The adjective "eternal" or "everlasting" is *never* used in connection with the words *psuchē* or *bios*. The phrase "immortal soul," so frequently used nowadays, does not once occur in the Sacred Scriptures. Nor is the perpetuation of mere natural or psychical life anywhere even hinted at. On the contrary, its perishableness is affirmed and its destruction announced. But with the word "*zōē*" the adjectives expressive of eternal duration are frequently used. "God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting '*zōē*.'" John iii. 16. "He that believeth not the Son shall not see '*zōē*.'" John iii. 36. "Ye search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal '*zōē*.'" John v. 39.

Third. This "*zōē*," in its quality of eternal duration, is declared to be the portion of believers in Jesus, and of them only. "In Him was the life, and the life was the light of the men." John i. 4. "He that hath the Son hath the life, and He that hath not the Son hath not the life" (*zōē*). I John v. 12.

Here, then, we have the solution of the problem of Life. Created psychical life no more possesses

an inherent principle of indestructibility than does Force or Matter. But God's answer to the question, "If a man die, shall he live again?" is the announcement of a *new* life, and not merely of a new life, but of a new *kind* of life. It is not the *psyche* or the "*bios*" that is incorruptible and immortal, but the "*zoē*."

This life has its source in God Himself. It is He only who "has immortality,"—only He who can lift His hand to Heaven and say, "I live forever!" "The Father has life (*zoē*) in Himself." God *only* possesses absolute immortality. What arrogance is it, therefore, for insignificant and feeble Man to set up his little claim, on the basis of Platonic reasoning, to that which God declares to be His own peculiar possession!

But God who possesses this, can also bestow it. He does not bestow it on all men. The *wages* of sin is death. Death is the common doom of a race which, without exception, has sinned. It is the *wages*, the natural and logical result of sin. So, also, "he that soweth to his flesh, shall out of his flesh reap corruption." The reaping is but the consequence of the sowing, and is not necessarily penal in its character. Millions "utterly perish in their own

corruption," who have never transgressed a commandment and who "perish without law," because no standard has been given them by which they can be judged. But in contrast with the *wages* of sin the *gift* of God is announced, and that gift is "eternal *zoē*." It is a free gift, alike unpurchasable and unforfeitable. Those on whom it is bestowed were first themselves the gift of the Father to the Son, as He said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me."

The first recipient of this gift of immortality was the man Christ Jesus. "As the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself." This gift was bestowed in the resurrection of the Son from among the dead ones. His death satisfied Eternal Justice, and rendered it possible to bestow eternal life on those to whom was due the death which is the wages of sin. So the Lord Jesus said, anticipatively, concerning His ransomed sheep, "I *give* unto them eternal '*zoē*' and they shall never perish." "I *am* come that they might have '*zoē*,' and that they might have abundance." "He who has the Son *has* the *zoē*, but he who has Him not possesses *not* the *zoē*." "He that believeth

on me hath everlasting *zoē*." "Is passed out of the death into the *zoē*." I might multiply such quotations, but leave the reader to take his Englishman's Greek Concordance and look them up for himself.

*Zoē*, as life in its absolute sense, stands in contrast with "*thanatos*," meaning death. But this latter is one of two words which our English Bible translates indiscriminately "death." The other word is "*nekros*." This is applied to the condition of the sinner, who is declared to be "*nekros*" in trespasses and sins, meaning that as to divine things he is impotent, insensible, and inert. It is also used with reference to those who have fallen asleep in Jesus, or with reference to those who are to be raised to suffer the second death. This second death is "*thanatos*." It is employed only with reference to those who are said to be "destroyed," or to "perish." It means, if it means anything, the absolute and entire extinction of personal being.

The *zoē* when imparted and existing in an individual as his personal life, is given another name, also in contrast with and distinction from the psyche, and that is, *spirit*. It is usual to speak of this as if it were a mere figure of speech. Spiritual things are



frequently talked of by theologians as if they were mere metaphors. But there are, in the teachings of the Christian Scriptures, no more vivid realities than the "spirit," and the "things of the spirit." That which is born of the flesh *is* flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit *is* spirit. The one is as real as the other. It is commonly supposed that this word merely designates the higher qualities of the human soul. But our Lord declared, in effect, to Nicodemus that man, *as man*, did not possess it at all. It was necessary to be born again, or "from above," in order to possess it. The Apostle Paul prays concerning the Thessalonians that their "whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thess. v. 23. The Epistle to the Hebrews tells us that "the Word of God is living and powerful, to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit." Jude declares concerning certain false teachers that they are "psychical, not having a spirit." James speaks of mere human wisdom as "earthly, psychical, demoniac." These passages sufficiently show the broad line of distinction that is drawn between "soul" and "spirit." This distinction is even more vividly drawn in 1 Cor. xv.,

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where the first Adam is declared to be soul, and the second Adam, spirit; the one to be earthy, the other heavenly; the one to possess a *psychical*, and the other a *spiritual* body.

God is Spirit; He is also said to have “*zōē* in Himself.” So Christians are said to possess eternal *zōē*, and to possess a “spirit” communicated from the Lord Jesus Christ. The *pneuma*, or spirit, describes the *zōē*. God is not said to be *soul*, but spirit. The Lord Jesus said, “The words that I speak unto you, they are *spirit*, and they are *zōē*.”

Psychical life is propagated and transmitted, and is therefore successional. The race was created in Adam, and all its individuals have been developed out of him. They are, therefore, his descendants, but cannot be said to be one with him. Adam is dead, and his descendant lives independently of him. The spiritual life, on the other hand, is not propagated, but imparted. It is not successional, because it is eternal. It is one life, undivided and indivisible. It is the same Christ who lives in every believer. The sinner is quickened together with Christ,—that is to say, is made alive in union with the Living One. He is, therefore, “in Christ Jesus,” and Christ

lives in him. Apart from Christ he is nothing. He is a member of the One Body, all the members of which possess one indivisible life. This body is many times spoken of in the Pauline Epistles as "The Christ,"—notably in 1 Cor. xii.: "As the human body is one and has many members, so also is the Christ."

As God is declared to BE Spirit, and to have life IN HIMSELF, so also is He declared to BE *Light*, and to BE *Love*. As He is Spirit, not soul; as to His Essence, He is also essentially Light, and essentially Love. When the Lord Jesus came among men, it was said of Him that "in Him was the Life, and the Life was the Light of the men." I retain the definite articles of the Greek, because they add force and definiteness to the statement. The *zōē* that was in the Son was the *Light*, and it *shone*; so that the men who beheld it were illuminated. It was a Light in the midst of a darkness which comprehended it not. It was therefore something entirely new, and entirely different from the cosmos in the midst of which it shone. It was a new kind of life, not psychical, but spiritual, which did not merely *possess* light,

but *was* light. This difference between essence and attribute we shall have occasion to notice more fully a little farther on.

God is not only Light, but He is declared to be Love. The Life which is declared to be Light is therefore also declared to be Love. Thus we learn of a Trinity of Essence, as well as a Trinity of Persons. These Three are one. Where the Life is, Light and Love are manifested. The solar light is the shadow of this divine constitution. Its rays are heat-giving, light-giving, and quickening, and these three are one.

The *zoē*, or new life of the Christian, is declared to be a divine nature. 2 Pet. i. 4. Those who possess it are said to be born of God, sons of God, children of God, brethren of Christ. I do not say that they possess within themselves essential Deity; but the plain words of Scripture make it certain that the new life which has been given them is a nature which may justly be called divine, because in essence and character it is like God. The *psyche* may and does *possess* love. But the love which it possesses is only a possession or an attribute. Many human souls appear to be entirely destitute of it. But the

*zoē*, or divine nature, is love. That which is the *attribute* of the *psyche* is the *essence* of the *zoē*.

Thus also Light, viz., Holiness, may be an attribute or possession of the *psyche*. Righteousness is *imputed* to souls which are conscious of inbred and active sin. It is actually theirs, and God counts them righteous because He has justified them. He calls them holy, because He has delivered them from condemnation and separated them unto Himself, in His Son. But their holiness is a gift and a possession. It is no part of the constitution of their original being. The divinely imparted *zoē* is, on the contrary, holy in itself. It is sinless, and incapable of sinning.

The *zoē* is therefore, in itself and in essence, Love and Light; and it *shines*. It is the real image of God. As the Son came a "Light into the World, that those who follow Him should not walk in the Darkness, but have the Light of Life;" those who possess eternal life are exhorted to "shine, as lights in the world."

The soul may lose the attribute, however beautiful, which is no part of itself. Without its attributes it virtually ceases to exist. But that which can be only

an attribute of the soul is the vital essence of the spirit. Faith and Hope will be done away, but Love, we are told, is eternal. That Life of which Love is the essence must therefore be eternal. The same thing is true concerning Holiness. Essential Love and Essential Holiness must endure forever.

The Christian Scriptures also frequently use another term in contrast with the "spirit," viz., the "*flesh*." This word describes the aggregation of desires and propensities which make up the character of the merely psychological man. These are all centred upon self. The word is also used by metonymy to describe the whole moral nature of man. The *works* of the flesh are contrasted with the *fruits* of the spirit. The Apostle Paul, in Romans viii., tells us that "there is now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, *because* the law (active principle) of the spirit of the life in Christ Jesus has delivered them from the law of sin and death." But he goes on to tell us that "if we live according to *flesh* we shall die." To the Galatians he writes, "He that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap *corruption* (consummated death); but he that soweth to the spirit shall of the spirit reap life everlasting."

The reason is obvious. The desire of the flesh brings forth sin, and sin, when it is finished, brings forth death. Corruption is what follows death. The desire of the flesh is always towards and upon self. It may be and often is very religious and very benevolent, but when the test is applied, its religion and benevolence are proved to be but refined selfishness. In the very nature of things this must perish. The apostle is here stating a chain of inevitable sequences. Sin is the necessary result of allowed selfish desire, and the inevitable natural consequence of sin, if allowed to complete its work, is death. Corruption is but consummated death,—as the Apostle Peter says concerning some, that they “shall utterly perish in their own corruption.”

We learn here of another important contrast between the psychological and spiritual man, assuring the mortality of the one and the immortality of the other. This is that the one is self-centred, while the other is God-centred. Just as all the desires of the flesh are for its own gratification, the desire of the spirit is to please God. Christ in the latter takes the place of self, and the ultimate result is that everything will be for and unto Him. Because therefore

He lives, and so long as He lives the being in which He has taken the place of the Ego must also live.

The ethics of Christianity are based upon its facts. The exhortations resulting from the facts we have been considering would necessarily be different from those addressed to a soul immortal in itself and capable of infinite development. Our duties spring from our relationships. If these relationships are misapprehended, the exhortations will be misplaced and the result must be failure. To try to cultivate the flesh and to develop human character is a common object of religious instruction. Very attractive results are sometimes secured by this process. But so long as self is not eliminated the results must be only temporary.

The ecclesiastical epistles of the Apostle Paul, like those messages of the Lord with which the Apocalypse opens, are addressed to seven churches. The number seven, in Scripture, signifies always, completeness. The Apocalyptic epistles tell out the whole history and the varied conditions of the visible church on earth from its institution till the return of its absent Lord. The Pauline Epistles reveal



a complete science of Divine Things, and show its adaptation to the needs of the children of God under varied circumstances of trial and temptation. In all these epistles the Personal Deity and true Manhood of the Lord Jesus Christ constitute the grand central fact; but revolving around this are three cardinal facts, presented in each epistle in different relations. These facts are Grace, Atonement, Life. The Christian is told that he is chosen of God, according to immutable purpose, before the foundation of the world; that his sins are forgiven, made an end of, put away, by virtue of their having been laid upon Jesus Christ, when hanging upon the cross; and lastly, that he has been "quicken together with Christ," is "risen with Christ," and "seated in the heavenlies in Him." All the varied aspects of Christian doctrine are but developments of these principles, and every exhortation to proper Christian behavior is based upon them. The believer is not taught to work that he may be saved, but because God has chosen him to salvation; not to abstain from evil that he may become clean, but because he has already been made clean; not to struggle to obtain eternal life, but to walk in the power of the eternal

life which he already possesses. Does he fear the desert of the sin which he is conscious is still in his members? The reply is that "there is now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, because the law of the spirit of the life in Christ Jesus has delivered us from the law of sin and death."<sup>1</sup> Is he tempted to sin because of the assurance that he is saved by unforfeitable grace, he is met with, "How shall we who are *dead* to sin live any longer therein?"<sup>2</sup> Is he exposed to be ensnared by human philosophy and human wisdom? He is told that the "psychical man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual discerneth all things, but is discerned of no one."<sup>3</sup> Do false teachers seek to put him under the bondage of legal observance? The answer comes, "I through law am dead to law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. I do not frustrate the grace of God:

<sup>1</sup> Rom. viii. 2.<sup>2</sup> Rom. vi. 2.<sup>3</sup> I Cor. ii. 14, 15.

for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ died for nought."<sup>1</sup> Would he know his present and future standing in the Universe? He is shown himself in Ephesians, as made alive together with Christ, as seated in Him the heavenlies, exalted to the summit of Creation, a member of the glorious body of the Christ, which is the fulness of Him that filleth all in all. Would he understand his relations to earthly things and circumstances? He is taught in Colossians to set his mind on things above, not on things on the earth, for he is dead and his life is hid with Christ in God, and "when Christ, our Life, shall be manifested, then shall we also be manifested with Him in glory."<sup>2</sup> Is he earnestly seeking to follow Christ? He is warned to put no confidence in the flesh, but to seek to apprehend the power of the resurrection of Christ, for which also Christ has apprehended him. Finally, the proximate hope set before him is not the exaltation of his psychical nature, nor the promotion of selfish enjoyment, but the development into visible and potential manifestation of His eternal but hidden life, when his Lord and Head shall come in glory.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gal. ii. 20, 21.

<sup>2</sup> Col. iii. 2-4.

<sup>3</sup> This is the theme of the Epistles to the Thessalonians.

The careful and unprejudiced reader who will study as a whole each one of this group of Epistles and their relations to each other, cannot fail to be convinced of the perishableness, if left to itself, of the old or psychical nature, and of the fact that an actual new vital entity has been imparted to the Christian,—the resurrection life of the Son of God,—in the power of which alone he can discern heavenly things, is freed from condemnation, has any ability whatever to please God, and shall live forever.

More than this, I think that the Christian who for the first time begins to study his Bible in the light of this truth will feel as if a veil had been taken from his eyes. He will see a unity, harmony, and completeness in the Book which were not before apparent; will find presented to his mind and heart motives of the most powerful character to holy living of the very existence of which he had been unconscious, and will learn of heights and depths of the Divine Love of which he had never even dreamed.

But it may be said of Christendom to-day as the Apostle Paul said of the Jews, that “the veil is upon their hearts.” When they shall turn to the Lord the veil shall be taken away. May my reader, thus

turning to Him, behold in Him his own and only immortality.

The *zoē* or Christ-life now in the believer is the beginning of a new order of things, which in due season will replace the old, already near vanishing away. The inception of the Old Creation foreshadowed the development of the New. By command of God, Light shone out over a scene of darkness and death. The first fact announced concerning the Word made flesh is that the Light shone in the Darkness, and the Darkness apprehended not. Not only had moral night settled down upon the world, but it had been reduced to moral chaos. Upon the physical chaos the Heavenly Dove brooded before life became manifestive. The New Creation is in Christ Jesus, and its fulness is being developed out of Him. Upon Him this same Dove descended as He came up from Jordan's baptismal waters. On the third day life was manifested upon the surface of the earth. On the third day also resurrection life came into the view of the Universe, and on the evening of that day was possessed by men upon the earth. Into the nostrils of the first man, when He had brought him forth from the womb

of his mother Earth, God blew the breath of lives, and he became a living soul. Upon the disciples also the Risen One breathed, saying, "Receive ye Holy Spirit." The first Adam was made in the image and likeness of God,—the second Adam is the brightness of His glory and express image of His substance. He is the image of the Invisible God, and in that very capacity is the First-Born of the whole Creation,—that is to say, of the New Creation.

The Old Creation has been condemned and set aside. The Problem of Evil has been solved by its means, and it now remains but as a scaffolding during the building of the New, which, being fitly compacted together, is "growing up into a holy temple in the Lord, . . . a habitation of God in the Spirit."<sup>1</sup> When the last living stone has been fitted to the place designed for it from all eternity, the scaffolding will be destroyed. Then shall all things be reheaded up together in THE CHRIST, and Life, Light, and Love will be universal, as they are eternal.

<sup>1</sup> Eph. ii. 21, 22.

# OPINIONS OF LEADING AUTHORITIES

ON THE

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