

LIFE,
DEATH,
AND SPIRITUALISM

COLLECTED PERIODICAL ARTICLES

A. T. JONES

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About the “Fragments” Series

THE *Fragments* series is composed of 12 books of articles, gathered from the various Periodicals which A. T. Jones contributed to during his lifetime. There is a separate and parallel series devoted to the writings of Jones’ companion in the gospel, E. J. Waggoner.

In order to bring some cohesion to these articles, the books are topical: that is, articles are organized according to their topic, and there is a separate book for each topic. So there are books on Gospel, Law and Sabbath, Healing and Temperance, the Bible, Religious Liberty, the Holy Spirit, the Prophetic Word, etc.

These volumes range in size from less than 100 pages, to over 1500 pages. In the largest, the Religious Liberty articles, I selected only those articles that carried principles or examples that would be applicable for our day. There were many other articles (about 3000 pages or more) that concerned local news and happenings. But to extract just the most essential, I left these out.

In most cases, I have left out articles that already appear in other books. For example, we produced a large collection of articles regarding the Papacy and Catholic errors, “The Light Shines in Darkness”. Articles that are in that collection are not included in the *Fragments* series.

Also, some articles crossed over many topics. For example, an article on the Sabbath could fit into the “Law and Sabbath” book, but it might also cover “Religious Liberty”, “The Gospel”, and even “The Prophetic Word.” I did not think it wise to duplicate articles, so in most cases I tried to fit these kinds of articles into the book that matched it’s main topic, or where there were a series of articles that it belonged to.

What these books demonstrate is that A. T. Jones produced a lot of precious material, much of which was never organized or reprinted after his death. Jesus taught us to “gather the fragments that none be lost.” *John* 6:12. Since much depends on how we receive and appreciate the light that God gives through His chosen messengers, I felt a burden to put these forgotten treasures into an orderly and easily accessible format.

May the Spirit that gave them, bless you as you read!

*“If human beings would open the windows of the soul heavenward,
in appreciation of the divine gifts,
a flood of healing virtue would pour in.”*

Ellen White, Ministry of Healing, p. 116

About This Volume

THIS volume gathers together those articles from A. T. Jones that are on the topic of the soul, eternal life, immortality, the nature of man, what happens after death.

When the early church started mixing in Greek philosophy with Christian teachings, the idea of an “immortal soul” became incorporated, and has been held by many denominations since that time. It is, however, contrary to:

1. The Law: God warned that souls which break the law are subject to death and not to life. *Genesis* 2:17; *Romans* 6:23.
2. The Gospel: only through Jesus Christ can man receive eternal life again. *John* 10:10; *1 John* 5:11.
3. God’s character: the “immortal soul” idea leads to an “eternally burning hell” for those who disobey God. But an unending eternity of punishment for a short life of sin is not only unjust, but cruel.
4. The Resurrection: why is a resurrection of the body needed, if our immortal souls go right to heaven at death?
5. The Judgment: there is to be a judgment before the resurrection, to determine who has “made themselves ready.” *Daniel* 7:10; *Revelation* 11:18, 14:7. But if souls are constantly flying to heaven (or hell) at death, why is the judgment required?
6. Separation from Spiritualism: many warnings have been given in the Bible against communicating with spirits of the dead. *Isaiah* 8:19-20, *Leviticus* 19:31, *Deuteronomy* 18:10-11. But now, even professed Christians think that their relatives are in heaven and can communicate with them.
7. The Prerogative of God: the Bible declares that God only has immortality, and that it is only through the gift of Christ, that man can receive it again.

The opposite of the “immortal soul” concept, introduced into Adventism through George Storrs, a Methodist minister who joined in with William Miller’s revival, was the teaching of man’s natural mortality through sin, and that death was an unconscious state until the resurrection. This became incorporated into the Seventh-day Adventist church after 1844, and has been considered one of the pillars of the faith ever since.

1. The Death of Saul

Advent Review, December 18, 1879

THE death of Saul did not occur on the morrow after his visit to the woman of Endor. Notice first, the phrase “to-morrow” signifies the day following the night during which it is spoken. See:

1 Samuel 19

¹⁰ And Saul sought to smite David even to the wall with a javelin; but he slipped away out of Saul's presence, and he smote the javelin into the wall; and David fled and escaped that night.

¹¹ Saul also sent messengers unto David's house, to watch him, and to slay him in the morning; and Michal, David's wife, told him, saying, If you save not your life tonight, to-morrow you shall be slain.

And:

Acts 23

³¹ Then the soldiers, as it was commanded them, took Paul, and brought him by night to Antipatris.

³² On the morrow they left the horsemen to go with him, and returned to the castle.

Also:

Acts 20

⁷ And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.

Then Eutychus fell out of the window and was killed, and Paul brought him to life again, etc.

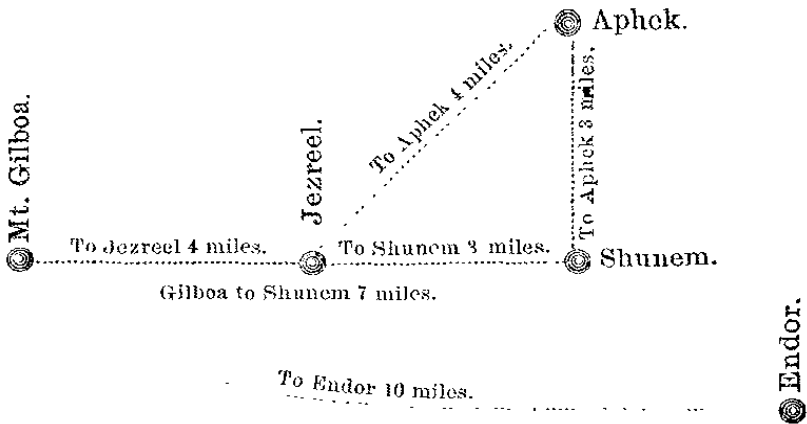
¹¹ When he therefore was come up again, and had broken bread, and eaten, and talked a long while, even till break of day, so he departed.

This text says that he preached till midnight, ready to depart

on the morrow, and that he departed at break of day. So it is plain from these scriptures that the term “tomorrow” means the day, or light part of the time following the night, or dark part, and that it begins in the morning, or even at “break of day.”

Therefore, when the spirit told Saul, through the woman, “tomorrow you and your sons shall be with me,” that is, that they should be dead, he meant by the word “tomorrow” the daylight division of time following that night.

In the second place, we want to understand the position of the two armies at that time, and their movements afterward; and to assist the reader in understanding this, I give a plan here of the places named, their relative positions and distances. There are five places named in the narrative: Shunem, Gilboa, Endor, Aphek, and Jezreel; and they lay as indicated in this diagram:



Now, the account says:

1 Samuel 28

⁴ And the Philistines gathered themselves together, and came and pitched in Shunem; and Saul gathered all Israel together, and they pitched in Gilboa.

Thus the first day Israel is in Gilboa and the Philistines in

Shunem, seven miles apart. That night Saul went to Endor, ten miles, and inquired of the spirit; the spirit told him that he and his sons should be with him “tomorrow.” Verse 19. Then Saul and his servants “rose up, and went away that night” (verse 25), back to Gilboa, making in all twenty miles that Saul traveled that night.

Second day (the tomorrow of verse 19).

1 Samuel 29

¹ Now the Philistines gathered together all their armies to Aphek [three miles from Shunem]; and the Israelites pitched by a fountain which is in Jezreel [four miles from Gilboa].

Now they are about four miles apart, for Aphek is about that distance from Jezreel.

But while the Philistines were moving from Shunem to Aphek, passing “on by hundreds, and by thousands,” their princes saw David and his men in the rearward with Achish, and objected to their going to the battle with them. *1 Samuel* 29:2-5. Then Achish ordered David and his men to return to their homes; but it was too late in the day for them to start that day, so Achish said to David:

¹⁰ Now rise up early in the morning with your master’s servants that are come with you; and as soon as you be up early in the morning, and have light, depart.

Now the second day, the tomorrow of the spirit, is past, the battle has not yet been fought, and cannot be; for the two armies are four miles apart, and Saul and his sons are yet alive upon the earth.

Third day:

¹¹ So David and his men rose up early to depart in the morning, to return into the land of the Philistines. And the Philistines went up to Jezreel.

At Jezreel was where Saul and the Israelites were, and there

was where the battle was fought, and the Israelites...

1 Samuel 34

¹ ...fled from before the Philistines, and fell down slain in Mount Gilboa.

And it was not on the morrow after Saul inquired of the familiar spirit, as the spirit said it would be, so the “thing did not follow, nor come to pass,” as it had said. Therefore the Lord did not speak by that spirit, and we are not afraid of him. *Deuteronomy 18:22.*

If you want to see a prophecy spoken by the Spirit of the Lord concerning “tomorrow,” and fulfilled to the very letter, read *2 Kings 7*.

So we find that on that point, as well as on every other, the Scripture proves to an absolute certainty that it was an evil, lying spirit, even one of the “spirits of devils,” (*Revelation 16:14*), that appeared to the woman of Endor and communicated with Saul.

2. Did Elijah Die?

Signs of the Times, September 10, 1885

WE HAVE long been perfectly assured, and it has been often shown in these columns, that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul turns into utter confusion and nonsense the whole scheme of divine revelation as contained in the Bible. If, however, there had been in our minds the least doubt that such is the truth, such lingering doubt would have been entirely and effectually removed by what has lately come under our notice.

Our readers will recollect that the International Sunday-school Lesson for September 6, 1885, was on the translation of Elijah. During the past week, the religious papers containing notes on this lesson have reached us from different parts of the country, and it is in these “notes,” and “observations,” and “practical suggestions,” etc., etc., that we find most aptly and fully illustrated, the havoc that is made with Scripture, reason, and common sense, by the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. We propose to lay before our readers some of the effusions that have actually been set forth as worthy of being taught in the Sunday-schools of our country.

The Bible record is:

2 Kings 2

¹¹ And it came to pass, as they [Elijah and Elisha] still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into Heaven.

There is a narrative so simple that a child can understand it, and an event transcendently sublime. And yet upon such a subject the writer of the “notes” in the *Pacific* gets off the following:

A sudden departure from this world is often considered a misfortune, and a stroke of lightning a token of divine dis-

pleasure. But, if we are ready, as Elijah was, we may accept it as a token of divine love that the manner of our removal is quick and painless.

Does this writer mean to convey the idea that Elijah was struck with lightning? If not, does he mean to say that, if a man were struck with lightning, it would be the same to him as was translation to Elijah? Again, is a “sudden departure from this world” by death, whether it be by a stroke of lightning or otherwise, equivalent to the departure of Elijah from this world? If so, why should it be considered “a misfortune”? Was it “a misfortune” to Elijah that he should make the “sudden departure” that he did?

Well, if he was struck with lightning, doubtless it was; but if as the word of God says, Elijah went up by a whirlwind into Heaven, then it was certainly everything but a misfortune. But the writer of the *Pacific* is not by any means alone. Here is one in the *Christian Union* writing “Home Talks about the Word,” on this same subject:

Paul says Elijah was a man of like passions with ourselves. Every child of God goes to Heaven just as much alive as Elijah did. The body is not you; you live in it, and you keep on living without it.

We would suggest that if this writer would study the word of God more and the doctrine of the immortality of the soul less, she would not have quoted “Paul” as saying that Elijah was a man of like passions with ourselves. See *James* 5:17. This simply in passing. But now to our subject.

If it be true that, “Every child of God goes to Heaven just as much alive as Elijah did,” how is it that nobody does it, nor ever has done it since Elijah did it? If, “Every child of God goes to Heaven just as much alive as Elijah did,” then how is it that every child of God, as well as everybody else, dies? Is it the same thing to die as it is to be translated? Here we set together two passages of Scripture:

2 Kings 2

¹¹ And Elijah went up by a whirlwind into Heaven.

2 Kings 13

²⁰ And Elisha died, and they buried him.

Now we ask: Do these two passages mean the same thing? Did Elisha go to Heaven just as much alive, as Elijah did? If language is of any use at all; if the power of reason, or of comprehension, be of any worth whatever; then it is impossible to hold both these scriptures as meaning the same thing—one just as much as the other.

It is equally impossible to believe that these words of the Lord, and those quoted from the *Christian Union*, can both be the truth. And as the word of God is the truth, we know by that, that this from the *Union* is not the truth.

There is another statement in the same paper to which we would call attention, this by Dr. Lyman Abbott, in which it is implied, if not definitely stated, that this narrative is not a part of the Bible. He says:

If any one doubts or denies the truth of the story, it is not worthwhile to argue with him. The translation of Elijah was a sign to Elisha. The sight was vouchsafed to him. He learned its lesson. That is enough....It is not right to treat as a rejecter of Christian truth one whose philosophic tendencies make him skeptical respecting such an event as this. The translation of Elijah is a flower embroidered on the edge of the garment; it is no part of the woof.

We can but wonder how Dr. Abbott knows that the “translation of Elijah is no part of the woof” of the garment of Christian truth. Is it not a part of the word of God? Was it not written for our learning? Is it not profitable? By what right does Dr. Abbott take upon himself to decide how much of the word of God is a part of the “woof,” and how much is not?

And if “it is not right to treat as a rejecter of Christian truth

one whose philosophic tendencies make him skeptical respecting such an event as this,” then is it right “to treat as a rejecter of Christian truth one whose philosophic tendencies make him skeptical respecting such an event as” the resurrection of Christ?

If “philosophic tendencies” will justify skepticism respecting this event or this part of the word of God, why will they not justify it respecting any or all other events or any other part, or even all of that word?

Next we have the *New York Observer*. One of the practical suggestions drawn from Elijah’s translation is this:

The dead do not slumber in the grave. God’s own go straight to the heavenly place. Elijah went up thither, not to sleep, but to live and serve and rejoice. So do dying saints now pass at once to glory “in paradise.”

Let us give a scriptural analysis of this.

1. “The dead do not slumber in the grave.”

Daniel 12

² And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake.

John 11

¹¹ Our friend Lazarus sleeps; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.

¹⁴ Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead.

³⁸ Jesus...came to the grave,

⁴³ [And] cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.

2. “God’s own go straight to the heavenly place.”

Acts 13

²² I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after my own heart.

Acts 2

²⁹ Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the pa-

triarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulcher is with us unto this day.

³⁴ For David is not ascended into the Heavens.

3. "Elijah went up thither, not to sleep, but to live and serve and rejoice. So do dying saints now pass at once to glory 'in paradise.'"

Psalm 115

¹⁷ The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence.

Psalm 6

⁵ For in death there is no remembrance of You; in the grave who shall give You thanks?

John 13

³³ Little children, yet a little while I am with you. You shall seek me; and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, you cannot come; so now I say to you.

John 14

¹² I go unto my Father.

Reader, which will you believe? the word of God, or the word of man? Will you believe a doctrine to be the truth that directly contradicts the word of God?

The *Sunday-School Times* says:

"The miraculous translation of Elijah only sets before us in a visible appearance what takes place when every true child of God departs."

And the *New York Independent*:

"Elijah's translation only slightly differs from that of every Christian. The important part is not that the body is taken up to Heaven, but that the soul is. And that is what we can all hope for."

These quotations¹ might be multiplied but we have not the space, nor, indeed, do we think it necessary. But from these no one can fail to see that there is an utter confusion of ideas, in regard to death and translation. From these extracts from the Sunday-school teaching, it is impossible to tell whether Elijah died, or whether all men are translated. Yes, more, from these it is impossible to tell whether Elijah himself died or whether he was translated.

We have often wondered what that man could have been thinking about, who wrote in the margin of *2 Chronicles* 21:12, of a certain writing of Elijah's that it, "was writ before his death"! But since seeing the above extracts from these leading, evangelical (?) papers, we cannot see but that he was just as clear in his estimate as are these eminent theologians of our own day.

And such confusion of ideas, and of plain Scriptures, in short, such unmitigated nonsense, is taught in the Sunday-schools throughout our land, as being the veritable truth of God. And all this that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul may have free course to run and be glorified. That doctrine cannot be held in harmony with the Scripture; and, that it cannot, needs no better proof than is found in the extracts which we have given. It is a doctrine entirely foreign to the word, the work, and the purpose of God.

We will present just one more extract—another from Dr. Abbott—and if anything could show a worse confusion of ideas, than the foregoing extracts display, this must be the thing that does it. It is as follows:

"What light, if any, does this incident throw on the question respecting the resurrection of the body?"

Well, we should like to know. We wish the Doctor had an-

¹ **Note:** These extracts can be found in the issue of August 27, 1885, of each of the respective papers, except the *S. S. Times*—in that the date is August 22.

swered his own question. We should exceedingly like to know what light could be thrown upon the resurrection of a dead man, by the fact that a living man went to Heaven! True, the Doctor says, "if any." Well, is there any?

We believe the Bible. We believe that Elijah went up into Heaven; this too, with no hint of death. We believe also, according to the Bible, that when a man dies and goes to the grave (*Ecclesiastes* 9:10; *2 Kings* 22:20; *2 Chronicles* 34:26), it is just as far removed from any similarity to that which happened to Elijah, as anything can possibly be. One is life, and the other is death; Elijah went into Heaven, the person who dies goes into the grave.

But if death and translation mean the same thing, if the experience of the man who dies is the same as that of the man who never dies, then language becomes useless, reason is made impotent, and the Bible a mass of meaningless phrases.

3. Psalm 146:4

Signs of the Times, November 5, 1885

Psalm 146

³ Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help.

⁴ His breath goes forth, he returns to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.

THIS is in harmony with the Scriptures throughout. As stated elsewhere:

Ecclesiastes 9

⁵ The dead know not anything;

⁶ Their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished.

Psalm 115

¹⁷ The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence.

To evade the force of the words of *Psalm 146:4*,—"In that very day his thoughts perish,"—it has been, for a long while, a favorite scheme of those who hold to the immortality of the soul to change the words of the text by substituting the word "purposes" for "thoughts," claiming that the man still thinks when he is dead, but that the purposes which he had formed while living have perished, that they cannot be accomplished.

And now comes the *Revised Version*, and, with a marginal reading, bolsters up this theory. The text of *Psalm 146:4* reads in the *Revised Version* just as it does in the *Old Version*, but "purposes" is put into the margin as an alternate reading. Thus this version is made to favor the idea that "thoughts" in the text is at least equivalent in meaning to "purposes;" and that when a man dies, in that very day his purposes perish, but his thoughts go on.

Such an interpretation of the text is, as we have seen, to make the scripture contradict itself. But that is not all, it is to

make the scripture contradict every principle of fact and evidence as seen in human experience. Let us cite a few instances of men's purposes that did not perish "in that very day," in which their breath went forth and they returned to earth.

Nebuchadnezzar formed the purpose of confining the River Tigris within certain limits, and built an extensive embankment at a place near where Baghdad now stands; and the bricks with which he faced and strengthened the embankment, and which have upon them his name, lie today exactly as he placed them. We know, therefore, that that purpose of his did not perish in the very day in which his breath went forth, nor for ages afterward, if indeed it has yet perished.

Stephen Girard purposed that the poor white orphans of the city of Philadelphia, Pa., should have the benefits of education, and should be supported till they had acquired an education. That purpose did not perish; not has it yet perished, nor will it ever while the world lasts.

Peter Cooper purposed that mechanics and artisans should have opportunity to acquire...

"...the most skillful practice of their several trades; to that they could not only apply their labor to the best possible advantages, but enjoy the happiness of acquiring useful knowledge—the purest and most innocent of all sources of enjoyment."

His purpose did not perish when he died.

James Lick purposed that the State of California should have an observatory, and in it a telescope having a larger object-glass than any that had ever yet been made. He died. But so far from his purpose perishing the "very day" in which his breath went forth, Europe and America have been engaged ever since in fulfilling that purpose, now soon to be accomplished.

Multitudes of such instances might be given from all ages of

human history in illustration of the fact that to read purposes for thoughts in *Psalms* 146:4, is to put darkness for light, and falsehood for truth. The fact of the matter is, men's purposes perish while they live as well as when they die. It is not necessary to wait till their "breath goes forth," and they return to earth, to realize that fact.

Today I may form a purpose concerning tomorrow, or next week, or next month, or next year, and that purpose may, and indeed does as often as otherwise, perish. Yet I continue to live and to think. Today I may purpose a thing in regard to even the things of this very day, and that purpose is just as likely as not to perish; but that affects neither the fact of my living, nor of my thinking. Again we say, and the experience of every human being proves the truth, that men's purposes perish in the days that they live, as well as in the day that they die.

It is not so with men's thoughts. When a man dies, it is the truth that "in that very day his thoughts perish"—he ceases to think, the mind ceases to act. As long as there is consciousness, there is thought; but when a man dies, all power of thought is destroyed.

That a man can think when he is dead is certainly one of the most perverse ideas that ever entered men's brains. A man may be struck a slight blow on the head, and he ceases to think; but let him be struck a crushing, killing blow, and lo! he thinks more and better than ever! In other words; knock him senseless and he cannot think at all; kill him, and he can think better than ever before!! Was there ever such nonsense?

Does anyone suppose that Adam, before he lived, had any powers of thought? Assuredly not. Then upon what principles can it be supposed that he had any such powers after he died—when he had returned to the condition in which he was before he lived? Did he, by sinning, acquire the power to think after he was dead? Did he, by sinning, acquire the power to

retain in death one of the very chiefest of the attributes of life
—the power of thought?

It is the absolute truth that:

Romans 6

²³ The wages of sin is death.

And when, because of sin, death passed upon all mankind,
it is equally the truth that when...

Psalms 146

⁴ His breath goes forth, [and] he returns to his earth, in that
very day his thoughts perish.

4. Try the Spirits

Signs of the Times, July 1, 8 & 15, 1886

How to Try Them

THE editor of the *Golden Gate*, in an article on “Spiritualism in the Churches,” says,

Ministers and laymen alike are disposed to “try the spirits.” [Thus it is, that] the communion of saints [is] a glorious fact in the lives of thousands who are never known or recognized as Spiritualists.

Well we also are disposed to “try the spirits,” but in a different way. If we were ignorant of the nature of some substance, we would not think, of swallowing it in order to try it and see if it were poison. We would take it to a chemist, who would subject it to the test of some known substance, and we could soon tell whether or not it would be safe to take it. If it was declared to be poison, we should certainly leave it alone.

Well, the same word which commands us to “try the spirits,” also tells us how to try them:

Isaiah 8

²⁰ To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.

Turning to a part of the “testimony” where a brief account of the work of the spirits is given, we learn that:

Revelation 16

¹⁴ They are the spirits of devils.

That settles the matter for us. We do not wish any closer acquaintance with those spirits than the word of God, our sure guide, gives us. It declares Spiritualism to be a deadly poison; and the only way we know of to escape the effects of poison is to let it alone.

Spiritualism has now become a common thing; and in the

last few years, as compared with its earlier history, has behaved itself exceedingly well. And as the immortality of the soul, the sole foundation of Spiritualism, is made so essential a part of the creeds of all the churches, it has in a measure disarmed the distrust in which it was very properly held in its early day while yet it was a new thing.

The source of Spiritualism is above the natural. No man ever yet believed in it because of its accordance with the natural, but solely because its phenomena is contrary to that which is natural. Therefore the only proper and trustworthy test by which the spirits can be tried is something whose source is likewise above the natural; and in the Bible this demand is fully supplied.

God spoke in time past unto the fathers by the prophets; afterward by His Son; and yet afterward by the apostles. *Hebrews* 1:1-2. This word...

2 Peter 1

²¹ ...came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

Therefore we maintain that the testimony of the Bible is the true and only safe standard by which to try the spirits. To that word we appeal. To that word the appeal must ever be made, if Spiritualism, its phenomena, its tendency, and its final end would be understood at all.

It was with direct reference to Spiritualism that the prophet exclaimed,

Isaiah 8

²⁰ To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.

The whole passage is as follows:

¹⁹ And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep and that mutter; should not a people seek unto their God? for the liv-

ing to the dead?

²⁰ To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.

Most assuredly this scripture is applicable now. On every hand, and among all classes of people from the hovel to the courts of kings and the palaces of queens, they say unto you,

“Seek unto them that have familiar spirits.”

And when this is so, the word says,

“Should not a people seek unto their God?”

By seeking unto God, men can learn more about Spiritualism than they can by seeking unto them that have familiar spirits. Then the prophet exclaims in a surprised inquiry,

“For the living to the dead?”

That is, Shall the living go to the dead to find out that which they wish to know? The living know something; the dead know nothing; and it certainly is matter of surprise that they who know something should go to them who know nothing to find out what they desire to know.

Thus at the very threshold of Spiritualism, we are brought face to face with a flat contradiction of “this word” in accordance with which they must speak, or else stand proven to be from the source of darkness.

“This word,” the word of God, says:

Ecclesiastes 9

⁵ The living know that they shall die; but the dead know not anything...

⁶ Their love, and their hatred, and their envy is now perished; neither have they any more a portion forever in anything that is done under the sun.

But instead of speaking according to this word, these “familiar spirits” with whom Spiritualism deals purport to be

people who have died in this world, but who now live in the “spirit world,” and continue to know all and a good deal more about both this world and all others than they did while they lived. That is to say, a person knows a vast deal more when he is dead than when he is alive!

In others words, if a man should be struck a moderately heavy blow and merely knocked, as the term is, senseless, he knows nothing, which is a fact; but if he be struck a crushing blow and killed outright, then he knows everything! then his knowledge is almost divine! Such stuff is according to the peeping and muttering nonsense of familiar spirits, but it is in no sense according to the word of God.

But this is by no means the only point in which Spiritualism conflicts with the word of God. In fact there is no agreement at all between them. It is well known that the very first of the first fruits of Spiritualism is to destroy confidence in the Bible. That there is no agreement, but rather direct conflict instead, between the teachings of the Bible, and those of Spiritualism, we have the positive evidence of prominent Spiritualists themselves.

In the *Religio-Philosophical Journal* of April 25, 1885, there was printed an address delivered by Wm. Emmette Coleman, at the Metropolitan Temple, San Francisco, Cal., on the thirty-seventh anniversary of the advent of modern Spiritualism. The address is entitled, “A Comparison of the Scriptural and Spiritual Evidences of Man’s Continued Existence;” but it is the worst kind of a misnomer to call it a comparison, for it would be impossible to show a clearer contrast between any two things than is shown in this address, between Spiritualism and the Scriptures.

We are glad to see this contrast so clearly defined by Spiritualism itself; for we propose to present a summary of it, and if we were to draw up such a one ourselves, some might think we were prejudiced even to bigotry.

We are sorry that we cannot present this summary in Mr. Coleman's own words, in full; but the truth is that in his presentation of the Bible side of the case, he sometimes uses language so extravagant, not to say scandalous, that we would not show such disrespect to our readers as to set it in our columns. We shall, however, as nearly as possible, present the matter as he did, only dropping his extravagances.

The Scriptures teach the eternal punishment of wicked mortals and fallen angels in everlasting hell-fire; Spiritualism teaches the non-existence of the fallen angels and the lake of fire, and that there is no eternal punishment.

The New Testament teaches the existence of a fixed, material Heaven, above the clouds, ruled autocratically by a local, personal God, seated on a throne, attended by hosts of non-human, winged angels; Spiritualism teaches that Heaven is a mortal condition,—happiness, harmony,—not a fixed location, and that in the spiritual world no trace can be found of a masculine potentate, enthroned in solemn awe, and that all angels are human spirits, devoid of wings, who have progressed into a high and pure condition from the lower spheres of the spirit realm.

Jesus and the apostles evidently conceived Heaven to be created miraculously by the arbitrary fiat of Jehovah; Spiritualism pronounces all spirit-worlds to be evolved from material worlds, or from lower spiritual worlds, through laws eternal as nature.

Christianity and the Bible threaten eternal damnation as a penalty for non-belief in Jesus; while Spiritualism declares that the belief or non-belief in Jesus weighs nothing as against the soul's seduction, the attainment of Heaven being dependent solely upon the character and aspiration of the individual, independent of all beliefs in speculative doctrines, and that, if any thing, the belief in the supremacy of Jesus, on earth and in Heaven, being an intellectual error, will retard rather than advance the soul's progress in light and love, purity and wisdom.

The New Testament and Christianity teach that man's sal-

vation, in a measure, depends upon his submission to the rite of baptism; Spiritualism affirms baptism to be of no avail, a foolish relic of ancient superstition, a belief in its efficacy cramping the mind and dwarfing the powers of the soul, inimical rather than favorable to the soul's purification.

The New Testament teaches salvation by and through Christ; Spiritualism knows no salvation through Christ or any other person, male or female—the man Jesus being able to save himself only, every soul being its own saviour, assisted of course by other sympathizing souls like Jesus, Paul, and other philanthropists.

Jesus and the apostles appear to have believed that the body and soul of man remained unconscious till the judgment day, when all material bodies would rise from the dead reanimated. Spiritualism affirms that the material body decomposes and is never restored to life, it having no place in the spirit world, it being impossible for purely material things to exist in that realm.

Christ and the apostles taught that at the end of the world a general judgment would take place, with Christ as judge, seated on a cloudy throne, before which throne all that have ever lived on earth would be assembled, in their material bodies; that the records of each life kept by angels would be read, and the entire multitude be separated into two great divisions. Spiritualism shows this to be a fancy sketch,—that no material resurrection or judgment day will ever happen; that immediately after death each human soul enters upon its never-ending pathway through the spheres, upward and onward forever, the day of judgment in our sense taking place at the entrance of each soul into spirit life, and in a more extended sense in every day of the life of every soul, a constant fact in the consciousness of all. Also that Jesus has no connection with the judgment of any soul save his own, in any peculiar or special sense.

Finally, Jesus taught that there was no marriage in the future life; while Spiritualism teaches that the domestic relations are eternal; that all true marital unions continue in the after life; that all souls have eternal soul-mates, the two being destined in time to be eternally conjoined as one; and that

there is no such thing as bachelorhood or old-maidism in the spirit country, except in the earlier experiences of some spirits, the very universe itself being redolent of nuptial unions in all departments of being, the sex principle being inherent in the eternal constitution of things.

In no one particular, then, does the description of our future home found in the Bible correspond with the sublime and virtue-inspiring realities of spirit existence open to our gaze in this age of spiritual life and revelation.

Thus in trying the spirits, by the very first test that we apply, by this appeal “to the law and to the testimony,” we find that “there is no light in them” and that the Scriptures and the teaching of the spirits are in direct antagonism. We shall now present a further illustration of this.

The passage of Scripture in which is found the injunction to “try the spirits,” reads in full thus:

1 John 4

¹ Beloved believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

The Scriptures show that there are manifestations of the Spirit of God, and manifestations of the spirits of devils; that there are true prophets, and false prophets; that the true prophet is moved by the Spirit of God, and the false prophet is moved by a spirit that is not of God.

The manifestations of the “spirits” are by a number of spirits and are discordant, contradicting themselves and one another. Of the Spirit of God,

1 Corinthians 12

⁴ There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit;

⁵ And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord;

⁶ And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which works all in all.

While of “the spirits” there are diversities of spirits as well as diversities of gifts; differences of administrations of different lords; and diversities of operations with no God at all.

By the Spirit of God is given in one:

⁸ ...the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;

⁹ To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;

¹⁰ To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues;

¹¹ But all these work that one and the selfsame Spirit.

While of the spirits, if there be words,—we shall not say of wisdom for there is no wisdom in them,—or gifts of healing, or miracles, or divers kinds of tongues, or any other manifestations, they are by a multitude of spirits, and with such diversity that there is no telling whether ever any two even of successive manifestations are by the same spirit, much less is it so that different manifestations at the same time are of the same spirit.

How then shall we know the true from the false?

1 John 4

² Hereby know you the Spirit of God. Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God;

³ And every spirit that confesses not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God.

Some may say that Spiritualism will bear this test, because Spiritualists admit that there lived a person called Jesus Christ. Yes, they do admit that there lived a person called by that name. But that is not enough. Jesus Christ is not simply the name of a person, as John Smith, or William Thompson, is a name. It is not only a name but a title,—a title which bears a depth of meaning.

The words Jesus and Christ are both Greek transferred into

English. If they were translated instead of transferred we should have no such word as either Jesus or Christ. It is evident therefore that we must know the meaning of the words, before we can tell what is demanded in the confession that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh.

Jesus means Saviour, and its meaning upon him was given by the angel when he announced that he should be born.

Matthew 1

²¹ And she shall bring forth a son, and you shall call His name JESUS [Saviour, margin]; for He shall save His people from their sins.

“Christ” signifies “anointed,” and is explained in *John* 1:41 with the margin. Speaking of Andrew, he says,

John 1

⁴¹ He first found his own brother Simon and said unto him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.

“Messiah” is Hebrew, and interpreted into Greek is “the Christ,” which, interpreted into English, is “the Anointed.” Thus in the term “Christ Jesus” we have the real meaning “the Anointed Saviour,” and as the angel said He shall save His people from their sins, we have the whole expressed by Paul, when he says:

1 Timothy 1

¹⁵ This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus [the Anointed Saviour] came into the world to save sinners.

Therefore, what there is in this test of the spirits, is this: Every spirit that confesses that the Anointed Saviour of sinners is come in the flesh, is of God; and every spirit that confesses not that the Anointed Saviour of sinners is come in the flesh is not of God.

To confess that the Anointed Saviour of sinners is come in

the flesh is a test that Spiritualism will not bear. Spiritualism knows no sin; much less does it confess a Saviour. Andrew Jackson Davis said:

Sin indeed in the common acceptance of that term does not really exist.

In the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures it is affirmed that sin is the transgression of the law. But by an examination of nature, the true and only Bible, it will be seen that this statement is erroneous. It gives a wrong idea of both man and law....It will be found impossible for man to transgress a law of God.

Why is it impossible? Simply because according to Spiritualism every man is his own God. Said B. Hall in a spiritualistic lecture:

I believe that man is amenable to no law not written upon his own nature, no matter by whom it is given....By his own nature must he be tried—by his own acts he must stand or fall. True, man must give an account to God for all his deeds; but how? Solely by giving account to his own nature—to himself.

As to its knowing no Saviour, we repeat a quotation from earlier:

Spiritualism declares that the belief or non-belief in Jesus weighs nothing as against the soul's salvation....If anything, the belief in the supremacy of Jesus...will retard rather than advance the soul's progress.

Spiritualism knows no salvation through Christ or any other person,...every soul being its own saviour.

Thus it is plain that the spirits do not confess that Jesus Christ, the Anointed Saviour, is come in the flesh, and they are therefore false prophets. And then the word of God continues,

1 John 4

³ ...this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof you have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

1 John 2

²² Who is a liar but he that denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denies the Father and the Son.

They are lying, seducing, wicked spirits. They lead to denial of God, and the Lord Jesus Christ; they lead away from the word of God; and the end of their course can only be perdition.

Here then, we have applied two of the tests which the word of God gives us by which to try the spirits:

1. They must speak according to the word of God;
2. They must confess that the Anointed Saviour is come in the flesh.

And in both instances Spiritualism fails to be in any sense worthy of confidence. There are yet other tests which we shall apply.

5. The Death of Lazarus

Signs of the Times, July 8, 1886

John 11:1-16

JESUS had often found the rest that His weary human nature required at the house of Lazarus, in Bethany. His first visit there was when he and His disciples were weary from a toilsome journey on foot from Jericho to Jerusalem. They tarried as guests at the quiet home of Lazarus, and were ministered unto by his sisters, Martha and Mary.

Notwithstanding the fatigue of Jesus, He continued the instruction which He had been giving His disciples on the road, in reference to the qualifications necessary to fit men for the kingdom of Heaven. The peace of Christ rested upon the home of the brother and sisters. Martha had been all anxiety to provide for the comfort of her guests, but Mary was charmed by the words of Jesus to His disciples, and, seeing a golden opportunity to become better acquainted with the doctrines of Christ, quietly entered the room where He was sitting, and, taking her place at the feet of Jesus, drank in eagerly every word that fell from His lips.

The energetic Martha was meanwhile making ample preparations for the entertainment of her guests, and missed her sister's help. Finally she discovered that Mary was sitting at the feet of Jesus, and listening with rapt attention to what He was saying. Martha, wearied with many cares, was so vexed to see her sister calmly listening thus, that she forgot the courtesy due to her guests, and openly complained of Mary's idleness, and appealed to Jesus that He would not permit all the domestic duties to fall upon one.

Jesus answered these complaints with mild and patient words:

Luke 10

⁴¹ Martha, Martha, you are careful and troubled about many

things;

⁴² But one thing is needful, and Mary has chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

That which Jesus indicated that Martha needed, was a calm, devotional spirit, a deeper anxiety to learn more concerning the future immortal life, and the graces necessary to spiritual advancement. She needed less anxiety for earthly things, which pass away, and more for heavenly things, which affect the eternal welfare of the soul. It is necessary to faithfully perform the duties of the present life, but Jesus would teach His children that they must seize every opportunity to gain that knowledge which will make them wise unto salvation.

One of the dangers of the present age is devoting too much time to business matters and to unnecessary cares, which we create for ourselves, while the development of Christian character is neglected. Careful, energetic Marthas are needed for this time, who will blend with their prompt, decisive qualities that “better part” of which Christ spoke. A character of such combined strength and godliness is an unconquerable power for good.

A dark cloud now hung over this quiet home where Jesus had rested. Lazarus was stricken with sudden illness. The afflicted sisters sent a message to Jesus:

John 11

³ Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick.

They made no urgent requirement for the immediate presence of Jesus, for they believed that He would understand the case and relieve their brother. Lazarus was a firm believer in the divine mission of Jesus; He loved him ardently and was in turn beloved by the blessed Master, whose peace had rested on his quiet home. The faith and love which the brother and sisters felt toward Jesus encouraged them to believe that he would not disregard their distress. Therefore they sent the simple, confiding message:

³ He whom You love is sick.

When Jesus received the message, he said,

⁴ This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.

He accordingly remained where he was for two days. After the messenger was sent, Lazarus grew rapidly worse. The sisters counted the days and hours that must intervene between the sending of the message and the arrival of Jesus to their aid. As the time approached when they should expect Him, they anxiously watched the travelers who appeared in the distance, hoping to discover the form of Jesus. All their efforts for the recovery of their brother were in vain, and they felt that he must die unless divine help interposed to save him. Their constant prayer was, Oh! that Jesus would come! He could save our beloved brother!

Presently their messenger returns, but unaccompanied by Jesus. He bears to the sorrowing sisters the words of the Saviour,

⁴ This sickness is not unto death.

But the hearts of the sisters fail them, for lo, their brother is already wrestling with the fierce destroyer, and soon closes his eyes in death.

Jesus, at the end of the two days, proposed to go to Judea, but His disciples endeavored to prevent Him from doing so. They reminded Him of the hatred manifested toward Him when He was last there. Said they,

⁸ The Jews of late sought to stone You; and go You there again?

Jesus then explained to them that He must go, for Lazarus was dead, adding,

¹⁵ And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent you may believe.

Jesus did not delay going to the relief of Lazarus through lack of interest in the stricken family; but He designed to make the sorrowful event of the death of Lazarus an occasion to give undoubted proof of His divine power, and unite His disciples to Him in a faith that could not be broken.

Already some among them were questioning in their minds if they had not been deceived in the evidences of His divine power; if He was really the Christ would He not have saved Lazarus whom He loved? Jesus designed to work a crowning miracle that would convince all who would by any means be convinced that He was the Saviour of the world.

The danger attaching to this expedition into Judea was great, since the Jews were determined to kill Jesus. Finding it was impossible to dissuade Him from going, Thomas proposed to the disciples that they should all accompany their Master, saying,

¹⁶ Let us also go, that we may die with Him.

Therefore the twelve accompanied the Saviour. On the way, Jesus labored for the needy, relieving the suffering and healing the sick as was His custom. When He reached Bethany He heard from several persons that Lazarus was dead, and had been buried four days.²

Jesus said,

John 11

¹¹ Our friend Lazarus sleeps.

¹³ Jesus spoke of his death.

¹⁴ Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead.

Yet nowadays there is hardly anything that will excite the

² Ellen G. White, *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 2, p. 362: "When He reached Bethany He heard from several persons that Lazarus was dead, and had been buried four days."

opposition of the majority of professed Christians more quickly than to preach, according to these very words of Christ, that the dead are asleep. In these days to speak of death as sleep is to subject yourself to the bigoted epithet of “soul-sleeper,” “materialist,” “teacher of infidelity,” and what not.

But here we have the plain record of the word of Christ, that when speaking of the death of a certain person he said, he “sleeps,” and then to make the matter certain that such is His meaning he said plainly, “Lazarus is dead.” Nothing could be plainer than that the doctrine of the Lord Jesus is that the dead are asleep.

With this agrees the word of His apostles. Paul said that David, after he had served his own generation,

Acts 13

³⁶ ...fell on sleep and was laid unto his fathers and saw corruption.

This however is only what had been written before of the death of David:

1 Kings 2

¹⁰ David slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David.

1 Chronicles 29

²⁸ And he died in a good old age.

In writing to the Thessalonians Paul said,

1 Thessalonians 4

¹³ We would not have you ignorant brethren concerning them which are asleep...

¹⁵ For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent [go before] them which are asleep.

Why? For,

¹⁶ ...the dead in Christ shall rise first,

¹⁷ Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

Thus the dead in Christ are those who sleep in Jesus. To the Corinthians he said,

1 Corinthians 15

⁵¹ We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

⁵² In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump.

In relating the death of Stephen, Luke says,

Acts 7

⁶⁰ He fell asleep.

With all this, and more, agrees the word of the prophets, and other writers of the Old Testament. Twenty-five times the record made of the kings of Israel and Judah is,

“He slept with his fathers and was buried,...”

Job says if he had died then he...

Job 3

¹³ ...should have slept;

and that,

Job 14

¹² Man lies down, and rises not; till the heavens be no more they shall not awake nor be raised out of their sleep.

Daniel says,

Daniel 12

² Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake.

That the dead are asleep, and they awake at the sound of the trump of God at the coming of Christ, and come forth at the resurrection of the dead, is the straightforward doctrine of the Bible. And however much men may sneer at it, as “soul-sleep-

ing,” “materialism,” etc., it is the truth of God and of our Lord Jesus Christ. And it is the love of the truth by which we are saved.

2 Thessalonians 2

¹⁰ ...they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

6. A Pagan Paradise

Signs of the Times, December 30, 1886

IN ITS notes on the Sunday-school lesson the *Advance* of November 18 says:

Hades is the place of departed souls, without reference to their character or condition. Paradise and Gehenna, or hell, are both in Hades.

Can it really be that hell and paradise are both in the same place? If that be so, it either cannot be a very bad thing to be in hell, or else it cannot be a very nice thing after all to be in paradise.

Or is Hades such a large country that it can contain both paradise and the lake of fire, for Gehenna is the lake of fire, and yet they be so far apart that the misery of the one cannot detract from the happiness of the other?

The *Advance* says:

Paradise and Gehenna, or hell, are both in Hades.

But where is Hades? The *Advance* leaves us totally in the dark on this point. True we are told what it is,—“the place of departed souls,”—but we should like to know where it is.

Does the *Advance* agree with Josephus? He said:

Hades is a place in the world not regularly finished; a subterraneous [under-ground] region, where the light of this world does not shine; from which circumstance, that in this place the light does not shine, it cannot be but there must be in it perpetual darkness.³

As Josephus, like the *Advance*, says that “in this region there is a certain place set apart, as a lake of unquenchable fire,” and that is Gehenna or hell; and as Josephus speaks of

³ Josephus, *Discourse on Hades*.

another part of this under-ground region, this Hades, and describes it in such a way as to correspond to the *Advance's* suggestion of paradise, we think perhaps the *Advance* has in view the very place that Josephus describes. If so, will the *Advance* tell its readers just what place "in the world" it is.

By the way, the thought just occurs to us that as Mr. Peloubet in his "Select Notes" on the *International Lessons*, gravely informs the Sunday-schools of the land, on the lesson for January 9, 1887, that:

A most able argument has been presented by President Warren of Boston University, in his late book, "Paradise Found," in favor of the north pole as the site of Eden.

And as the *Advance* oracularly declares that paradise and Gehenna or hell are both in Hades; it must be that Hades is at the north pole. That being the case it would necessarily follow that Gehenna is at the north pole, which would hardly correspond with the idea of the temperature that is generally supposed to be the special characteristic of hell.

It does, however, exactly correspond to what we were taught in Sunday-school in our youth. For, when a child, the writer of this article was actually taught in an "orthodox" "evangelical" Sunday-school that the gnashing of teeth of the lost was really the chattering of the teeth from shivering in the excessive cold of the place of departed souls.

When such stuff as this, and that of the *Advance*, is seriously taught in the Sunday-schools, then how far removed is the Christian world from downright paganism on the subject of the place and state of the dead?

The Bible deals in no such nonsense. Neither paradise nor Gehenna is in Hades. Hades, in the New Testament, as well as Sheol in the Old, is the place of the dead. But that place is in the grave, in the dust of the earth. For at the resurrection that is where they are found.

Daniel 12

² Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake.

Isaiah 26

¹⁹ Awake and sing, you that dwell in the dust; for your dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.

Matthew 27

⁵² And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose,

⁵³ And came out of the graves after His resurrection.

John 5

²⁸ All that are in the graves shall hear His voice,

²⁹ And shall come forth.

According to the word of God, the grave, the dust of the earth, is the place of the dead.

The tree of life is in the midst of paradise.

Revelation 2

⁷ To him that overcomes will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.

But the tree of life is on either side of the river of life, and the river of life proceeds...

Revelation 22

¹ ...out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

Therefore, according to the word of God, paradise is in the presence of the throne of God.

Gehenna or hell,—the lake of fire,—is not found until the judgment of the great day.

Matthew 25

³¹ When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him.

⁴¹ Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, you cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the

devil and his angels:

And when Gehenna is kindled, it is when, at the end of the millennium, the devil and the wicked of all the earth go up on the breadth of the earth, and compass the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city; and fire comes down from God out of Heaven and devours them. *Revelation 20:7-9*. There it is, and then it is, and not till then, that Gehenna is found.

It is most devoutly to be wished that the word of God, instead of pagan superstition, could be taught in the Sunday-schools.

7. Which of These is Not Spiritualism?

Signs of the Times, August 25, 1887

Here is one statement:

There is, strictly speaking, no such thing as death, in the popular signification of that term. Death, so called—the death of the human—is a veritable birth into a higher life. It is a change in the condition consequent upon outward dissolution...The real man survives the process intact, and still exists in full life and consciousness, upon a plane beyond, far beyond, the reach of fire and flood.

Here is another:

At the death of the outer body, the true life of the inner spirit commences.

Here is another:

Hence the dark hearse, the black pall, the bitter lamentation over the grave, which shows that it is not realized that death is only a glorious birth.

And another:

But hark! a voice comes from beyond the grave to tell us that death is not our foe; that he is the messenger of life and joy; that he is the grand accoucheur of the soul, and comes to usher it into light and life eternal.

And then here is another, the very latest production on this subject that we have seen:

One of our dear Sabbath-school pupils has graduated into the higher school. The great Teacher has promoted her to the celestial sphere where the freed spirit shall never tire as it soars into the knowledge of the infinite, which only God and the angels can reveal to her. Death, whom we call the great destroyer, set free from flight this immortal soul after a struggle of only nine days with the fair form which held it to earth....Ah! death has proved to her the genius of the foun-

tain of eternal youth.

Now can anyone tell which of these quotations speak the language of Spiritualism and which do not? We cannot. And yet all but the last were written by avowed Spiritualists, by people who make no pretensions to anything else, while the last is from a strictly evangelical—heaven save the man—paper.

The first quotation is from the *Spiritual Telegraph*; the second from Andrew Jackson Davis's *Healing of the Nations*; the third is from Dr. Hare's *Spiritualism Scientifically Demonstrated*; the fourth is from a lecture on *Spiritualism* by Joel Tiffany; and the last is from the official organ of the Presbyterian Church of East Oakland, a paper entitled the *Christian Home*, in an editorial notice in the issue for August, 1887. But not one of the first four is a whit more impregnated with Spiritualism than is the last.

The fact is that today the churches are to Spiritualism the basis of its strongest hopes. The doctrine of the immortality of the soul is the sole foundation of Spiritualism, and in the estimation of the evangelical (?) pulpit to deny the doctrine of the immortality of the soul is to proclaim yourself an infidel if not an atheist.

The churches lay down the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, and Spiritualism builds upon it and destroys its multitudes. The pulpits defend it by such arguments as that "matter cannot think, nor move, nor feel;" and then the so-called "Christian Science" stands upon the doctrine, and accepts the arguments, and carries them in their logical conclusion into practice, and deludes its thousands into the belief that it is really so, and into the expectation of thereby surviving all that is, in their estimation, miscalled disease.

Then too there comes the New Theology, of probation after death, because it cannot admit the justice of an eternity of tor-

ment, upon those who have lived and died without a knowledge of the gospel. And all that the orthodox can do against these and numberless other heresies springing from the same source, is to make ineffectual attempts to stem the tide of evil, because she herself stands upon the doctrine of which the evils and heresies are only the logical outcome.

Let the truth of the word of God be preached as it is:

Ecclesiastes 9

⁵ ...the dead know not any thing...

⁶ Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun.

Psalms 146

⁴ His breath goes forth, he returns to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.

And Spiritualism can have no place. But as long as the pulpit tells the church and the world that the dead are conscious and know all about us, and are hovering round us, just so long is Spiritualism going to seize the logic of it and do its best to show both the church and the world that through it the channel of communication is open. And when the pulpit presents the proposition, it will find that the logic that leads to Spiritualism will prove a thousand times stronger than will be any attempt that the pulpit can make in opposition to the logic of its own proposition.

Let the truth of God be preached and believed that man is mortal, and that immortality is the gift of God alone, and that alone through the faith of Jesus Christ; that man is made of the dust of the ground and will never be anything else except through an abiding faith in Christ;—let this be preached and believed, and the so-called Christian so-called Science can have no place.

But so long as the pulpit furnishes the arguments, so long this Christian Science, that is neither Christian nor science,

will use the arguments which the pulpit furnishes.

Let the truth of God be preached and believed, that the dead know not anything, and that without a resurrection from the dead even they “which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished” (*1 Corinthians* 15:16-18), and that will annihilate at once the New Theology with its question of probation after death.

Let the truth of God be preached and believed that “the soul that sins it shall die” (*Ezekiel* 18:20), and “the wages of sin is death” (*Romans* 6:23), and that will annihilate forever the horrible doctrine of an eternity of torment, and with it will be annihilated the infidel charge of cruelty and injustice against God, who is supremely just and who is Love itself.

And so God charges men:

2 Timothy 4

¹ I charge you therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;

² *Preach the word...*with all long-suffering and doctrine.

³ For the time will come [“will come?” it has come] when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

⁴ And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

8. What is This But Spiritualism?

Signs of the Times, September 1, 1887

LAST week we gave some extracts which show that the churches and pulpits are in reality the strongest hope and support of Spiritualism. Through the kindness of a friend we are enabled to lay before our readers further and stronger proofs of this.

Our correspondent sent us a paper containing a sermon by Dr. T. De Witt Talmage, entitled, "Employments in Heaven." The Doctor has taken it upon himself to tell the world what dead people are doing. As he is the preacher whose sermons are the most widely read of any in the world, except perhaps Spurgeon's, we shall make quite liberal extracts, especially as the sermon is of the very essence of Spiritualism. The sermon was preached Sunday, July 31, 1887. The "Rev." Spiritualist says:

The question is often silently asked, though perhaps never audibly propounded: "What are our departed Christian friends doing now?" The question is more easily answered than you might perhaps suppose. Though there has come no recent intelligence from the heavenly city, and we seem dependent upon the story of eighteen centuries ago, still I think we may from strongest inference decide what are the present occupations of our transferred kinsfolk.

Yes, this question is more easily answered than the people generally suppose; and it is answered abundantly and authoritatively, but the trouble is the people will not believe the answer, even though it be given by the Lord himself. The word of God says,

Ecclesiastes 9

⁵ The dead know not anything;

⁶ Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, [and even their "thoughts," *Psalm* 146:4] is now perished...

¹⁰ [and that] there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor

wisdom, in the grave, whither you go.

All this and much more says the Bible plainly, and yet says Dr. Talmage, "There has come no recent intelligence" on the subject. Has Mr. Talmage, with the rest of the Spiritualists, "progressed" beyond the Bible? Has the Bible become to him also as "a last year's almanac," so that it conveys no recent intelligence? For our part we would far rather have one sentence from the Bible than ten thousand from Dr. Talmage.

"Our transferred kinsfolk." Of course they are not dead. According to Dr. Talmage's idea nobody ever dies. In his opinion the death of a Christian is a "translation better than Elijah's." And as they are only transferred of course their employment there is the same as here. So he says:

You have, then, only by a sum in subtraction and a sum in addition to decide what are the employments of your departed friends in the better world. You are to subtract from them all earthly grossness and add all earthly goodness, and then you are to come to the conclusion that they are doing now in Heaven what in their best moments they did on earth.

In the first place, I remark that all those of our departed Christian friends who on earth found great joy in the fine arts are now indulging their tastes in the same direction....Are you so obtuse as to suppose that because the painter drops his easel and the sculptor his chisel and the engraver his knife, that therefore that taste, which he was enlarging and intensifying for forty or fifty years, is entirely obliterated? These artists, or these friends of art, on earth worked in coarse material and with imperfect brain and with frail hand. Now they have carried their art into larger liberties and into wider circumference. They are at their old business yet but without the fatigues, without the limitations, without the hindrances of the terrestrial studio.

Raphael could now improve upon his masterpiece of Michael the Archangel, now that he has seen him, and could improve upon his masterpiece of the Holy Family, now that he has visited them. Michael Angelo could better present the

Last Judgment after he has seen its flash and heard the rumbling battering rams of its thunder. Exquisite colors here, graceful lines here, powerful chiaroscuro here....The reason that God took away their eye and their hand, and their brain, was that he might give them something more limber, more widely, more skillful, more multipliant.

So Michael Angelo has seen the last Judgment has he? If that be so how are the cases to end of those who are now living? And the painter, and the sculptor, and the engraver, are all “at their old business yet”! At first sight it would seem that Mr. Talmage has them “at their same old business,” in Heaven, but from what follows we might almost conclude that he allows them to conduct “their same old business” at the same old stand.

But suppose he means that “they are at their same old business” in Heaven; then are we to believe that they are painting with brushes, on canvas, with oil? are they carving with knives on stones? or are they painting-engraving, etc., with space, on the sky, with air? We cannot see how it could be the former, because he says that “God took away their eye, and their hand, and their brain,” consequently they have no hand to handle a brush, and no eye to see canvas or brush or anything else, and no brain to know how to do anything, even if they had eyes and hands.

Therefore it must be that they are painting, carving, engraving, etc., with space, on the sky, with air; that would seem to be about the only thing for such people to do who have neither body nor brain, nor eye nor hand. Unless indeed the Doctor allows them to carry on “their same old business,” on earth, through the mediumship of those who have eyes and hands and brains.

From what follows it would fairly seem that he does even allow this. True, he does not say it of the painter, the sculptor, the engraver, and the musician, but he does say that the

“Christian soldier,” the doctor, and the preacher carry on their “same old business” on earth. Here is what he says of the military folks:

Again, I remark that those of our departed Christian friends who in this world had very strong military spirit are now in armies celestial and out on bloodless battle. There are hundreds of people born soldiers. They cannot help it. They belong to regiments in time of peace. They cannot hear a drum or fife without trying to keep step to the music. They are Christians, and when they fight they fight on the right side. Now when these, our Christian friends who had natural and powerful military spirit, entered Heaven, they entered the celestial army....

When those who had the military spirit on earth, were sanctified and entered glory, I suppose they right away enlisted in some heavenly campaign, they volunteered right away. There must needs be in Heaven soldiers with a soldierly spirit. There are grand parade days when the King reviews the troops. There must be armed escorts sent out to bring up from earth to Heaven those who were more than conquerors....

Besides that, in our own world there are battles for the right and against the wrong, where we must have the heavenly military. This is what keeps us Christian reformers so buoyant. So few good men against so many bad men; so few churches against so many grog shops; so few pure printing presses against so many polluted printing presses; and yet we are buoyant and courageous, because while we know that the armies of evil in the world are larger in numbers than the army of the truth, there are celestial cohorts in the air fighting on our side.

I have not so much faith in the army on the ground as I have in the army in the air. O God! open our eyes that we may see them. The military spirits that went up from earth to join the military spirits before the throne—Joshua, and Caleb, and Gideon, and David, and Samson, and the hundreds of Christian warriors who on earth fought with fleshly arm, and now having gone up on high are coming down the hill of

heaven ready to fight among the invisibles. Yonder they are—coming, coming. Did you not hear them as they swept by?

Anybody who is at all acquainted with Dr. Talmage's intensely demonstrative, dramatic style of delivery, can readily imagine what effect this last appeal would have upon his audience. They would imagine that a host of them were really sweeping by and that they did "hear them as they swept by."

Then he talks in the Talmagian way of what "our mathematical friends," and "our transferred and transported metaphysicians," are doing. Then he tells of "our departed Christian explorers" scaling Mount Blanc "without alpenstock" and exploring "the coral depths of the ocean without a diving bell;" and tells what our departed students, and historians, and astronomers, and chemists, and geologists, and lawyers are doing, and finally comes to the doctors—not the doctors of a spiritualistic divinity, but the doctors of medicine—and tells what they are doing. Thus he says:

What of our departed Christian friends who in this world had their old business? No sickness in Heaven, but plenty of sickness on earth, plenty of wounds in the different parts of God's dominion to be healed and to be medicated. You cannot understand why that patient got well after all the skillful doctors of New York and Brooklyn had said he must die. Perhaps Abercrombie touched him—Abercrombie, who, after many years' doctoring the bodies and the souls of people in Scotland, went up to God in 1864. Perhaps Abercrombie touched him.

Now suppose somebody who believes in Dr. Talmage's spiritualistic bombast, should form a personal friendship and alliance with "Dr. Abercrombie" and should thereby become a "healing medium" who could deny the correctness of the logic of the thing? Who? Next he notices the people whose chief employment in this world was in visiting. Of them he says:

But what are our friends who found their chief joy in con-

versation and in sociality doing now? In brighter conversation there and in grander sociality. What a place to visit in, where your next-door neighbors are kings and queens; you yourselves kingly and queenly. If they want to know more particularly about the first paradise, they have only to go over and ask Adam. If they want to know how the sun and the moon halted, they have only to go over and ask Joshua.

Indeed! What will Joshua know about it, more than anybody else? When he was on earth he didn't know any more about "how" it was done, than we do. And when all get to Heaven will not all have an equal chance to know?

If they want to know how the storm pelted Sodom, they have only to go over and ask Lot.

What will Lot know about it? He didn't see it. His wife did—perhaps.

If they want to know more about the arrogance of Haman, they have only to go over and ask Mordecai. If they want to know how the Red Sea boiled when it was cloven, they have only to go over and ask Moses.

He got off a long string of this kind of stuff, but we shall impose no more of it on our readers. But it is when he comes to the preachers, that he gives us the very cream of the cream of Spiritualism. Hear him:

What are our departed Christian friends doing in Heaven, those who on earth found their chief joy in the gospel ministry? They are visiting their old congregations. Most of those ministers have got their people around them already. When I get to Heaven—as, by the grace of God I am destined to go to that place—I will come and see you all. Yea, I will come to all the people to whom I have administered in the gospel, and to the millions of souls to whom, through the kindness of the printing-press, I am permitted to preach every week in this land and in other lands—letters coming from New Zealand and Australia, and uttermost parts of the earth, as well as from near nations, telling me of the souls I have helped—I

will visit them all. I give them fair notice. Our departed friends of the ministry engage in that delectable entertainment now.

Oh, yes! He is going to be a great man when he “gets to Heaven,” that is, when he dies. No doubt he will be as ubiquitous as the grandest saint in the Catholic calendar. He will have to be, to visit “the millions” in “near nations” and the “uttermost parts of the earth.”

But will he “communicate” with them? If not, why not? If he can find someone of his friends still in the flesh through whom he can speak to his old audiences, what is to hinder him from thus developing an “inspirational speaker”?

But even if he does not, if someone comes to his old audiences and pretends to be inspired by the spirit of Doctor Talmage, and talks to them in the theology of Doctor Talmage, and with the manner and tone of Doctor Talmage, then how are the people to know that it is not he, as long as they bear in mind the promise and the expectation that he is going to visit them, according to the “fair notice” which he has given?

These are but parts of the sermon, but what more need we give to prove our statement that the so-called Christian pulpit, is today the strongest bulwark of Spiritualism? As we said at the beginning of this article, Doctor Talmage is the one preacher whose sermons are the most widely read of any in the world, unless Mr. Spurgeon be an exception. And this single sermon sent broadcast as it is by the printing-press even to the “uttermost parts of the earth,” will do more to help forward the work and the iniquity of Spiritualism, than Spiritualism itself could do in a year.

It is high time that everywhere, and by every means, the truth of God should be spread to “near nations” and to the “uttermost parts of the earth” that:

Ecclesiastes 9

⁵ The dead know not anything;

¹⁰ There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom,
in the grave, whither you go;

And that the thoughts of the dead are perished. *Psalm* 146:4.
As for these would-be wise men,

Jeremiah 8

⁹ Lo, they have rejected the word of the Lord; and what wisdom is in them?

9. Whither I Go You Cannot Come

Signs of the Times, September 15, 1887

IN THE Bible School at Northfield, last month, Mr. Moody preached one Sunday on the second coming of Christ, arguing that Christ will come to earth in bodily form as he left it, and that it is a duty of the Christian to watch for his coming and to expect to meet him when he comes.

But to Mr. Moody's argument some of the attendants at the school made answer:

We expect to meet Christ in death and be with Him. What difference can it make in our Christian life and work whether we are always on the tiptoe of expectation to meet Him thus, or go to Him. In other words, what difference does it make whether we go to a friend or He comes to us, provided we are with our friend?

With such an expectation for the premise, then that argument is sound, and as Mr. Moody accepts the premise he could not avoid the conclusion, and therefore in defense of his sermon he could only reply to this that,

We should get great encouragement in our evangelical work by the thought that at any moment Christ may come to help us in that work.

Thus by admitting one error as a premise, Mr. Moody became involved in a dilemma where he had to commit another error to get out.

Did Mr. Moody teach those young men whom he was there training for evangelical work, that they were to go forward and engage in that work without the help of Christ, and to be constantly on the watch and waiting for Christ, and that their encouragement should be the thought that at any moment He may come and help them in their work? Not at all. Mr. Moody knows the "Great Commission," and he knows that when

Christ gave that Commission, he said to every soul who should ever engage in evangelistic work,

Matthew 28

²⁰ Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world.

And that is the only way in which Christ has ever promised to be with anybody to help them in their evangelistic work. When He comes to earth in bodily form, that is, when He comes in His second advent, He does not come to help anybody in “evangelical work,” but to take His people unto Himself. When He comes, all evangelical work is done, and He comes to reward the workers and to take vengeance on them that know not God and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Revelation 22

¹² And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.

2 Thessalonians 1

⁷ And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels,

He comes then, not as a priest making reconciliation for the people, but as King of kings and Lord of lords. He comes not then as a Saviour of sinners, but as the Judge of all men, and the Saviour of saints.

Therefore, Mr. Moody in answering his young men as he did only set them on further in their erroneous course. Because the very idea of their answer to his statement in the first place is erroneous, that the Lord will come to earth in bodily form. They argued,

“We expect to go to Him at death. Then what difference does it make whether we are always watching for and expecting Him to come to us or whether we go to Him?”

In other words, what is the difference whether Jesus comes

again or not? We say again that that is a valid argument provided the expectation is correct. But the expectation is a deception. It is directly contrary to the plainly expressed word of Christ. In that last night, just after the Last Supper, Jesus said to his disciples,

John 13

³³ Whither I go, you cannot come.

And that there might be no mistake about it, He said,

³³ ...as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, you cannot come.

And what he said to the Jews on this subject was this:

John 8

²¹ You shall die in your sins; whither I go you cannot come.

We suppose it would be considered by Mr. Moody and these same young men at Northfield, a most presumptuous thing for a man who was about to die in his sins to say,

“I expect to meet Christ in death and be with Him. I expect to go to Him.”

And yet it would be no more presumptuous so far as the fact is concerned, than it was or is for these young students at Northfield to say it. For to the men who die in their sins, Jesus says,

“Whither I go you cannot come.”

And to his disciples Jesus says the same thing,

“Whither I go you cannot come. As I said unto them, so now I say to you.”

Now why didn't Mr. Moody answer these young men in the words of Christ,

“Whither I go you cannot come?”

Then they could have seen the necessity of the Saviour's

coming again, and the beauty of the doctrine. For when His disciples were troubled at this saying, Jesus said,

John 14

¹ Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in me.

² ...I go to prepare a place for you.

³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there you may be also.

This is Christ's own word and doctrine on that subject. And the only way in which His children can ever be with Him, is by His coming to receive them unto Himself. And in that coming,

1 Thessalonians 4

¹⁶ For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first;

¹⁷ Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so [in this way, by this means] shall we ever be with the Lord.

But instead of believing the plain word of Christ, these young men have their minds full of the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, and so according to Satan's promise at the beginning they expect to be gods as soon as they die, and expect to go to Jesus when they die, although He has told them as plainly as He could possibly do so, that they can do no such thing.

And Mr. Moody is wrapped up in the same delusion, and so when his own sermon is disputed from the standpoint of this erroneous expectation, all he can do is to confirm the young men in their delusion, and to add to it another error, by teaching them to expect the coming of Jesus in bodily form only to help them in their evangelical work.

If there is any doctrine that was ever taught in this world, that is more thoroughly subversive of the word of God than is the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, we have never heard of it, and we do not think we ever shall hear of one such.

And that is the kind of training that young men get nowadays in theological training-schools. Even in Mr. Moody's which is undoubtedly the best in the nation.

10. Partakers of the Divine Nature

Signs of the Times, September 22, 1887

A short time ago the question was asked the *Interior*:

Is it orthodox, in a Presbyterian sense, to teach for sound doctrine that as Christ took upon himself human nature, so we shall at last take upon us the divine nature?

The *Interior* gave the answer:

There is no warrant in Scripture for such an assertion.

Now whether the *Interior* made its answer upon the broad sense of the question, or upon the particular point involved in the terms “as” and “so,” of course we cannot say. But be that as it may, there certainly is in Scripture ample warrant for the statement that we shall “at last” be partakers of the divine nature. For Peter says directly:

2 Peter 1

⁴ Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature.

John says:

1 John 3

² Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.

As He is, He is assuredly divine, and if we shall be like Him as He is, it cannot be otherwise than that we shall be partakers of the divine nature. Paul says on this point:

Philippians 3

²⁰ We look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ;

²¹ Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body.

His glorious body is most certainly divine; and when our

bodies shall be changed and fashioned like unto His glorious body, then we shall be partakers of the divine nature. This too is precisely that to which Peter referred in the verse quoted above. For in his first letter, he uses the same word “partaker” saying,

1 Peter 5

¹ The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed.

And Paul says of this glory:

Romans 8

¹⁶ The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God;

¹⁷ And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together.

¹⁸ For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

And again, we shall be:

2 Corinthians 3

¹⁸ ...changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

And Jesus said,

Matthew 13

⁴³ Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.

Now how all this can be, and yet we not “take upon us the divine nature,” is more than any man can make to appear. And how the *Interior* can say that “there is no warrant in the Scripture for such an assertion,” is more than we can understand.

There is another consideration that proves clearly that we shall “be partakers of the divine nature.” Immortality is an at-

tribute of Divinity. It inheres solely in Him. For thus it is written:

1 Timothy 1

¹⁷ Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory forever and ever.

And again, speaking of the “appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ,” it is written:

1 Timothy 6

¹⁵ Which in His times He shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords;

¹⁶ Who only has immortality.

Yet, although He only has immortality, He has promised to give of it to all who will obey Him; for Christ has brought it to light through the gospel. And to all who seek for it through Him it will be given,

1 Corinthians 15

⁵² In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

⁵³ For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

Therefore as immortality is a property solely of the divine nature, when we shall have put on immortality, and so shall have been made like unto the glorious Son of God, we shall then have taken upon us the divine nature, we shall then, with all the redeemed, be “partakers of the glory that shall be revealed,” and “partakers of the divine nature” of the glorious One who reveals it.

Thanks be unto God for the unspeakable gift of His exceeding great and precious promises.

11. The Scripture Cannot Be Broken

Signs of the Times, October 27, 1887

HOW much of the Bible shall remain when the doctrine of the immortality of the soul is in question? Here comes the *Christian Union* and says that the 5th and 10th verses of the 9th chapter of *Ecclesiastes*,

...are not to be regarded as divine revelations respecting the future state.

The *Union* had said that there is nothing in the Bible limiting probation to this life, and a correspondent asked for an explanation of these two verses. Here is the answer in full. The passages referred to are as follows:

Ecclesiastes 9

⁵ But the dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten.

¹⁰ Whatsoever your hand finds to do, do it with your might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither you go.

Ecclesiastes records the experience of one who had made full trial of the world and its pleasure, living without any spiritual faith or hope. He regards, as a result, that life as vanity, and the conclusion of his experiences is that the true way to live is to fear God and keep his commandments.

The verses given above are not to be regarded as divine revelations respecting the future state; if so, then divine revelation would disclose that there is no immortality, no life beyond the grave; they are to be regarded as the expression of despair which inevitably and always accompanies the philosophy of materialism and the life of worldliness.

Well, let that stand so for a little while, and let us look further. David said of man,

Psalms 146

⁴ His breath goes forth, he returns to his earth; in that very

day his thoughts perish.

And this,

Psalm 115

¹⁷ The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence.

And this,

Psalm 6

⁵ In death there is no remembrance of You; in the grave who shall give You thanks?

Are these words “to be regarded as the expression of despair which inevitably and always accompanies the philosophy of materialism and the life of worldliness”? Are these the words also of one who is recording “the experience of one who had made full trial of the world and its pleasure, living without any spiritual faith or hope”?

Is that the kind of a man that David was? Did he live without any spiritual faith or hope? Was his the philosophy of materialism and the life of worldliness? And are these verses also not to be regarded as divine revelations respecting the future state?

Job, too, according to the estimate of the *Christian Union*, was a man living without any spiritual faith or hope. His, too, was “the philosophy of materialism and the life of worldliness.” For he said:

Job 14

¹⁰ But man dies, and wastes away: yea, man gives up the ghost, and where is he?

¹¹ As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decays and dries up; so man lies down, and rises not:

¹² Till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep.

Again, speaking of his infancy, he said:

Job 10

¹⁸ Oh that I had given up the ghost, and no eye had seen me!

¹⁹ I should have been as though I had not been; I should have been carried from the womb to the grave.

And again he says:

²⁰ Are not my days few? cease then, and let me alone, that I may take comfort a little,

²¹ Before I go whence I shall not return, even to the land of darkness and the shadow of death;

²² A land of darkness, as darkness itself; and of the shadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkness.

Of the dead he says:

Job 14

²¹ His sons come to honor, and he knows it not; and they are brought low, but he perceives it not of them.

Good king Hezekiah, too, just after the Lord had miraculously restored him to health, and while thanking and praising the Lord for it, fell into the “materialistic philosophy” of the same worldly crowd, for he said,

Isaiah 38

¹⁸ The grave cannot praise You, death cannot celebrate You; they that go down into the pit cannot hope for your truth.

Paul also was tainted with it, for he said:

1 Corinthians 15

³² If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantages it me, if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we die.

And,

¹⁶ If the dead rise not...

¹⁸ Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.

Now if the words in *Ecclesiastes* 9:5, 10 are not to be re-

garded as divine revelations respecting the future state, then how can these words of David, and Job, and Hezekiah, and Paul be regarded as such? And if it be left for men to decide which of the words of God are to be regarded as divine revelations regarding a future state, and which are not, then what is the use of the Lord's saying anything on the subject?

The fact is that the words of *Ecclesiastes* 9:5, 10 are divine revelations regarding the state of man between death and the resurrection; as are also the words of David, and Job, and Hezekiah, and Paul, above quoted, with many others that might be quoted.

In short, the whole Bible, with all its doctrines, all its arguments, and all its conclusions, is in perfect accord with the plain text of these passages which the *Christian Union* sets down and excludes from divine revelation as the expression of the despair of the philosophy of materialism and a life of worldliness.

It is true that with this view of the Scriptures, there is no place there for the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. But that does not affect the Scripture at all; it only shows the utter falsity of the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. And it is time to suspect the correctness of any doctrine when it presumes to set aside the plain words of inspiration, as "not to be regarded as divine revelations" upon the very subject on which they speak.

But, says the *Union*, if these words are to be regarded as divine revelations,

...then divine revelation would disclose that there is no immortality, no life beyond the grave.

Not at all. It only shows what it was intended to show, and what is manifestly the divinely-revealed truth, that there is no immortality, no life in the grave, where men do certainly go. For that same book of *Ecclesiastes* abundantly shows that

there is to be life beyond the grave. But that life can only come through the resurrection of the dead.

The whole difficulty is that in the doctrinal scheme of the immortality of the soul there is no place for death, nor for the grave, nor for the resurrection of the dead, while by the Bible all these are held constantly in view. Death comes alike to all; all go alike to the grave; and there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust. Those who, through faith in Christ, have done good, shall come forth from the graves unto the resurrection of life, while those who have done evil shall come forth unto the resurrection of damnation.

It is better to believe what the Bible says than to try to set aside so much of it as does not agree with the doctrine of the immortality of the soul.

John 10

³⁵ The Scripture cannot be broken.

Isaiah 40

⁸ The word of our God shall stand forever.

12. The Immortality of the Soul

Subtitle: Is it a Scriptural Doctrine?

Bible Students' Library No. 70, September 1890

Introduction

THE doctrine of the natural immortality of the soul is one of the oldest and one of the most widespread doctrines that has ever been in this world. It was preached in the world before ever faith in Christ the Saviour was preached.

Genesis 3

⁴ The serpent said unto the woman, You shall not surely die.

And from that day to this that doctrine has been believed more generally by the children of men than has the truth of God.

Indeed, in our day the doctrine of the immortality of the soul has gained such favor among even those who profess the word of God as their standard of belief, that to deny it is considered by the majority of them as equivalent to a denial of the Bible itself.

But, instead of such denial being in any way a denial of the truth of revelation, the fact is that the truth of revelation can be logically and consistently held only by the total and unequivocal denial of the doctrine of the natural immortality of the soul. This, the Scriptures plainly show.

I. The Resurrection

There is no truth more plainly taught nor more diligently insisted upon in the Bible than this:

*The future existence of men depends absolutely
upon either a resurrection of the dead
or a translation without seeing death at all.*

Paul's hope for future existence was in the resurrection of

the dead. In speaking of his efforts to “win Christ,” he says:

Philippians 3

¹⁰ That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death;

¹¹ If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.

It was of “the hope and resurrection of the dead” that he was called in question by the council (*Acts 23:6*); and when he had afterward to make his defense before Felix, he declared that the resurrection of the dead was the end of his hope, saying:

Acts 24

¹⁵ And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.

Time and again Paul thus expresses his hope of future life. Nor is Paul the only one of the writers of the Bible who teaches the same thing. The resurrection of the dead is that to which Job looked for the consummation of his hope.

Job 14

¹⁴ If a man die, shall he live again? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come.

¹⁵ You shall call, and I will answer you: you will have a desire to the work of your hands.

Job 17

¹³ If I wait, the grave is my house: I have made my bed in the darkness.

¹⁴ I have said to corruption, You are my father: to the worm, You are my mother, and my sister.

¹⁵ And where is now my hope? as for my hope, who shall see it?

Job 19

²³ Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were

printed in a book!

²⁴ That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever!

²⁵ For I know that my Redeemer lives, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth:

²⁶ And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God:

²⁷ Whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.

David says:

Psalm 71

²⁰ You which have showed me great and sore troubles, shall quicken [give life to] me again, and shall bring me up again from the depths of the earth.

Psalm 17

¹⁵ As for me, I will behold your face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake with your likeness.

And what shall we more say? For the time would fail us to tell of Isaiah, and Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, and Daniel, and Hosea, and Micah, and all the prophets and apostles, and of our fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; for Jesus himself declared that it was the resurrection of the dead of which God spoke when He said,

Matthew 22

³² I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.

More than this, Jesus pointed His disciples always to the resurrection of the dead, through which alone they could obtain the reward which He promised. In *John* 6:39-54 we find that no less than four times the Saviour, in giving promise to those who believe in Him, sets it forth as the consummation of that belief that "I will raise him up at the last day." And in *Luke* we read:

Luke 14

¹³ When you make a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind;

¹⁴ And...you shall be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.

Paul, however, gives us, upon this subject, a straight-forward, logical argument, which leaves the doctrine of the immortality of the soul not a particle of ground to rest upon. The 15th chapter of *1 Corinthians* is devoted entirely to an argument in proof of the resurrection of the dead. The apostle first proves, by hundreds of living witnesses who had seen Him after He was risen, that Christ arose from the dead.

No Resurrection – No Immortality

Still there were some who said,

“There is no resurrection of the dead.”

And in refutation of that idea, he introduces three points of argument, any one of which utterly excludes the doctrine of the immortality of the soul from any place whatever in Christian doctrine. In verse 16, his premise is,

1 Corinthians 15

¹⁶ If the dead rise not...

The first conclusion from that is,

¹⁶ ...then Christ is not raised.

Then upon this conclusion follows the logical sequence,

¹⁷ ...your faith is vain;

and upon that another,

¹⁷ ...you are yet in your sins.

From his premise, “If the dead rise not,” the second conclusion is,

¹⁸ Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are per-

ished.

Nothing can be plainer than that this statement and the doctrine of the immortality of the soul cannot both be true. For if the soul be immortal, as is held, it cannot perish, and, therefore, so far as its existence is concerned, it is utterly independent of the resurrection of the dead.

Is it not supposed by all those who believe the soul to be immortal that all who have passed from this world in the faith of Christ, have gone to heaven, and are now enjoying its bliss? Assuredly it is.

Then, if that be the truth, upon what imaginable principle can it be conceived that they “are perished,” if there be no resurrection? What need have they of a resurrection? Have they not, without a resurrection, all that heaven can afford? Upon that theory they certainly have.

Then it just as certainly appears that not one of them has perished, even though there never be a resurrection. Over against this theory stands the word of God, that:

1 Corinthians 15

¹⁶ ...if the dead rise not,...

¹⁸ Then they which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.

That word is the truth. Therefore it follows that if there be no resurrection of the dead, there is no hereafter for any who have ever died, or who shall ever die. But God has given assurance to all men that there shall be a hereafter, and that assurance lies in the fact...

Acts 17

³¹ ...that He has raised Him [Christ] from the dead.

The resurrection of Christ is the God-given pledge that there shall be a resurrection of all the dead:

1 Corinthians 15

²² For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made

alive,

and,

Acts 24

¹⁵ ...there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.

Therefore it is by virtue of the resurrection of the dead, and not by the immortality of the soul, that there will be any hereafter for the dead, whether just or unjust.

No Resurrection – No Reward

The second point that the apostle makes in this connection is:

1 Corinthians 15

³² If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantages it me, if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we die.

On this nothing can be better than to present Dr. Adam Clarke's comment upon this same passage:

I believe the common method of pointing this verse is erroneous; I propose to read it thus: "If, after the manner of men, I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what does it advantage me? If the dead rise not, let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we die." What the apostle says here is a regular and legitimate conclusion from the doctrine that there is no resurrection; for if there be no resurrection, then there can be no judgment—no future state of rewards and punishments; why, therefore, should we bear crosses, and keep ourselves under continual discipline? Let us eat and drink, take all the pleasure we can; for tomorrow we die, and there is an end of us forever.

That is sound exegesis, and a just comment upon the words of the apostle. As we have shown, that is the point of Paul's argument throughout, and it is the thought of the whole Bible upon this subject.

But if the soul be immortal, neither Dr. Clarke's comment nor Paul's argument is sound. For if the soul be immortal, whensoever it may be that we die, that is not the "end of us forever," resurrection or no resurrection. By this it is plain that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul nullifies the plainest propositions of Scripture, and is therefore false.

This view fully explains the query which Dr. Clarke propounds in his remarks at the close of his comments on *1 Corinthians* He says:

One remark I cannot help making: the doctrine of the resurrection appears to have been thought of much more consequence among the primitive Christians than it is now! How is this? The apostles were continually insisting on it, and exciting the followers of God to diligence, obedience, and cheerfulness through it. And their successors in the present day seldom mention it!...There is not a doctrine in the gospel on which more stress is laid; and there is not a doctrine in the present system of preaching which is treated with more neglect!

From the doctor's insertion of exclamation points and his query, "How is this?" it would appear that he was surprised that it should be so. It is indeed surprising that it should be so. But it is easily enough explained. The fact is that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul has become so all-pervading "in the present system of preaching" that there is no room for the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead.

If the doctrine of the immortality of the soul be true, then the doctrine of the resurrection is indeed of no consequence. If that doctrine be true, then all need of laying stress upon the gospel doctrine of the resurrection of the dead is destroyed.

And although "the apostles were continually insisting on" the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, and although there is "not a doctrine of the gospel upon which more stress is laid," yet it is through the insidious deceptive influence of

the doctrine of the immortality of the soul that the preachers of the present day “seldom mention it,” and that in the present system of preaching there is indeed “not a doctrine that is treated with more neglect,” and nothing is needed to show more plainly than does this the irreconcilable antagonism between the truth of God and the doctrine of the immortality of the soul.

Immortality Includes the Body

The third point is:

1 Corinthians 15

³⁶ That which you sow is not quickened, except it die.

To quicken is “to make alive.” What Paul says therefore is,

“That which you sow is not made alive except it die.”

That this is spoken directly of man and his resurrection, is evident from verses 42-44, “It is sown a natural body,” etc.

Now the doctrine of the immortality of the soul is that the body properly has no life, that it is not the real man, but that the soul is the real, living, sentient man, the soul which alone possesses real life. In other words, the body is only the house in which the real man lives. The real “I”—the soul,—dwells within the body, and death is simply the separation of the soul from the body. Death breaks down the house, and lets the occupant free.

According to this doctrine, there is no such thing as death, because the body properly has no life, consequently it does not die, and the soul—the real man—is immortal, and it cannot die; therefore, there is in reality no such thing as death.

If this be true, there is not only no such thing as death, but there is, likewise, no such thing as a resurrection of the dead; for upon the apostle’s premise that “that which you sow is not quickened [made alive] except it die,” it follows that, as the

body, having no life, does not die, it cannot be quickened (raised from the dead); and as the soul does not die, it cannot be raised from the dead; consequently, there is no such thing as a resurrection of the dead.

Therefore it stands proved to a demonstration that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul is utterly subversive of the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. But the resurrection of the dead is a Bible doctrine; it is the very truth of God. So then it is plain that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul is subversive of the truth of God, and is therefore false, deceptive, and destructive.

II. The Second Coming of Christ

There is another doctrine of the Bible which holds just as important a place in the divine scheme as does that of the resurrection; and that is, the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. This likewise is subverted by a belief in the doctrine of the natural immortality of the soul.

The subversion of this truth is, in a measure, involved in that of the resurrection, because without the second coming of Christ there would be no resurrection, and anything that destroys belief in the resurrection of the dead, by that means destroys faith and hope in the second coming of the Lord.

That the event of the resurrection of the dead depends wholly upon the second coming of Christ, is easily shown by the Scripture, which, of course, in these things is the only authority. We have before shown that the righteous are rewarded only at the resurrection; and to show plainly the connection, we will repeat a verse before quoted:

Luke 14

¹³ When you make a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind.

¹⁴ And you shall be blessed; for they cannot recompense you; for you shall be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.

And of His own coming, Jesus says:

Revelation 22

¹² Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.

The coming of the Lord, and the resurrection of the righteous dead, are directly connected by Paul thus:

1 Thessalonians 4

¹⁶ The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first;

¹⁷ Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

And again:

1 Corinthians 15

⁵¹ We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

⁵² In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

⁵³ For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

⁵⁴ So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

⁵⁵ O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory?

⁵⁴ Then shall be brought to pass the saying...

When?

⁵² ...at the last trump,

certainly;

⁵² ...for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised.

When is it that the trump shall sound?

1 Thessalonians 4

¹⁵ For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord,...

¹⁶ For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven...with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise.

1 Corinthians 15

⁵⁴ ...then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

Then it is, and not till then, that men shout,

⁵⁵ O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory?

But through belief in the doctrine of the natural immortality of the soul, it is now sought to be made to appear that this “saying” is “brought to pass” when men die! There can be no more direct perversion of the word of God than to represent this saying as being brought to pass when men die. But what does the doctrine of the immortality of the soul care about the perversion of the word of God?

The first time that the doctrine was ever uttered, it was in direct contradiction of the express word of the Lord himself. The Lord said, in the event of man’s disobedience,

Genesis 2

¹⁷ You shall surely die;

And the devil said,

Genesis 3

⁴ You shall not surely die.

And there is no shadow of reason to expect that the doctrine will, in reality, ever assume any other position.

It is not alone a perversion of Scripture to so apply the “saying” in question; it is alike a perversion of the plainest principles of reason and experience.

For instance, here are death and a saint of God struggling

for the mastery. Presently death obtains the mastery. The saint lies lifeless; death has the victory. When he is dead, is that a time to claim victory over death? When he is being lowered into the grave, is that a time to shout the victory over the grave? Nay, verily.

But it is not to be always so. There is One who exclaims,

Revelation 1

¹⁸ I am He that lives, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell [the grave] and of death.

And when that glorious One...

1 Thessalonians 4

¹⁶ ...shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God,

...and with power that bursts the bars of the cruel grave and destroys the strength of death, then the saint arises triumphant over death, and...

1 Corinthians 15

⁵⁴ ...then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

Then the saint can shout exultingly,

⁵⁵ O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory?

And,

⁵⁷ ...thanks be to God, which gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

And thrice thanks, yea,

1 Peter 1

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy has begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

However, it is not alone through the subversion of the doctrine of the resurrection that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul strikes against the coming of the Lord. The issue is directly joined. For by those who believe in the natural immortality of the soul, it is held that those who die in the Lord go straight to heaven; that they go direct to the place where the Lord is; and so they sing,

Then persevere till death
Shall bring you to your God;
He'll take you, at your parting breath,
To His divine abode.⁴

And obituaries are actually written by them such as the following, which we read not long since in the *Christian Cynosure*:

"Alvah Palmer went to heaven from [a certain place in New York;]"

And then the notice went on to tell when and of what he died, etc. And Dr. Talmage, in relating how a certain saintly woman was "emparadised," tells how the chariot of Elijah was outdone; for there it must have taken some little time to turn out the chariot and hitch up the horses; but here, in this instance, the transition was all made instantaneously, without waiting for either horses or chariot! And all this when a person died! These are only notable expressions of the common idea of those who believe in the doctrine of the natural immortality of the soul.

Now, if these things be true, if it be true that death brings people to God; that men and women go direct to heaven from their homes in this world, and this so instantaneously that there is no time to get ready the chariot of God, as was done when Elijah went without dying at all, we say if these things

⁴ George Heath, Hymn: *Steadfastness*, from the book *Hymns and Poetic Essays*, 1781. Used afterwards in many Protestant hymn books.

be true, then there is literally no place left for the coming of the Lord.

It would be simply the height of absurdity to talk about the Lord's coming to this world after people who are not here at all, but are, and have been, for years and hundreds of years, in heaven, in the very place which He leaves to come here!

This is why the doctrine of the coming of the Lord is so neglected, so despised, in fact. Believing this, and there is no need to believe in the coming of the Lord; indeed, it is a palpable inconsistency to believe in it.

Believing this, and there is no need to look, or wait, for the coming of the Lord; all there is for such to do is to wait till death shall come and take them; and so death,—“the last enemy,” “the king of terrors,”—is given the place and the office of Him who is our life (*Colossians* 3:4), of:

Revelation 1

⁵ [Him that] loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood.

But this belief is not the “belief of the truth.” *2 Thessalonians* 2:13. There is no element of truth, in any form, in the idea of people going to God or to heaven when they die. Christ himself said as plainly as tongue can speak,

John 13

³³ Where I go, you cannot come.

Then when his disciples were troubled because of these words, He told them, in words equally plain, of the event upon which they must place their only hope of being with Him where He is, and that event is,

John 14

³ I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there you may be also.

And the word “that” shows positively that it is the only way

in which men may ever be with Him where He is. Therefore the coming of the Lord is the Christian's hope. And the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, in supplanting, as it certainly does, the doctrine of the coming of the Lord, supplants the Christian's hope.

Then when the doctrine of the immortality of the soul sends men to heaven:

- before the end of the world,
- before the sounding of the last trump,
- before the time when the Lord himself shall descend from heaven and raise the dead,
- before He appears in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory, and sends His angels to gather together His elect,

—when the doctrine of the immortality of the soul puts men into heaven before the occurrence of these events, it does it in defiance of the word of Christ, which lives and abides forever.

Therefore we say it stands proved that the belief of the doctrine of the immortality of the soul is subversive of the doctrine of the second coming of Christ, and, in that, is subversive of the truth of God.

III. The Judgment

The judgment is one of the certainties of Bible doctrine. Time and again Jesus sets before us the awful scenes and the all-important decisions of the judgment.

Matthew 12

³⁶ I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.

Luke 11

³¹ The queen of the South shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them; for she came from the utmost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of

Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here.

³² The men of Nineveh shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.

In the parables of:

- the wheat and tares; *Matthew* 13:24-30;
- the marriage of the king's son; *Matthew* 22:1-14;
- the talents; *Matthew* 25:14-30;

—in fact, in all His teaching, the judgment was made prominent. In *Matthew* 25:31-46, he sets before us a view of the very judgment itself.

Matthew 25

³¹ When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory:

³² And before Him shall be gathered all nations: and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats:

³³ And He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.

³⁴ Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, Come, you blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

³⁵ For I was hungry, and you gave me meat: I was thirsty, and you gave me drink: I was a stranger, and you took me in:

³⁶ Naked, and you clothed me: I was sick, and you visited me: I was in prison, and you came unto me.

³⁷ Then shall the righteous answer Him, saying, Lord, when did we see You hungry, and fed You? or thirsty, and gave You drink?

³⁸ When did we see You a stranger, and took You in? or naked, and clothed You?

³⁹ Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and came unto You?

⁴⁰ And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least

of these my brethren, you have done it unto me.

⁴¹ Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, you cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

⁴² For I was hungry, and you gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and you gave me no drink:

⁴³ I was a stranger, and you took me not in: naked, and you clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and you visited me not.

⁴⁴ Then shall they also answer Him, saying, Lord, when did we see you hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto You?

⁴⁵ Then shall He answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me.

⁴⁶ And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

The Old Testament as well as the New tells of the judgment. Solomon says:

Ecclesiastes 12

¹³ Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His commandments; for this is the whole duty of man.

¹⁴ For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.

Daniel says:

Daniel 7

⁹ I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of Days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head like the pure wool; His throne was like the fiery flame, and His wheels as burning fire.

¹⁰ A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him; thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him; the judgment was set, and the books were opened.

Isaiah, David, Job, and other prophets speak of this, as well as Solomon and Daniel. Even...

Jude

¹⁴ Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of this, saying, Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of his saints,

¹⁵ To execute judgment upon all.

This is not a judgment that is constantly going on during men's lives and completed at their death, so that then their reward is given, whether for good or ill.

Hebrews 9

²⁷ It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.

Paul...

Acts 24

²⁵ ...reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and *judgment to come*,

...not judgment already come, nor constantly going on. There is a time appointed for the judgment

Acts 17

³¹ Because He has appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom He has ordained; whereof He has given assurance unto all men, in that He has raised Him from the dead.

Romans 2

¹² As many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law;

¹⁶ In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.

And again:

2 Corinthians 5

¹⁰ We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that everyone may receive the things done in his body, according to what he has done, whether it be good or bad.

He must account not only for what he has done in his direct

personal acts, but he must answer for the fruit of his doings:

Jeremiah 17

¹⁰ I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.

The time when men shall receive for that which they have done, whether it be good or bad, is at the coming of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, and the end of the world.

Revelation 11

¹⁵ And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ; and He shall reign forever and ever.

¹⁸ And the nations were angry, and your wrath is come, and the time of the dead that they should be judged, and that you should give reward unto your servants the prophets, and to the saints, and to them that fear your name, small and great; and should destroy them which destroy the earth.

Again we quote the words of Jude:

Jude

¹⁴ And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints,

¹⁵ To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.

With this agree exactly the words of Christ:

Revelation 22

¹² Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.

And Paul, in his charge to Timothy, and to all ministers of Christ, says:

2 Timothy 4

¹ I charge you before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick [living] and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom:

² Preach the word.

Peter also says:

2 Peter 2

⁹ The Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished.

More texts might be given on these points, but these are sufficient. From these it is plain that:

1. There is a time “appointed” for the judgment;
2. This is after death;
3. It is the time of reward to all, for good or evil;
4. This is called the “day of judgment;”
5. It is at the appearing and kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ;
6. Then, and not till then, it is that the righteous receive their reward; and
7. The “unjust” are “reserved” until that time to be punished, and are not punished before that great day of judgment.

Yet, however plain all this may be, it is equally plain that there is not one of these propositions that the doctrine of the natural immortality of the soul does not tend to subvert. For if, at death, righteous men enter immediately into their reward, and the unrighteous go immediately to the place of punishment, then where is there any possible room for the judgment? Unless, perhaps, the absurd idea be adopted that men should spend hundreds or thousands of years in happiness or misery, and then be brought to the judgment to see whether they be worthy of that which they have enjoyed or

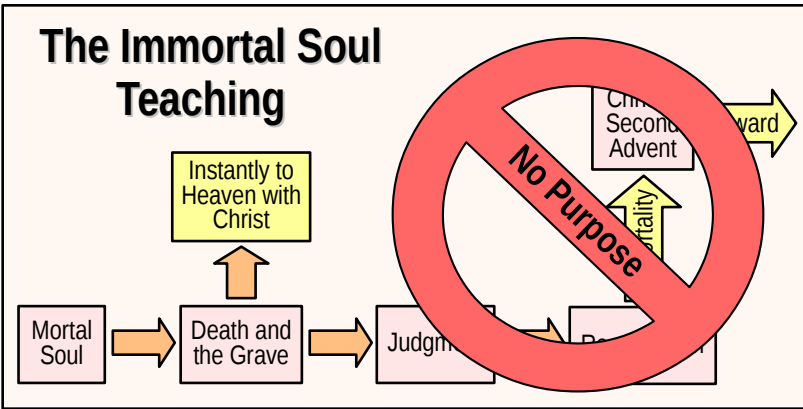
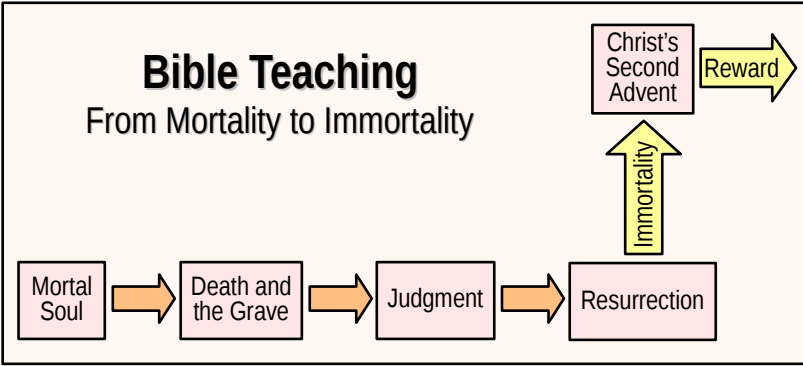
suffered!!

For if at death men enter immediately into their reward or punishment, as the case may be, then it follows, if there be any judgment at all, that instead of there being a time “appointed” “after this” for judgment, there must necessarily be a judgment constantly going on in the life of each individual, and that the judgment closes at his death, and that he in consequence of judgment passed enters then upon his destiny, whether for good or for ill.

It can be seen at a glance that such a view is utterly subversive of the Bible doctrine of the judgment. If such be the truth, then:

- There can be no such thing as a day of judgment when the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints to execute judgment upon all, because all are judged as fast as they die.
- There can be no such thing as Christ judging the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom, because all the dead have been judged when they died.
- There can be no such thing as the “time of the dead that they should be judged” when the seventh angel sounds, and the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ, for all the dead will have been judged before the seventh angel shall have sounded.
- And there can be no such thing as reserving “the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished,” because by this theory they are sent to punishment as soon as they die.

In short, if the doctrine of the immortality of the soul be the truth, the Bible doctrine of the judgment cannot be the truth. And the time has now come when a choice must be made between them. As for us, we choose the Bible, with all its doctrine, and with all that that choice involves.



That we do not misrepresent the popular doctrine of the immortality of the soul when we say that it puts men into heaven or hell at death, can be proved by anyone who will consult the hymn books, or the papers of the religious denominations that believe that doctrine, or listen to the average funeral discourse or revival sermon.

But that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul is subversive of the Bible doctrine of the judgment is not all. By virtue of that doctrine, men have usurped the seat of the Judge of all, and have arrogated to themselves the prerogative of reading into heaven whomsoever they see fit.

How often we read that such and such a person is in

heaven! But what right has any man to say who is worthy of a place in that bright world? Who knows the heart? None but God alone. He alone it is who pronounces upon the worthiness of men “to obtain that world and the resurrection from the dead,” and when men take upon themselves to read into heaven this man or that man, they are simply usurping the awful prerogative of the Most High. And without a belief in the doctrine of the natural immortality of the soul, no man would ever think of it.

We repeat: It is God alone to whom belongs the right to pronounce that decision. He will pronounce it in every case, but it will be in the judgment; not at death, but at the resurrection of the dead, and before the assembled universe, and by the voice of the glorious Son of God, who has loved us and has washed us from our sins in His own blood; for:

John 5

²⁷ [He] has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of man.

²⁸ Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice,

²⁹ And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

Any doctrine that will lead men to thus usurp the prerogative of the Judge of all the earth, cannot be the truth. This is exactly what the doctrine of the immortality of the soul does, therefore it cannot be the truth; and as it is subversive of the Bible doctrine of the judgment, it is not only not the truth, but the belief of it is subversive of the truth.

IV. A Clean Universe

God created man upon the earth, and gave him dominion over all upon it. He made him, not as the angels, but lower than they—inferior to the angels:

Psalm 8

⁵ For You have made him a little lower than the angels, and have crowned him with glory and honor.

Hebrews 2

⁷ You made him a little while inferior to the angels; You crowned him with glory and honor, and did set him over the works of your hands.

God made man upright, but through the deception of Satan he turned to crooked ways—he sinned.

And although God had put all things in subjection under him, and “left nothing” that was not “put under him,” yet now, says Paul,

⁸ We see not yet all things put under him.

Through sin he has been deprived of his glory, and honor, and dominion, which God gave him, and which the Lord intended that he should forever enjoy. This sin was brought upon him by Satan, and, hard upon sin, death followed.

But when man had thus sold himself under sin, God gave by promise, and in the “fullness of time” (*Galatians 4:4*) He gave in fact, His only-begotten Son,

John 3

¹⁶ ...that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.

When man had so sold himself under sin, under the curse, God gave His dear Son to redeem him from sin, from the curse, and from all condemnation.

Romans 8

¹ There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Galatians 3

¹³ Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being

made a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangs on a tree.

2 Corinthians 5

²¹ He has made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

Romans 8

³ For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh;

⁴ That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

To put away sin and plant righteousness in its stead, is the mission of Christ to this world. That He might accomplish this, He had to make the awful sacrifice of Himself, the Creator of the universe.

Hebrews 9

²⁶ Now once in the end of the world has He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.

By the greatness of the sacrifice we may judge of the enormity of sin, and how abhorrent it is in the sight of God, and also how widely contrary it is to every principle of the government of the King of eternity. To deliver man from its thralldom He spared not His own Son. Rather than to see the blight and stain of sin upon the fair face of his universe, God gave up the "Son of His love" (*Colossians* 1:13 RV) to die the cruel death of the accursed tree. John says:

1 John 3

⁸ He that commits sin is of the devil; for the devil sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.

The work of the devil is sin; for he said, "he that commits sin is of the devil." Therefore when it is said that the Son of God was manifested to destroy the works of the devil, it is

simply expressing, in other words, that which we quoted from Paul, that Christ appeared to put away sin.

As therefore Christ's mission is to destroy the works of the devil—to put away sin—it follows that as long as there is a vestige of sin remaining, His mission is not accomplished. Whatever, therefore, tends to perpetuate sin, tends just so far to delay the accomplishment of the mission of Christ. And if by any means sin were made eternal, the inevitable result would be to nullify and subvert the mission of Christ.

Now that is exactly what is done by the doctrine of the natural immortality of the soul. The very meaning of the word immortal being “not subject to death,” it follows that if the soul be immortal, it must live eternally, whatever its condition may be; and from this again it follows that when the awful sentence is pronounced,

Revelation 22

¹¹ He that is unjust, let him be unjust still,

whatsoever soul it be that shall then be unjust must live so to all eternity; which is simply to make sin eternal, and so to subvert the mission of Christ.

That sin is to be eternal is strenuously maintained by those who believe that the soul is immortal. This is shown positively in the doctrine of the eternal torment of the wicked. In fact, the belief in the eternal torment of the wicked is simply the necessary consequence of the belief in the immortality of the soul.

We know, for the word of God says it, that the wicked will be punished. We know likewise, by the same authority, that they will be punished as long as they live (*aion*: a life-time). Now if they live eternally, it is evident that they will be in pain eternally. But the word of God says just as plainly that the wicked shall die as it says anything at all about them.

Romans 6

²³ The wages of sin is death.

Ezekiel 18

⁴ The soul that sins, it shall die.

That word describes a time in the future:

Revelation 5

¹³ And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sits upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.

This scripture can never be fulfilled if the doctrine of eternal suffering be true, or, in other words, if the doctrine of the immortality of the soul be true; for every living intelligence joins in the song of joy and praise. Again, we read of a time when...

Revelation 21

⁴ ...there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away.

If the doctrine of eternal suffering be the truth, it is literally impossible that there can ever come a time when there shall be “no more pain.” But there stands that faithful word, that there is coming a time when there shall be no more pain; there is coming a time when every voice in the universe will ascribe...

Revelation 5

¹³ ...honor, and glory, and power...unto Him that sits upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever.

This is the truth of God; He has given His only-begotten Son that it might be accomplished; and we have seen that the mission of the Son is declared to be:

Hebrews 9

²⁶ ...to put away sin,

to

1 John 3

⁸ ...destroy the works of the devil.

And the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, in making sin eternal, and in immortalizing the works of the devil, frustrates the purpose of God and subverts the mission of Christ.

V. The Mission of Christ

The doctrine of the natural immortality of the soul makes the body only worthless clay, formed into a prison that binds, and fetters, and clogs the free action of the soul, while death is the friendly messenger that bursts the prison bars, and sets free the aspiring soul to seek its native sphere.

One of the most influential of American preachers said lately, of one who had died, that the person...

“...is living, and more thoroughly living today than any of us who are clogged and hampered and chained down by earthly impediment.”

This is simply the expression of the common belief of those who hold to the idea that the soul is immortal. Embodied in meter so that it can be sung, it runs on this wise:

Why should we start and fear to die?
What timorous worms we mortals are!
Death is the gate to endless joy;
And yet we dread to enter there.⁵

Now we read in the word of God as follows:

Hosea 13

¹⁴ O death, I will be your plagues.

And again we read that:

1 Corinthians 15

²⁶ The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.

⁵ Isaac Watts, *Hymns and Spiritual Songs*, Book 2, Hymn 31, 1707.

Can it be that God is going to visit with plagues, and destroy, the gate to endless joy? Is He so displeased to have His creatures entering into endless joy that He is determined to destroy the very means by which they enter that blissful state?

If the words of this preacher, the language of this hymn, and the doctrine upon which they are founded, be the truth, then the Lord is going to do just the thing that is here pointed out, that is, He is going to visit with plagues. and destroy, the gate to endless joy. But this is not all. We read further of Christ:

Hebrews 2

¹⁴ Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.

Granting the claim that death is the gate to endless joy, then from this scripture it follows, just as absolutely as logic can demonstrate, that the devil, having the power of death, is the gate-keeper. And so the Lord is not only going to destroy this “gate to endless joy,” but He is going to destroy him that keeps it.

Nor yet is this all. Granting not only the claim based upon the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, that death is the gate to endless joy, but also that the soul is clogged, and hampered, and imprisoned by its confinement in the body, and that it is released by death, it follows that if there had never been any death in the world, no soul could have ever been set free, and there never would have been any gate to endless joy.

And as it was the devil who brought death into the world, therefore, under that doctrine, to him must be accorded the honor of setting men free from this world, and of creating and opening to men the gate of endless joy. But this is the very thing that Christ says that He himself came to do. He says:

John 14

⁶ I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man comes unto the Father but by me.

John 10

⁹ I am the door; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved.

Therefore when the doctrine of the immortality of the soul makes death the gate to endless joy, and the friendly messenger that releases men from this world, it supplants the Saviour of the world, and bestows upon Satan the honor that is due to Christ.

And by all this we lay against the doctrine of the natural immortality of the soul the legitimate and logical charge that it frustrates the purpose of God, that it nullifies the mission of Christ, and supplants the Saviour of the world.

And if anything more is needed to show that between that doctrine and the truth of God there is a difference wide as eternity, it will be found in the next chapter.

VI. Christ Our Life

Romans 6

²³ For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 5

¹² ...sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.

Romans 3

²³ For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.

But when man had sinned, and thus brought himself under the doom of death, then Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, presented Himself, and was accepted of God, in man's behalf.

God had before pronounced the penalty of death against transgression. And Adam would have died the day he sinned had not the Son of God interceded in his behalf, and presented

Himself in satisfaction of the demands of the broken law of God. But by the love of Christ and the mercy of God, man was given a second probation, a second opportunity to attain to righteousness.

Only for the mediation of Christ, the race of man would have ceased the day that Adam sinned. Only for Christ there never would have lived a man after Adam. So that every man who has ever lived, or who shall ever live, from the sin of Adam to the end of the world, owes that life to the fact that Christ, the Son of God, offered Himself when Adam sinned. This is shown in the words of Christ:

John 10

¹⁰ I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

Christ offering Himself in behalf of Adam is the only means by which men have life at all:

¹⁰ I am come that they might have life.

But this life is only temporal. It is only extended as an opportunity for man to prove himself worthy of eternal life, that he may show himself worthy of having life more abundantly; for as Christ said, He is come that they might have life,

¹⁰ ...and that they might have it more abundantly.

The way in which men use the life which is already given, will decide whether they shall have life more abundantly, or whether they shall have life at all. The man who shows himself abusive of the trust of God, and ungrateful for his favor shown in granting this life, only shows himself unworthy of that which he already has, and much less can he be intrusted "more abundantly" with anything pertaining to life.

In this view is contained the very basic principle of the lesson inculcated in the parable of the unjust steward:

Luke 16

¹⁰ He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much; and he that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much.

¹¹ If therefore you have not been faithful in the unrighteous riches, who will commit to your trust the true riches?

¹² And if you have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?

And also in the lesson of the parable of the talents:

Matthew 25

²⁹ Unto everyone that has shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but from him that has not shall be taken away even that which he has.

If men will turn to purposes of iniquity, and transgression, and sin, a life which is committed to them for a time, how can the Lord commit to them this gift for eternity?

If this life, which is not their own, they will devote simply as an instrument of unrighteousness unto sin, to rebellion, and unfaithfulness to Him who gives it, how shall He give to such immortal life—a life which, not being subject to cessation, may properly be called their own?

To do so would be only to subvert His own authority and the principles of His government. Such a thing He will never do.

But such as devote this life to the honor of Him who gives it, and to righteousness before Him, to them will be given life “more abundantly,” even eternal life, in which to honor and glorify Him; while from all who do not so shall be taken away even that which they have.

Acts 10

³⁴ Of a truth...God is no respecter of persons;

³⁵ But in every nation he that fears Him, and works righteousness, is accepted with Him.

The righteousness which is acceptable with God is the righteousness...

Romans 3

²² ...which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference;

²³ For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.

Hebrews 5

⁹ He became the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him.

John 3

¹⁶ God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Christ's coming to this world was not in vain. He came for a purpose, and that purpose is that those who will believe in Him may not perish, but have eternal life. And as surely as those who believe in Him shall have eternal life, just so surely those who do not believe in Him shall perish. If not, if those who do not believe in Him do not perish, then this record which He has given cannot be true.

If, by virtue of the immortality of the soul, those who do not believe in Christ live as long as those who do, then where is there any point in these scriptures? We know full well the meaning that is put upon the word "perish" by those who believe in the doctrine of the natural immortality of the soul; that is, that it means eternal life in misery. But no such idea is contained in the Scripture.

Eternal life is the heritage of those who believe in Christ, and of those alone. Nor will language allow any such meaning to be put upon the word "perish." That word is defined thus:

Perish: to be destroyed; to go to destruction; to pass away; to come to nothing; to be blotted from existence; to die; to lose life.

This is Webster's definition of perish; and every part of it can be duplicated time and again from the Scriptures. But no part of this definition can be true if the soul be immortal.

Psalm 37

¹⁰ For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be; yea, you shall diligently consider his place, and it shall not be.

Again, in *Isaiah*, we read a promise of what the Lord will do with those who contend with the "seed of Abraham," "the friend of God:"

Isaiah 41

¹¹ Behold, all they that were incensed against you shall be ashamed and confounded; they shall be as nothing; and they that strive with you shall perish.

¹² You shall seek them, and shall not find them, even them that contended with you; they that war against you shall be as nothing, and as a thing of nought.

But to the meek, to those who learn of Christ, it is promised:

Psalm 37

¹¹ But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

²⁸ ...the seed of the wicked shall be cut off

²⁹ The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein forever.

All is summed up by the Lord Jesus in one sentence, as follows:

John 3

³⁶ He that believes on the Son has everlasting life; and he that believes not the Son shall not see life.

And again:

John 6

⁵³ Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, you have no life in you.

If these scriptures, from the first to the last, do not show that future life is obtained only in Christ, then it would be impossible for the Lord himself to put words together that would show such a thing.

If the Lord wanted to tell men that without believing in Christ they could have no life; that without believing in Him they should perish; if He wanted to tell them that the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ, how would it be possible to tell them so more plainly than He has already told, in the words quoted?

Yet in defiance of these plain, positive scriptures, and in direct subversion of them, the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, which gives to all men immortal life irrespective of Christ, is held by the majority of professed Christians as a veritable article of Christian faith.

Why is it that men will not believe the record that God has given on this subject? Why is it that they will not believe that future life is given alone through Christ? It is no light thing to disbelieve this.

Many seem to think, and will even so express themselves, that it makes no difference particularly whether this be believed or not. But it does make a difference. We state it as the simple truth that not to believe that eternal life for man is in Christ alone, is one of the greatest insults that can be offered to the God of heaven. Please read carefully the following scripture, and see whether we have stated more than the exact truth:

1 John 5

¹⁰ He that believes not God has made Him a liar; because he believes not the record that God gave of His Son.

¹¹ And this is the record, that God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.

¹² He that has the Son has life; and he that has not the Son of God has not life.

Here is the plain statement that to believe not a certain “record” is to make God a liar. That record is just as plainly stated to be that the eternal life that is given us “is in the Son” of God, and that:

¹² He that has not the Son of God has not life.

Now the doctrine of the immortality of the soul causes men not to believe that record. They who believe the doctrine of the immortality of the soul do not believe that they who have not the Son of God have not life. Therefore the doctrine of the immortality of the soul “has made God a liar,” because it causes men to...

¹⁰ ...believe not the record that God gave of his Son.

¹¹ And this is the record, that God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

¹² He that has the Son has life; and he that has not the Son of God has not life.

Therefore we say that not to believe that future life is given us in Christ alone, is to insult the God of heaven by making Him “a liar.” It does make a difference how we believe on this question; for when God is made a liar, He ceases to be Jehovah, He ceases to be God.

VII. Which Will We Believe?

Nor is that all; for when the Lord is thus removed from His throne, Satan is put into His place. In the event of man’s sinning,

God said, “You shall surely die.”

Satan said, “You shall not surely die.”

Which of these told the truth? It is impossible for both to be true.

The doctrine of the immortality of the soul teaches that the devil told the truth, for that doctrine teaches that there is no

death, and if there be no death, then every man has life, independent of belief in Christ, which, as we have read from the word, makes God a liar. Therefore, the doctrine of the immortality of the soul sets God aside as a liar, and exalts Satan as the one who tells the truth, and as the one who is to be believed.

Here we close our investigation of this subject. These evidences certainly show that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul is subversive of the truth of God. We have proved by logical deduction from sound Scripture premises, that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul:

- is subversive of the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead;
- is subversive of the doctrine of the coming of the Lord;
- is subversive of the doctrine of the judgment;
- is subversive of the mission of Christ;
- supplants Christ in the honor of opening the way from this world to another, and bestows that honor upon Satan; and finally,
- puts God aside as a liar, and exalts Satan to His place as the one who tells the truth.

The logical summary of all this is contained in one word:

Spiritualism.

The immortality of the soul is the foundation of Spiritualism; and through the already prevalent belief of that doctrine, Spiritualism will yet lead the world to the active acceptance of every point which we have charged.

Therefore, we pray all to flee this thing, and believe...

1 John 5

¹⁰ ...the record that God gave of His Son.

¹¹ And this is the record, that God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.

¹² He that has the Son has life; and he that has not the Son of God has not life.

13. What Happens When We Die?

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Introduction

IN THE thoughts of man there are a great many questions which arise concerning himself. Some of these are highly important. So important indeed are they that the Word of God itself has recorded them.

Nor is that all. This Word has not only recorded the questions, but it has also recorded the answers to the questions. And when the Word of God asks a question and answers it, then in the answer we have the absolute truth on that question, and there is an end of all dispute. There is left no room for controversy; for

Isaiah 48

¹⁷ Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel:
I am the Lord your God which teaches you to profit, which leads you by the way that you should go.

Therefore, whatever the Lord teaches is profitable teaching. Whether we believe it, or whether we like it or not, makes no difference so far as the teaching is concerned. The teaching is profitable, and everything that conflicts with it is unprofitable.

The way the Lord leads is the way that we should go, and to follow any other leading is to go in the way that we should not.

I. Is Man Mortal or Immortal?

Psalm 8

⁴ What is man, that You are mindful of him?

Of course there are more ways than one in which this question can be referred to man, but the thing about man upon which we wish now to bring it to bear is that of immortality.

“What is man?”

Is he mortal or immortal? We have not far to go for an answer.

Job 4

¹⁷ Shall mortal man be more just than God?

2 Chronicles 14 [margin]

¹¹ O Lord, You are our God: let not mortal man prevail against You.

Thus we find in answer to the question, that the Word of God calls man mortal, and everything that the Bible says directly about immortality is consistent with this answer. This Word says:

1 Timothy 1

¹⁷ Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

Here it is shown that immortality is an attribute of God, equally with eternity, wisdom, honor, glory, etc. None of these belong to man as he is. Again, speaking of the appearing of Jesus Christ, the Word says:

1 Timothy 6

¹⁵ In His times He shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, the Lord of lords;

¹⁶ Who only has immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man has seen, nor can see.

Christ has brought this immortality to light. The purpose and grace of God, says the Word,

2 Timothy 1

¹⁰ ...is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who has abolished death, and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

What the gospel is, is shown in a few words:

1 Corinthians 15

¹ I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you...

³ For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures;

⁴ And that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.

Thus, then, in the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ is summed up the gospel; and “through the gospel” it is said Christ “brought life and immortality to light.”

Certainly it was not by dying nor being buried that either life or immortality was brought to light, for both these things were familiar to all men. But to rise again from the dead, and bring with Him a multitude of the dead, who also appeared unto many (*Matthew 27:52-53*), that was to bring to light something that had never been seen before; that was to bring life and immortality to light indeed. Therefore it is through the resurrection that Christ has brought immortality to light.

Again, the Scripture says that God will render eternal life...

Romans 2

⁷ To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor and immortality.

Now as immortality is to be sought for, and as God is the only one who has it, and as Christ is the only one who has brought it to light, it follows that immortality must be sought of God, through Christ. Even so says the Scripture:

Romans 6

²³ The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

1 John 5

¹¹ This is the record, that God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.

¹² He that has the Son has life; and he that has not the Son of God has not life.

Having then sought and found that immortality comes only through Christ, we ask, When is it bestowed upon us as our own?

1 Corinthians 15

⁵¹ Behold, I show you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

⁵² In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

⁵³ For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

⁵⁴ So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

⁵⁷ Thanks be to God, which gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Thus the story which the Word of God tells about immortality is this:

- Man, being mortal, has it not;
- God has it.
- Christ has brought it to light through the Gospel;
- Man is to seek for it of God, through Christ, and will obtain it at the resurrection of the dead; for then it is that this mortal puts on immortality; then it is that death is swallowed up in victory.
- This comes “at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible,” and the living shall be changed.

But when is it that the last trump sounds? It is when the Lord Jesus comes in His glory:

1 Thessalonians 4

¹⁶ For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first;

¹⁷ Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

Immortality is obtained of God, though Christ, at the resurrection of the dead. It is the sound of the last trump that awakes the dead. That trump is sounded at the coming of the Lord. Therefore without the second coming of the Lord Jesus we shall never receive immortality. For this reason we long for His glorious appearing. We watch, we wait for Him,

Philippians 3

²¹ Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body.

For...

1 John 3

² ...we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.

“Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.”

Revelation 22:20

II. Where Do Men Go When They Die?

Another important question concerning man, one which has, no doubt, been asked by every person that ever lived long enough to think at all upon the subject, is,

“When a man dies, where does he go?”

“What is his condition?”

This question the Bible asks:

Job 14

¹⁰ Man dies, and wastes away; yea, man gives up the ghost, and where is he?

There have been many answers given to this question; and there are yet many, even in this land where Bibles are scat-

tered everywhere.

- Some say that if he die wicked, he is in hell; if he die righteous, he is in heaven.
- Others say that he is in neither hell nor heaven, but in purgatory;
- And yet others, that he is in none of these, but has passed to the “spheres,” and still associates and communicates with those who still live.

All these answers cannot be the right ones; and, as a matter of fact, not one of them is the right one. The Bible alone is that which gives the right answer to this, its own question. And as it is alone the Bible answers to Bible questions that we are now studying, that alone shall be what we shall seek on this question of where is man when he has died.

Job 14

¹⁰ Man dies, and wastes away; yea, man gives up the ghost, and where is he?

Answer:

Ecclesiastes 9

³ The heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in their heart while they live, and after that they go to the dead.

To good King Josiah God said:

2 Kings 22

²⁰ You shall be gathered into your grave in peace.

Of the wicked He also says:

Job 21

³² Yet shall he be brought to the grave, and shall remain in the tomb.

Jacob said:

Genesis 37

³⁵ I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning.

We shall not multiply texts on this point, but simply show that this is confirmed by the Word of Christ. When He comes to give reward to His people, and when He calls for them, they, all that are dead, are found in the grave:

John 5

²⁸ The hour is coming, in which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice,

²⁹ And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

Therefore the Bible answer to this question is plainly that he is in the grave. But what is his condition there? Let us read a verse from *Job* again:

Job 14

¹⁰ Man gives up the ghost, and where is he?

¹¹ As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decays and dries up;

¹² So man lies down, and rises not; till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep.

This shows that man, when he dies, is asleep. Again, *Job* says that if he had died when he was an infant:

Job 3

¹³ Now should I have lain still and been quiet, I should have slept; then had I been at rest,

¹⁴ With kings and counselors of the earth...

¹⁷ There the wicked cease from troubling; and there the weary be at rest.

¹⁸ There the prisoners rest together; they hear not the voice of the oppressor.

¹⁹ The small and great are there; and the servant is free from his master.

In the history of the kings of Israel and Judah, 25 times is the record made of their deaths, "He slept with his fathers."

We again turn to the Word of Christ. Lazarus was sick. Jesus and His disciples were some distance away, and Lazarus died. Jesus said:

John 11

¹¹ Our friend Lazarus sleeps; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.

¹² Then said the disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well.

¹³ However Jesus spoke of his death; but they thought that He had spoken of taking rest in sleep.

¹⁴ Then Jesus said unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead.

Here are the Words of Christ: “Lazarus sleeps;” “Lazarus is dead.” Therefore the plain Word of Christ is that when a man is dead he is asleep. Paul says that:

Acts 13

³⁶ David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption.

And Peter says of him:

Acts 2

³⁴ David is not ascended into the heavens.

And the reason is that:

1 Kings 2

¹⁰ David slept with his fathers and was buried.

Of Stephen it is recorded:

Acts 7

⁶⁰ He kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

It is certain, therefore, that the Bible plainly teaches that when man dies he falls asleep. The Word of God plainly teaches the sleep of the dead. Death is wholly an unconscious sleep, as, in the very nature of the case, it must be when the

place of sleep is in the grave. But here is the proof:

Ecclesiastes 9

⁵ The living know that they shall die; but the dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten.

⁶ Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion forever in anything that is done under the sun.

¹⁰ Whatsoever your hand finds to do, do it with your might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, where you go.

Psalms 146

³ Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help.

⁴ His breath goes forth, he returns to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.

When men's love, and hatred, and envy, and their very thoughts, have perished, and their memory is gone, there can be nothing else but unconsciousness. And that is precisely what death is, and that is the condition into which men go when they die—a silent, dreamless sleep.

But the Bible story on this subject does not stop here. For:

1 Corinthians 15

²⁰ Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept.

Matthew 27

⁵² And many bodies of the saints which slept arose,

⁵³ And came out of the graves after His resurrection.

And as God...

Hebrews 13

²⁰ ...brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus...

so also...

1 Thessalonians 4

¹⁴ ...them which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.

¹⁵ For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

¹⁶ For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first;

¹⁷ Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

1 Corinthians 15

⁵¹ We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

⁵² In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump.

Then it is that:

Daniel 12

² Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake.

Then is the time to which David looked when he fell asleep, and was laid unto his fathers:

Psalms 17

¹⁵ As for me, I will behold your face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with your likeness.

This is the time to which Job looked when he said:

Job 14

¹² So man lies down, and rises not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep.

For it is at the coming of Christ and the resurrection of the dead that the heavens roll away:

Revelation 6

¹⁴ The heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places,

¹⁶ [and men cried] to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us,

and hide us from the face of Him that sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb;

¹⁷ For the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?

Therefore, the Bible answer to the Bible question, “When man gives up the ghost, where is he?” is this:

He is asleep in the grave until the trump of God awakes the dead; until the voice of the glorious Son of God calls, and all that are in the graves hear His voice; for it is God who gives victory over death, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Reader, this is profitable teaching, for it is the teaching of the Word of God, for:

Isaiah 48

¹⁷ Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: I am the Lord your God which teaches you to profit, which leads you by the way that you should go.

This is the way that the Lord Jesus leads us.

Will you follow?

III. Do the Dead Praise the Lord?

Another question is, “Do the dead praise the Lord?” Nowadays it is held, as a matter of course, that if a person be righteous, or even professedly so, when he dies, he has gone to heaven, and has joined the angelic hosts in their holy songs of praise to the Creator of all.

But in the Scriptures this question is asked, in connection with certain others, in a manner and in a tone which of themselves admit only of a negative answer. Says the Psalmist:

Psalm 88

¹⁰ Will You show wonders to the dead? Shall the dead arise and praise You?

¹¹ Shall your loving-kindness be declared in the grave? or your faithfulness in destruction?

¹² Shall your wonders be known in the dark? and your righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?

Here the grave, the place of the dead, is called “the land of forgetfulness.” This is strictly in accord with that which we read under our last question, that:

Ecclesiastes 9

⁵ ...the dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten.

They are in the land of “forgetfulness.”

⁶ Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished.

And,

Psalms 146

⁴ ...in that very day his thoughts perish.

And:

Ecclesiastes 9

¹⁰ There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, where you go.

In this respect, therefore, no single expression could better describe the place of the dead than does this one:

“The land of forgetfulness.”

The Psalmist also speaks of it as “the dark.” On this Job says:

Job 10

²¹ I go whence I shall not return, even to the land of darkness and the shadow of death;

²² A land of darkness, as darkness itself; and of the shadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkness.

Those that have been long dead David says:

Psalms 143

³ ...dwell in darkness.

Now it is of those who dwell in this place, the place of the dead, that the question is asked:

“Do they praise the Lord?”

And here is the direct answer:

Psalm 115

¹⁷ The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence.

And again:

Psalm 6

⁵ In death there is no remembrance of You; in the grave who shall give You thanks?

These words are the words of God. They are the truth. Therefore the idea that people go to heaven, or anywhere else but this place of the dead, when they die, cannot be the truth. The Lord who speaks to us in the Bible made man. He knows what is before us. He knows what will be after us. He knows our thoughts afar off.

- He it is who says, “The dead know not anything.”
- He it is who says, “The dead praise not the Lord.”
- He it is who says that the place of the dead is “the land of forgetfulness.”

We implicitly believe this word, for He alone knows. He teaches us to profit, and though we may have to pass through this land of darkness, this...

Psalm 23

⁴ ...valley of the shadow of death,

if our trust is in Him,

⁴ ...His rod and His staff will comfort us,

for He has gone this way before us. He died and lives again. If our hope is in Him, even though we may have to go to the place of the dead, yet we shall come again from it and live by

Him.

King Hezekiah was one of the few good kings that Judah had. He fell “sick unto death.” The Lord, by the prophet, sent this message to him:

Isaiah 38

¹ Set your house in order; for you shall die, and not live.

Yet, although this word of the Lord says positively, “You shall die, and not live,” now it is believed by the great majority of people that when a man dies he *does* live, and that he lives more fully, more really, than ever before.

It is now held that when a person dies he knows vastly more than he ever knew before, or than he ever could have known if he had not died. But from what we have set forth in these articles, there can be nothing more certain than that such is not the teaching of the Bible.

In this theory of the consciousness of the dead is the promise and potency, the whole sum and substance, of Spiritualism, purgatory, prayers for the dead, worship and invocation of saints, etc.

But bring Spiritualism, with all these other things, to the test of these scriptures, and where will it appear? It will appear just where it rightly belongs, that is, in the train of...

Revelation 12

⁹ ...that old serpent, which is the devil and Satan,

who said to innocent Eve,

Genesis 3

⁴ You shall not surely die.

People now think it very strange that Eve should have believed the word of Satan. Yet with the example of Eve before them, and its fearful fruits of these thousands of years, and the word of God with its line upon line and precept upon pre-

cept—with all this before them, multitudes of these same people, instead of believing the word of God, will yet believe the same story that Satan told Eve.

When the prophet went to King Hezekiah with the message that he should die and not live, Hezekiah was greatly grieved, and turned his face to the wall and prayed, and said:

Isaiah 38

¹⁰ I shall go to the gates of the grave; I am deprived of the residue of my years.

¹¹ I said, I shall not see the Lord, even the Lord, in the land of the living.

This, with much more, he said in his prayer, and the Lord sent Isaiah again to the king, saying:

Isaiah 38

⁵ I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears; behold, I will add unto your days fifteen years.

Then Hezekiah praised the Lord and said:

¹⁷ You have in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption...

¹⁸ For the grave cannot praise You, death cannot celebrate You; they that go down into the pit cannot hope for your truth.

¹⁹ The living, the living, he shall praise You, as I do this day; the father to the children shall make known your truth.

See *Isaiah* 38, throughout. Take this plain, express statement of the Word of God:

¹⁸ They that go down into the pit cannot hope for your truth,

and by it test the New Theology—probation after death—which is just now being discussed throughout the land, and its utter worthlessness will be seen at a glance. When a man dies, his opportunity to learn the truth is gone. He is dead. He is gone to the “land of forgetfulness,” to the grave, and they that go there cannot hope for the truth of God. If they have

not learned it, and loved it, before they go there, they will never learn it at all.

2 Corinthians 6

² ...now is the accepted time...now is the day of salvation.

Hebrews 3

¹⁵ Today if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts.

The living, the living it is, not the dead, who praise the Lord. Therefore, the Bible answer to this Bible question is:

*“The dead praise not the Lord,
neither any that go down into silence.”*

Psalm 115:17

IV. If a Man Die, Shall He Live Again?

This question is not one that is asked now so much as it ought to be. The question that is now asked a good deal more than it ought to be is whether man really dies—whether there is really any such thing as death.

And as it is, in the great majority of cases, decided that man does not die, that “there is no death, what seems so is transition,” in the view that man never ceases to live, it would not be an appropriate question at all to ask, Shall he live again?

But, as we have abundantly shown, the Bible considers this subject from the standpoint of the fact that man *does* die; that when he is dead he is wholly unconscious, and that all prospect of future existence depends upon an affirmative answer, from the Word of God, to the question as to whether he shall live again.

In *Job* is written the question to which we have here referred:

Job 14

⁴ If a man die, shall he live again?

And in *Isaiah* we have the direct answer to the question:

Isaiah 26

¹⁹ Your dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, you that dwell in the dust; for your dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.

The only hope of future life which the Word of God presents is in the resurrection of the dead. This is the hope of the righteous; it is the Christian's hope. Paul, in discussing this subject of the resurrection of the dead, proves first that Christ is risen, and then says:

1 Corinthians 15

¹² Now if Christ be preached that He rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?

¹³ But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen;

¹⁴ And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.

It is evident that there were some at Corinth, even as there are some now, who professed to believe in Christ, and at the same time believed not in the resurrection of the dead. But Paul settles that at once by saying,

¹³ If there is no resurrection of the dead,...

¹⁴ ...your faith in Christ is vain.

This proves plainly that our hope and faith in Christ meet their fruition only at and by the resurrection of the dead. This is so important that the Spirit of God, by the apostle, repeats it. Again he says:

1 Corinthians 15

¹⁶ If the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised;

¹⁷ And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; you are yet in your sins.

Here it is declared that to deny the resurrection of the dead

is to deny the resurrection of Christ, is to leave the professed believer yet in his sins; and therefore it subverts the gospel and the salvation of Christ.

This is followed by another most important conclusion, and that is,

¹⁶ If the dead rise not...

¹⁸ Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.

It would be impossible to more forcibly show that all hope of future life depends upon the resurrection of the dead. If there be no resurrection of the dead, then the dead are perished. And this is stated, not of the wicked dead, but of the righteous dead,

¹⁸ They also which are fallen asleep in Christ,

–even these have perished if there be no resurrection of the dead. In verse 32, this is repeated in another form:

1 Corinthians 15

³² If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantages it me, if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.

Such argument as that is very seldom heard in these our days. The argument now is:

“What advantage is it for us to practice the life of Christian self-denial if the soul be not immortal? What advantage is it for us to do these things if we do not go to heaven when we die?”

And so it is even sung:

Oh, you must be a lover of the Lord,
Or you can't go to heaven when you die!⁶

⁶ Charles Wesley, Hymn: *Jesus, Thou All Redeeming Lord*, from the book *Hymns and Sacred Poems*, 1749.

The truth is that, even though you be a lover of the Lord, you can't go to heaven when you die. But you *can* go at the resurrection of the dead; and that is at the coming of the Lord. For so it is written:

1 Corinthians 15

²² As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

²³ But every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming.

1 Thessalonians 4

¹⁶ For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first;

¹⁷ Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

“So” means “in this manner.” In this manner it is that we go to heaven. In this manner we meet the Lord. The hope of life by Christ, at the resurrection of the dead, is the hope in which Paul lived, the hope in which he exercised himself, the hope which he preached. When he stood before the council, he said:

Acts 23

⁶ I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee; of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question.

And afterward, when he answered his accusers before Felix, he said:

Acts 24

¹⁵ [I] have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.

²⁰ ...let these same here say, if they have found any evil doing in me, while I stood before the council,

²¹ Except it be for this one voice, that I cried standing among them, Touching the resurrection of the dead I am called in question by you this day.

Again, when he stood before Agrippa, he said:

Acts 26

⁶ And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers;

⁷ Unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. For which hope's sake, King Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews.

⁸ Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?

Now put these things together:

1. He stood and was judged for the hope of the promise made of God.
2. This was the promise made unto the fathers.
3. Unto this promise the twelve tribes—all Israel—hope to come.
4. For this hope he was accused of the Jews.
5. But he was accused—called in question—of the Jews, “touching the resurrection of the dead.”
6. Therefore the hope of the promise of God, made unto the fathers, is the hope of the promise of the resurrection of the dead.
7. This is made emphatic by his question to Agrippa, “Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?” When Paul was at Athens, “he preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection.” *Acts 17:18*.

Therefore it is plainly proved that the hope which God has set before us in Christ and His blessed gospel, is the hope of the resurrection from the dead unto everlasting life and eternal glory.

And as this resurrection all depends upon the glorious appearing of our Saviour, therefore the second coming of our Saviour is inseparably connected with this, the Christian's “blessed hope.” Thus says the Lord:

Titus 2

¹¹ The grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men,

¹² Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;

¹³ Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

This is that for which Job looked. He said:

Job 14

¹⁴ All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come.

This change is at the resurrection, for says Paul,

1 Corinthians 15

⁵¹ We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

⁵² In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump.

Again says Job:

Job 17

¹³ If I wait, the grave is my house; I have made my bed in the darkness.

¹⁵ And where is now my hope?

Here it is:

Job 19 [margin]

²⁵ I know that my Redeemer lives, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth;

²⁶ And though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God,

²⁷ Whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not a stranger. My reins within me are consumed with earnest desire for that day.

Time and space would fail us to quote the words of this hope, expressed by David, and Isaiah, and Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, and Daniel, and Hosea, and Micah, and all the prophets and apostles. We can only cite again the words that

this is the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers, unto which promise we instantly serving God day and night hope to come.

Why should it be thought a thing incredible that God should raise the dead? The righteous dead shall live again, at the coming of the Lord, and therefore we look and anxiously wait for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the Lord Jesus.

Like faithful Job, our reins within us are consumed with earnest desire for that glorious day. And as He assures us:

Revelation 22

²⁰ Surely I come quickly,

our hearts reply:

²⁰ ...*Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.*

V. How Are the Dead Raised Up?

Our last question under this heading was, “If a man die, shall he live again?” *Job* 14:14. And we presented the direct Bible answer by Isaiah:

Isaiah 26

¹⁹ Your dead men shall live.

And by the Lord Jesus:

John 5

²⁵ The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live.

We presented abundant Scripture proof that it is at the second coming of the Lord that the dead hear His voice, that the trumpet of God sounds, and that the dead are raised. We presented proofs of Holy Writ that the hope of the gospel is the resurrection of the dead; that this is the hope of the promise made of God unto the fathers; that:

- in this hope they all lived;
- in this hope they died; and
- in this hope they still sleep in the dust, awaiting the glorious sound of the voice of the Son of God to call them from the dead to life and immortality.

We proved by Paul's repeated argument in *1 Corinthians 15* and other places that in assurance of the resurrection of the dead alone, lies the assurance of a future life; and that if there be no resurrection of the dead there is no future life for either righteous or wicked.

In connection with this, there now comes in a question that has perplexed men for ages, and does yet perplex many; and although the Bible both asks and answers the question, there is yet much perplexity about it even among those who profess to believe the Bible. That question is:

1 Corinthians 15

³⁵ How are the dead raised up?

The answer is, in substance, The dead are raised up by...

Matthew 22

²⁹ ...the power of God.

This is shown by the Saviour's words to the Sadducees. The Sadducees, who...

Mark 12

¹⁸ ...say that there is no resurrection,

once came to Jesus and in favor of their unbelief presented what they deemed an insuperable objection to the idea of there being such a thing as a resurrection of the dead. They said:

Matthew 22

²⁴ Master, Moses said, If a man die, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.

²⁵ Now there were with us seven brethren: and the first, when he had married a wife, deceased, and, having no issue, left his wife unto his brother;

²⁶ Likewise the second also, and the third, unto the seventh.

²⁷ And last of all the woman died also.

²⁸ Therefore in the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had her.

²⁹ Jesus answered and said unto them, You do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.

All the difficulty that has ever arisen in men's minds upon this question, "How are the dead raised up?" has been from these causes. At the foundation of all the difficulty lies the lack of knowledge of the Scriptures, and the accompanying, if not the consequent, lack of knowledge of the power of God.

Without the Scriptures we can know nothing about the resurrection of the dead; and without the power of God there can be no resurrection of the dead; and so to leave out either consideration, is only to be at sea on the question before us—not only at sea, but at sea with neither rudder nor compass nor pole-star.

It was only giving expression to this same thought of the Saviour's when Paul, speaking of this hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers, appealed to Agrippa in these earnest and thrilling words:

Acts 26

⁸ Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?

Sure enough! Why should it be thought a thing incredible with anyone that God should raise the dead? God made a man once from the dust of the ground; He states in his word that many have arisen from the dead, and He has given us the most abundant testimony that he raised up the Lord Jesus from the dead.

And that He was seen of witnesses chosen before—wit-

nesses, too, to the number of above five hundred at once. Most, if not all of these witnesses were acquainted with Him both before His death and after His resurrection. Some of them sat with Him, talked with Him, and handled Him, after they had seen Him dead and buried and risen again. And yet if men leave out the Scriptures and the power of God, to them it still remains incredible that God should raise the dead.

Even in this our duty, and among those who profess to firmly believe the Scriptures and the power of God, there are those to whom it is incredible that God should raise the dead. Nor is this confined to what are sometimes called the “ignorant multitudes.” It is found, and in fact is prevalent, among the “divines,” the “great scholars,” and the “leaders of thought.”

But yet in all this, the difficulty lies in the fact shown by the Saviour that they...

Matthew 22

²⁹ ...do err, not knowing the Scriptures.

For the one thing which logically and reasonably leads these eminent scholars, as well as others, to doubt the resurrection of the dead, is their fixed belief in the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. Beside the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, there is nothing more destructive of belief in the resurrection of the dead, and nothing more subversive of the Bible doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. In fact the two doctrines cannot possibly be consistently held in the same mind. Now for the proof. The Scripture says:

1 Corinthians 15

³⁶ That which you sow is not quickened, except it die.

This is spoken in answer to the question that is the subject of this article, and is therefore spoken with direct reference to the subject of how the dead are raised up. To *quicken* is “to make alive.” What Paul says therefore is:

“That which you sow is not *made alive* except it die.”

That this is spoken directly of man and his resurrection, is plain by verses 42-44, "It is sown a natural body," etc.

Now the doctrine of the immortality of the soul is, that the body properly has no life, that it is not the real man; but that the soul is the real, living sentient man; that it is the soul about man which alone possesses real life. In other words, the body is only the house in which the real man lives; i.e., the real "I" dwells within the "me;" and death is simply the separation of the soul from the body. Death breaks down the house, and lets the real occupant free.

According to this doctrine, there is no such thing as real death; because the body properly has no life, consequently it does not die; and the soul—the real man—is immortal and it cannot die; therefore there is in reality no such thing as death. If this be true, there is not only no such thing as death but there is, likewise, no such thing as a resurrection of the dead. For, upon the apostle's premise that "That which you sow is not quickened [made alive] except it die," it follows that, as the body, having no life, does not die, it cannot be quickened (raised from the dead); and as the soul does not die, it cannot be raised from the dead; consequently there is no such thing as a resurrection of the dead.

Therefore it stands proved to a demonstration that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul is utterly subversive of the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. But the resurrection of the dead is a Bible doctrine; it is the very truth of God. And it is because of the wide-spread belief of the doctrine of the immortality of the soul that there is so much doubt and misunderstanding of the Scripture on the subject of the resurrection of the dead.

As we have already shown in these articles that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul is contrary to the Scriptures throughout; and as it is now shown that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul leads to disbelief in the resurrection of

the dead, the Saviour's words are distinctly applicable to all who now doubt the resurrection:

“You do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God.”

To all with whom there is any difficulty in understand the question, “How are the dead raised up?” we say, Get an understanding of the Scriptures as to the nature of man, and his condition in death, and all connected subjects, then allow the power of God a place, and all your doubts will be removed, and the subject will be all plain and easily understood.

For a view of the actual process of bringing the dead from the graves to real living existence again, *Ezekiel 37:1-14* may be read with profit. Read it carefully, and as you read do so in view of the “power of God”:

Ezekiel 37

¹ The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones,

² And caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry.

³ And He said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord God, You know.

⁴ Again He said unto me, Prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O you dry bones, hear the word of the Lord.

⁵ Thus says the Lord God unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and you shall live:

⁶ And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live; and you shall know that I am the Lord.

⁷ So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone.

⁸ And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them.

⁹ Then He said unto me, Prophecy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus says the Lord God; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.

¹⁰ So I prophesied as He commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army.

¹¹ Then He said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts.

¹² Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus says the Lord God; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel.

¹³ And you shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves,

¹⁴ And shall put my spirit in you, and you shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall you know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, says the Lord.

VI. With What Body Do They Come?

In the last chapter the Bible question which we noticed was, “How are the dead raised up?” To that question we gave the Bible answer. In immediate connection with that question is this one, “With what body do they come?” The whole verse reads:

1 Corinthians 15

³⁵ But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?

This is an important question or the Bible would not ask it. It is one which we have a right to study or it would not be presented thus in the Bible. And the Bible having asked the question, we believe that the Bible answers it, because God does not trifle with men.

The Bible is His revelation to man, and in it God has laid before us that which it is important and for our good to know.

We have yet found no question asked in the Bible which is not answered by the Bible, unless it be of those questions which carry the answers in themselves.

This question is not an exception. The Bible answers the question as to with what body the dead come when they are raised up. And, like all the other questions which we have examined, the Bible is the only place where the correct answer to this question can be found. And what the Bible says on the subject must settle the matter at once, for that is the truth, and nothing contrary to it can be.

Remember that the subject of the whole chapter in which this question is found is the resurrection of the dead. In verse 20, we read:

1 Corinthians 15

²⁰ Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept.

The first-fruits was the sample, and of the best of the great harvest that was to follow. There is to be a harvest of the earth. Of those who shall be gathered from the earth into the everlasting garner of God, Christ is the same. His glorious resurrection body is the sample, the pattern of all that shall be received by Him from the earth. For says the Scripture:

Philippians 3

²¹ [He] shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body.

And:

1 John 3

² We know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.

But Christ says:

Revelation 1

¹⁸ I am He that lives, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive

for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell, the grave, and of death.

And that same body that died on the cross; that same body that was pierced with the Roman spear; and that was laid in Joseph's new tomb; that same body came forth from the tomb and lived again. That same body that died came forth from the dead. And so really was it so that He could say to them who had been with him before his death:

Luke 24

³⁹ Handle me and see that it is I myself.

John 20

²⁷ Reach here your finger and behold my hands; and reach here your hand and thrust it into my side.

And when He came forth from the dead, the napkins which had enwrapped His sacred head, and the linen clothes that had been about His holy form, were laid in places by themselves, while every vestige of the body was gone from the sepulcher. Thus the Saviour rose from the dead with the same body that died.

He, says the Scripture, is "the first-fruits," the sample, of those who shall come from the dead. Therefore, the dead come from the dead with the body that died, only that in the case of those who are Christ's, the body will be immortal as His glorious body instead of the mortal body that was laid in the grave. This is clearly stated by the scripture:

Isaiah 26

¹⁹ Your dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, you that dwell in dust; for your dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.

Now, how could it be possible for the "dead body" of any person to arise unless it be the body that died? Yet bear in mind that when the dead body—the body that died—arises, if

it be the body of a righteous person, it arises immortal instead of mortal as it died. For says the Scripture:

1 Corinthians 15

⁵¹ Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

⁵² In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

⁵³ For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

⁵⁴ So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

Next the Scripture uses a simile to illustrate this. Death and burial are likened to the sowing of grain. And so we read:

³⁶ That which you sow is not quickened, except it die;

³⁷ And that which you sow, you sow not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain;

³⁸ But God gives it a body as it has pleased Him, and to every seed his own body.

As, therefore, death and burial are likened to the sowing of seed, and as God gives to every seed his own body, it is plain by this word that when the one who has died is quickened, is made to live again,—to every one is given his own body; not the body of someone else nor some other body, but “his own body.” When Christ was brought again from the dead He came with “His own body.” As He was the sample of all the harvest, so every one who shall be brought from the dead will come as He did, and as the Scripture declares, with “his own body.”

But the Scripture carries the subject yet farther:

1 Corinthians 15

³⁹ All flesh is not the same flesh; but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and

another of birds.

And as God gives to every seed—every person—his own body, it follows that when men’s flesh is sown, it will be men’s flesh and not beasts’, nor birds’, nor fishes’ flesh, that will be raised at the resurrection of the dead. Again says the Scripture:

⁴⁰ There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial; but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another.

Every person will have his own body, but it will be immortalized and glorified so that its nature and capabilities will as far transcend our bodies at present as the glory of Heaven transcends the earth. For:

⁴¹ There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars, for one star differs from another star in glory.

⁴² So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption;

⁴³ It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power;

⁴⁴ It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.

Notice in all this that it is the same thing that is sown that is raised. “It is sown,” “it is raised.” The man who died is raised from the dead. The body that is sown, that body is raised, for God gives to every seed “his own body.” Yet it is a changed body; changed from mortal to immortal, from corruptible to incorruptible, from weakness to power, from natural to spiritual, from dishonor to glory, for Christ:

Philippians 3

²¹ ...shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself.

We know that many attempt to apply scientific tests to the resurrection of the dead, as nowadays they do to every phase

of revelation, and in the application of these scientific tests they cannot see how the dead can be raised, they cannot see how the body can be brought again from the dust. But it is not a scientific question at all. It is not susceptible of scientific tests. It is solely a question of the power of God, and science cannot touch it.

Yet it is said that though it be not itself a question of science, it must be according to science, for “God cannot violate His own laws.” It is not becoming for anyone to say that what God says He will do, would be contrary to science. It may be indeed that it would be contrary to what man knows of science; it might be against man’s ideas of philosophy. But does it follow that therefore it must be contrary to the science or the philosophy of the universe as known to God? We think not, for of a truth there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of in our philosophy.

We do not believe that God is obliged to raise the dead according to men’s ideas of science or philosophy. Jevons justly says:

We perpetually find ourselves in the position of finite minds attempting infinite problems, and can we be sure that where we see contradiction an Infinite Intelligence might not discover perfect logical harmony?⁷

As for the idea that “God cannot violate his own laws,” we put the thing just the other way, that as God is the source of all law, it is impossible that anything which He should do could be a violation of law.

We know that a piece of lead, or any other metal except gold or silver, can be transformed by heat in contact with air, into a powder or species of ashes or lime. Those ashes can then be taken and heated in a crucible with some grains of wheat, and the metal will be seen rising from its ashes and re-

⁷ William Stanley Jevons, *Principles of Science*, vol. II, p. 468.

assuming its original form and properties.

If chemistry can do this, faith says that though the human body be reduced to ashes or to the dust of earth, the power of God can cause the body to arise from its ashes, and to re-assume its original form; and that this renewed form will be immortal, spiritual, and glorious, according to the working whereby the Christ-God is able to subdue all things unto Himself. *Philippians* 3:21.

The Bible question is:

1 Corinthians 15

³⁵ With what body do they come?

The Bible answer is,

1 Corinthians 15

³⁸ God gives it a body as pleases Him, and to every seed [every person] his own body.

VII. The End of the Unrighteous

1 Peter 4

¹⁷ What shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?

Here is another question which we wish to notice. The Bible answer to this, its own question, is:

Philippians 3

¹⁸ They are the enemies of the cross of Christ:

¹⁹ Whose end is destruction.

2 Thessalonians 1

⁸ ...them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

⁹ ...shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power.

Peter also tells of the...

2 Peter 3

⁷ ...perdition of ungodly men.

Perdition is defined to be “utter destruction.” There would not be space in an article of reasonable length to quote the bare texts without note or comment, that destruction is the end of them that obey not the gospel of God. We can only give some indication of the evidence on this point by a summary.

- 19 times the word of God says they shall be “destroyed;”
- 7 times it says they shall go to “perdition;”
- 34 times it says they shall “die,” and this with reference alone to the second death;
- 20 times it says they shall “perish;”
- 8 times it says they shall be “consumed;”
- 4 times it says they shall be “devoured;”
- 7 times it says they shall come to an end;
- 10 times it says they shall be burned up or “utterly burned;”
- 3 times it says they shall be as nothing;

Once it says:

Psalm 37

¹⁰ The wicked shall not be; yea you shall diligently consider his place, and it shall not be.

Now when the Scripture says so plainly and so repeatedly that the wicked shall be destroyed, and utterly destroyed; that they shall die, perish, be consumed, devoured, come to an end, be burned up, shall come to nothing, and shall not be, and that there will be no place for him if he should be; then how can the idea of eternal torment be true?

If those words of the Scripture do not show that the wicked shall perish, that he shall come cease to exist, then what do they mean? If these Scriptures do not show that the wicked

shall cease to exist, then how could God make known such a thing if He wanted to tell to men that the wicked should perish and should not be?

Then in the face of scores of passages of Scripture that show that the wicked shall be destroyed, etc., how can it be that, in the almost universal doctrine of Christians, eternal life is given to the wicked. True, by this doctrine they are to remain in misery eternally without dying; but if the wicked live eternally, that is eternal life, and the fact that they are in misery, does not in the least affect the duration of their existence.

But against such doctrine there stands the word of God that:

Romans 6

²³ The wages of sin is death.

And if the wicked live eternally even in torment, then there can be no such thing as death. Again the Scripture speaks of a time when there shall be no more pain:

Revelation 21

⁴ And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

But if the wicked are tormented eternally there never can be a time when there shall be no more pain.

Again we ask, How then can it be that in the beliefs of men eternal life is given to the wicked? How is it that, in spite of the plain Bible answer to the question as to what the end shall be of them that obey not the gospel of God, so many are perplexed upon the question?

The perplexity on this question arises from the same source that it does on all the other questions which we have examined, that is, from the doctrine which we have examined, that is, from the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. As a Doctor of Divinity once said,

“If we believe in the immortality of the soul we must believe in the eternal torment of the wicked.”

Immortal means “exempt from death,” “exempt from liability to die.” It is the doctrine of the unconditional immortality of man, therefore, which gives eternal life to the wicked.

But such a view cannot be held consistently with the Bible. This is plain from the few texts cited, and the Bible terms referred to above. And that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul may be still held, the language of the Bible has to be, and is, forced into channels where that of no other book would be allowed to go.

Words when found in the Bible are made to mean exactly contrary to what they mean when found in any other place in human language. And all to sustain the dogma of the immortality of the soul.

But that is just where this method of interpretation belongs. It was the introduction of this doctrine into the Christian church, that created the necessity for this scheme of interpretation. The one man who, more than any other, is responsible for it was Origen, who lived from 185 to 253 AD. Says Mosheim:

The Christian doctors who had applied themselves to the study of letters and philosophy, soon abandoned the frequented paths, and wandered in the devious wilds of fancy. The Egyptians [Alexandrians] distinguished themselves in this new method of explaining the truth....Origen was at the head of this speculative tribe.

This great man, enchanted by the charms of the Platonic philosophy, set it up as the test of all religion, and imagined that the reasons of each doctrine were to be found in that favorite philosophy, and their nature and extent to be determined by it....

He alleged that it was not in their literal force and import that the true meanings of the sacred writers were to be

sought, but in a mysterious and hidden sense...In this devious path he displays the most ingenious strokes of fancy, though generally at the expense of truth, whose divine simplicity is rarely discernible through the cobweb of allegory.

Origen expresses himself in the following manner: “The source of many evils lies in adhering to the carnal or external part of Scripture. Those who do so shall not attain to the kingdom of God. The Scriptures are of little use to those who understand them as they are written.”

But the philosophy which this great man embraced with such zeal was one of the sources of his delusion. He could not find in the Bible the opinions he had adopted, as long as he interpreted that sacred book according to its literal sense.⁸

There is exposed the secret of the whole matter.

“He could not find in the Bible the opinions he had adopted.”

What were those opinions? He was...

“...enchanted by the charms of the Platonic philosophy.”

And that was the immortality of the soul. Now in Plato’s discussion of the nature of the soul, he maintains that it is imperishable, indestructible, immortal, deathless, etc., etc. But the Bible, speaking of wicked men, says they shall “die”:

Ezekiel 18

²⁰ The soul that sins, it shall die;

2 Peter 2

¹² ...they...shall utterly perish;

Philippians 3

¹⁹ [Their] end is destruction;

– and that man is “mortal,” etc.

It is not at all strange, therefore, that Origen could not find in the Bible the opinions he had adopted, because those opin-

⁸ *Church History*, century 2, part 2, chap. 3, paragraphs 1, 5.

ions, and the statements of the Bible, are as entirely opposites as it is possible for things to be. And so, not finding any support in the Scriptures for this doctrine, he invented a scheme by which he could find not only that, but whatever he wanted. That is, to give a meaning to the Bible language directly opposite to what it says.

And Origen's method of interpretation is perpetuated to this day by those who attempt to maintain, by the Scriptures, the immortality of the soul, and the consequent eternal life of the wicked. However, this is not strange, because, as the doctrine was dependent wholly upon this scheme of interpretation for its birth into the Christian church, so, without that scheme, it could not live there for a day.

The Bible taken as it is, therefore, is clear on the question,

1 Peter 4

¹⁷ What shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?

The word of God says, their "end is destruction." That word says,

2 Thessalonians 1

⁹ [They] shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power;

and,

Revelation 21

⁴ ...neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away.

VIII. The Reward of the Righteous

The last question which we shall notice in this connection is that one which was put by Peter to the Lord Jesus:

Matthew 19

²⁷ Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed You; what shall we have therefore?

To this question the Lord gave two answers. The first one was to the twelve direct, and concerned them alone:

²⁸ Verily I say unto you, That you which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of His glory, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

The other answer is to all people:

²⁹ And everyone that has forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold,...

Mark 10

³⁰ ...now in this time,...and in the world to come eternal life.

Eternal life is that which they shall have who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

John 3

¹⁶ For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

1 John 5

¹¹ And this is the record, that God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.

¹² He that has the Son has life; and he that has not the Son of God has not life.

With eternal life to those who believe on the Son of God, there is also given eternal glory.

1 Peter 5

¹⁰ The God of all grace, who has called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that you have suffered awhile, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.

Romans 8

¹⁸ For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

2 Corinthians 4

¹⁷ For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, works for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

They shall stand in the presence of the throne of God and of His glory.

Revelation 7

⁹ I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;

¹⁰ And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sits upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.

Jude

²⁴ Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy,

²⁵ To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and for ever.

Of some other of the glories of the reward which shall be to those who have left all and followed Christ, we will let another tell, in tones that charm as though attuned to the symphonies of the other world:

The fire that consumes the wicked purifies the earth. Every trace of the curse is swept away. No eternally burning hell will keep before the ransomed the fearful consequences of sin. One reminder alone remains: our Redeemer will ever bear the marks of his crucifixion. Upon his wounded head, upon his side, his hands and feet, are the only traces of the cruel work that sin has wrought.

Micah 4

⁸ O Tower of the flock, the stronghold of the daughter of Zion, unto you shall it come, even the first dominion.

The kingdom forfeited by sin, Christ has regained, and the redeemed are to possess it with Him.

Psalms 37

²⁹ The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein for-

ever.

A fear of making the saints' inheritance seem too material has led many to spiritualize away the very truths which lead us to look upon the new earth as our home. Christ assured his disciples that he went to prepare mansions for them. Those who accept the teachings of God's word will not be wholly ignorant concerning the heavenly abode.

And yet the apostle Paul declares:

1 Corinthians 2

⁹ Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.

Human language is inadequate to describe the reward of the righteous. It will be known only to those who behold it. No finite mind can comprehend the glory of the Paradise of God.

In the Bible the inheritance of the saved is called a country. There the great Shepherd leads His flock to fountains of living waters. The tree of life yields its fruit every month, and the leaves of the tree are for the service of the nations. There are ever-flowing streams, clear as crystal, and beside them waving trees cast their shadows upon the paths prepared for the ransomed of the Lord. There the wide-spreading plains swell into hills of beauty, and the mountains of God rear their lofty summits. On those peaceful plains, beside those living streams, God's people, so long pilgrims and wanderers, shall find a home.

There is the New Jerusalem, "having the glory of God," her light "like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal." Says the Lord,

Isaiah 65

¹⁹ I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people.

Revelation 21

³ The tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

⁴ And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, nei-

ther shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away.

In the city of God “there shall be no night.” None will need or desire repose. There will be no weariness in doing the will of God and offering praise to his name. We shall ever feel the freshness of the morning, and shall ever be far from its close.

Revelation 22

⁵ And they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God gives them light.

The light of the sun will be superseded by a radiance which is not painfully dazzling, yet which immeasurably surpasses the brightness of our noontide. The glory of God and the Lamb floods the holy city with unfading light. The redeemed walk in the sunless glory of perpetual day.

Revelation 21

²² I saw no temple therein; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.

The people of God are privileged to hold open communion with the Father and the Son. Now we “see through a glass, darkly.” We behold the image of God reflected, as in a mirror, in the works of nature and in His dealings with men; but then we shall see Him face to face, without a dimming veil between. We shall stand in His presence, and gaze upon the glory of His countenance.

There, immortal minds will study with never-failing delight the wonders of creative power, the mysteries of redeeming love. There is no cruel, deceiving foe to tempt to forgetfulness of God. Every faculty will be developed, every capacity increased. The acquirement of knowledge will not weary the mind or exhaust the energies. There the grandest enterprises may be carried forward, the loftiest aspirations reached, the highest ambitions realized; and still there will arise new heights to surmount, new wonders to admire, new truths to comprehend, fresh objects to call forth the powers of mind and soul and body.

And as the years of eternity roll, they will bring richer and more glorious revelations of God and of Christ. As knowledge is progressive, so will love, reverence, and happiness increase. The more men learn of God, the greater will be their

admiration of His character. As Jesus opens before them the riches of redemption, and the amazing achievements in the great controversy with Satan, the hearts of the ransomed beat with a stronger devotion, and they sweep the harps of gold with a firmer hand; and ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands of voices unite to swell the mighty chorus of praise.

Revelation 5

¹³ And every creature which is in Heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sits upon the throne and unto the Lamb forever and ever.

The great controversy is ended. Sin and sinners are no more. The entire universe is clean. One pulse of harmony and gladness beats through the vast creation. From Him who created all, flow life and light and gladness, throughout the realms of illimitable space. From the minutest atom to the greatest world, all things, animate and inanimate, in their unshadowed beauty and perfect joy, declare that God is love.⁹



⁹ Ellen White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 674-678.

14. Orthodoxly Insane

American Sentinel, July 5, 1894

JUNE 18, a bright little school boy was murdered in this city by his father who had become insane by brooding over the death of his wife which had taken place some months previously. The insane father after sending three bullets into his child's brain turned the weapon on himself.

The father was much attached to the boy and the neighbors now recall the fact that he was often heard to remark,

“When I go, Walter will go with me.”

The boy, an exceptionally manly little fellow, was also much attached to his father. The secret of this sad affair is thus told by the *World*:

Upon the table at which the distracted father was seated when the tragedy took place was an open hymn book. The covers had been bent so that it could not close, and inmates of the house now remember that throughout the early afternoon they heard the old man singing the verses of the hymn at which the book was opened. It was entitled “Beautiful Beckoning Hands,” and read as follows:

Beckoning hands at the gateway tonight,
Faces a shining with radiant light,
Eyes looking down from your heavenly home,
Beautiful hands they are beckoning, come.

Beckoning hands of a mother, whose love
Sacrificed life its devotion to prove;
Hands of a mother, to memory dear,
Beckoning higher the waiting ones here.

This hymn has always been a favorite with Forshay, out by a singular coincidence he had on Sunday evening heard it sung for the first time by its author, Rev. C. C. Luther, who is temporarily filling the pulpit of Dr. Knapp at the MacDougal Street Baptist Church. It was after a visit to his wife's grave

at Greenwood Sunday afternoon, that Forshay had taken his youngest boy (he never went anywhere without him) to the church. On their return from church that evening he had taught the bright little boy the hymn, and together they had sung it over many times.

So it seems that this utterly unscriptural hymn was responsible in some degree at least for this terrible tragedy. The Bible declares:

Ecclesiastes 9

⁵ The dead know not anything;

Job 14

²¹ His sons come to honor, and he knows it not;

Psalms 146

⁴ His breath goes forth, he returns to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.

But popular theology teaches, as does the hymn referred to, that the dead are conscious in heaven beckoning to their friends on the earth. If this were true, and they were so beckoning, and it were possible for those left behind to rejoin the departed by death, what would be more natural than just such an act as that committed by an “orthodoxly” insane father?

15. Is Man Immortal?

American Sentinel, August 9, 1894

THE following letter demands respectful consideration because of its candid tone:

Editors American Sentinel: In an editorial of July 5th, under the above title, you have—unconsciously no doubt—laid yourself liable to the criticisms of many thoughtful readers. In attributing the murder and suicide referred to, to the “orthodoxy” of the demented father, you certainly forgot that a very prominent article in the creed of “orthodoxy” is that “No murderer has eternal life abiding in him,” so that true “orthodoxy,” had he possessed it,—or rather, had it possessed him, would have prevented the shocking tragedy you mention.

Your quotations from *Ecclesiastes*—“The dead know not anything,” and from *Job*—“His sons come to honor and he knows it not,” and from the *Psalms*—“In that very day his thoughts perish,” come far short of teaching the unconscious condition of man after the body crumbles back to its native dust, even if there were not numerous declarations of the Scriptures positively teaching the opposite view, as *Ecclesiastes* 12:7—“Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.”

Before you reply that the term “spirit” means nothing but the mere “breath” or air that, in one sense keeps man alive, please examine *Job* 15th chapter and 13th verse, compared with the latter part of the 25th verse of the same chapter, where it is plain the speaker refers to the spirit of man as meaning man himself, instead of his “breath.” Let us read: “You turn your spirit against God, and let such words go out of your mouth,” verse 13. And in verse 25—“He stretches out his hand against God, and strengthens himself against the Almighty.” Here there can be no question as to the identity of “spirit” with man himself.

Again, *Isaiah* 57:15, “I dwell...with him that is of a humble and contrite spirit.” Is it possible for mere “air” or the “breath” of men to be spoken of as having humility and contrition? If your view is tenable, it must be so.

In *Proverbs* 16th chapter, 18th verse, and in *Psalms* 32:2, and in 51:10, as well as in many other parts of the Word, the “spirit” of man is spoken of in such a manner as to make it absolutely impossible to understand the meaning as limited to the narrow bounds contended for by you.

Take any Concordance, and look over the various passages referred to under “spirit,” and you will see at a glance that very few, if any of them can be properly interpreted as you and your writers are in the habit of doing.

And now as to the meaning of the passages you quoted as to the dead not “knowing anything,” etc., I think a careful examination of the several contexts will satisfy any ordinary reader (who is not committed to, and influenced by, some special theory), that the passages in question simply teach this and nothing more, that after death men are so separated from their former surroundings and associations in this life as to know nothing concerning the things with which they were once interested, as in *Job*: “His sons come to honor, and he knows it not.”

C. W. Swartz.

Hillsdale, Mich.

It is true, as Mr. Swartz says, that so-called orthodoxy teaches not only the immortality of the soul, but also that:

1 John 3

¹⁵ No murderer has eternal life abiding him.

But this is nullified very largely by the definition given to the term “eternal life.” Life and death are not by “orthodoxy” permitted to have their natural and obvious meaning, but are made to mean misery and happiness. In this fact lurks the evil.

Clothe a man with eternal life and he will readily take the chances on his condition in eternity. This argument prevailed with our first parents. It was when assured by the serpent that they should not surely die, but should be as gods that they took the forbidden fruit. The Lord says:

Ezekiel 13

²² With lies you have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad; and strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not turn from his wickedness, by promising him life.

“Orthodoxy” departs from the truth far enough to accept as one of its tenets Satan’s first great lie. Is it strange that many who accept this tenet go one step further and imagine that life a happy one?

We do not claim that in the Scriptures the term “spirit” always means “breath or air.” It sometimes means life; but it does not follow that consciousness attaches to that life. Life—animal life—is often present when there is no consciousness, as in sound sleep, injury to the brain, etc.

When God created man,

Genesis 2

⁷ [He] breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.

There was life, or spirit, if you please, in that breath; but the same thing was given to the lower animals for we read in:

Genesis 7

²¹ And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth, and every man:

²² All in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died.

Just what this life is nobody knows, but when it leaves the body, whether of men or of beast, it returns to God who gave it. That this is so will appear from a comparison of:

Psalms 104

²⁴ O Lord, how manifold are your works! in wisdom have You made them all: the earth is full of your riches.

²⁵ So is this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts.

²⁶ There go the ships: there is that leviathan, whom You have made to play therein.

²⁷ These wait all upon You; that You may give them their meat in due season.

²⁸ That You give them they gather: You open your hand, they are filled with good.

²⁹ You hide your face, they are troubled: You take away their breath, they die, and return to their dust.

Job 34

¹⁴ If He set His heart upon man, if He gather unto Himself His spirit and His breath;

¹⁵ All flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again unto dust.

The first of these texts asserts what occurs when God gathers to Himself the breath of the beast; the second asserts substantially the same thing of man. While *Ecclesiastes* says plainly:

Ecclesiastes 3

¹⁹ For that which befalls the sons of men befalls beasts; even one thing befalls them: as the one dies, so dies the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man has no preeminence above a beast: for all is vanity.

And in the 21st verse the question is asked:

Ecclesiastes 3 [Douay Version]

²¹ Who knows if the spirit of the children of Adam ascend upward, and if the spirit of the beasts descend downward?

Our correspondent is clearly wrong in asserting that “spirit” sometimes means man himself; this is true of soul, but not of spirit. Nor do the verses to which he refers prove that the spirit is man himself any more than they prove that the “hand” is man himself.

It is clear that in this case spirit means *disposition* or *will*; and that this is so is evident, for by substituting either of these words the sense is perfectly preserved. God dwells with the

man who is of a humble disposition, a submissive will. There is in *Isaiah* 57:15 not the least evidence of immortality. Our correspondent is here beating the air. He has set up a man of straw which he very valiantly knocks down.

The Bible says that:

Ecclesiastes 9

⁵ ...the dead know not anything.

Our correspondent says that they “know nothing concerning the things with which they were once interested.” We may be excused for believing the words of God rather than our correspondent's interpretation of those words.

“The dead know not anything;” for, as the same Word declares:

1 Timothy 6

¹⁶ [God] only has immortality.

We know this because God says so, and we believe His word.

16. What is Modern Spiritualism?

American Sentinel, November 22, 1894

MODERN Spiritualism claims to be intercourse, or communion, with the spirits of the dead. In this it is identical with ancient witchcraft, which was likewise intercourse, or communion, with the dead.

That witchcraft was a real thing, and not simply a superstition, is evident from the fact that it was prohibited by the Lord under penalty of death. In *Exodus*, we find the express command:

Exodus 22

¹⁹ You shall not suffer a witch to live.

And again in *Leviticus*, we have these words:

Leviticus 20

²⁷ A man also or a woman that has a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death.

The latter text records, not only the sentence of death against those who had familiar spirits, but identifies witchcraft with spiritism, or with spirit possession; that is, one not merely pretending to have communion with familiar spirits, but one actually being possessed by a familiar spirit as a wizard or a witch, according to sex.

The Scriptures not only forbid, under penalty of death, communion with pretended spirits of the dead, but they declare that the dead take no interest in human affairs:

Job 14

²¹ His sons come to honor, and he knows it not; and they are brought low, but he perceives it not of them;

And that they have no power to help those who invoke them:

Psalm 146

³ Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help.

⁴ His breath goes forth, he returns to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.

And that they...

Ecclesiastes 9

⁵ ...know not anything.

This at once brands the whole system of witchcraft, ancestral worship, and Spiritualism as deceptive and soul-destroying.

That this communion with pretended spirits of the dead was for the purpose of obtaining revelations from them is evident; thus we find Saul seeking to a witch for information as to the future after the Lord had forsaken him (*1 Samuel 23*); and in *Isaiah*, we read these words:

Isaiah 8 [RV]

¹⁹ And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits and unto the wizards, that chirp and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? on behalf of the living should they seek unto the dead?

This spirit intercourse was universal among heathen peoples. The *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Article: "Manes," says:

All nations have revered the spirits of their ancestors;

And again:

In all nations of antiquity, and in many existing savage tribes, these spirits [supposed spirits of the dead] were held in great awe and veneration, as being powerful for good or for harm.

Offerings of all kinds were placed in the tomb or burnt on the pyre, and the rites of burial were, with the lamentations of surviving friends, thought necessary for the repose of the ghost.

That the spirits referred to in *Isaiah* 8:19, were evil spirits will scarcely be disputed; else why the prohibition of communion with them? Besides it cannot be supposed that spirits in harmony with “the Father of spirits” would hold communion with men contrary to the will of God.

But we are not left in doubt as to the character of these spirits. The apostle says, plainly:

1 Corinthians 10

²⁰ The things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils.

This, then, is the reason why witchcraft, or communion with evil spirits, is so hateful in the sight of God; it is devil worship. It was into this debasing idolatry that the Israelites fell when:

Psalms 106

²⁸ They joined themselves unto Baal-peor, and ate the sacrifices of the dead.

It was not that they ever absolutely renounced the adoration of Jehovah; but, apparently deeming him far above out of their sight, while they distantly viewed him with a decent, ineffective reverence, they addicted themselves to the more palpable funeral orgies of Thammuz, or Adonis, or Baal, or Osiris.”¹⁰

The same writer continues:

Such also is the worship, into which, according to the sure word of prophetic revelation, certain members of the church catholic [general] would lapse in the latter times. “The Spirit,” says St. Paul, “speaks expressly, that in the latter times some shall apostatize from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines concerning demon gods.”¹¹

This interpretation of the prophecy was received by the

¹⁰ *The Difficulties of Romanism*, by George Stanley Faber, E.D., p. 186.

¹¹ *Id.*, p. 190.

early church,

...probably more than twelve centuries before the Reformation.¹²

But, it may be asked, has not devil worship, or witchcraft, ceased? By no means. Has human nature changed? Have demons become less wicked than formerly? Are human beings any less prone to seek to know the future independently of God? A single negative will suffice to answer all these questions. Then how could demonology cease so long as the conditions necessary to its existence are unchanged?

In an article in the *Arena* for November, that well-known Spiritualist, J. M. Peebles, A.M., M.D., gives explicit testimony as to the continuance of spiritual phenomena and its identity in all ages; he says:

Evolution is everywhere manifest. The telegraph, the telephone, the phonograph, surrogony, mesmerism, clairvoyance, psychometry, in connection with other scientific discoveries and religious aspirations, seemingly constituted the befitting time for the rediscovery and propagation of Spiritualism. We say rediscovery, for to agnostic materialists and sectarian Christians, Spiritualism, demonstrating connections communications between mortals and the overarching, invisible world of immortals, was literally a discovery, a new revelation. And yet from remotest antiquity all races and tribes had addressed and echoed these phenomena in some form. They were considered in different periods: miracles, magic, possessions, apparitions, oracles, special providence, witchcraft, demons, and angels. Their persistence, surviving the decay of deities and empires, is, according to Herbert Spencer, a proof of their reality and their value.

When in Canton, China, the guest of Dr. Kerr, physician and missionary, we chanced to speak of the spirit manifestations in America, when he coolly exclaimed:

¹² *Ib.*

“Why, sir, these manifestations are very old in this country. China is an empire of spiritists.”

And to prove it he took me out to temples, shrines, and booths, where I witnessed spirit-writing and other forms of mediumistic phenomena. Thus, it is evident that communion with spirits has not ceased; and that these spirits are evil is also confessed by Spiritualists themselves. Said Judge Edmonds, in his Broadway Tabernacle lecture, in this city, Feb. 15, 1855:

I assure you from my own experience and observation, that the fascination of this intercourse is so great that its tendency is to lead men away from their proper judgment, and instill a spirit of fanaticism most revolting to the calm and restored mind.

And in the *Banner of Light*, of Oct. 26, 1864, Dr. Child said:

Nor can we doubt, I think, that there are a diverse host of badly misdirected spirits. The lower spirits seek to undo the good work of the higher, and to harass and to annoy and subject to suffering, medium and sitter. They will deceive us for their amusement. Where is the medium but what has either seen or felt this? I have both, but wise spirits, who are to be the revelators and executors of the divine will, designedly deceive us for our good.

The same paper, in its issue of March 26, 1869, quotes Swedenborg as follows:

When spirits begin to speak with men, he must beware that he believe nothing that they say; for nearly everything they say is fabricated by them and they are; for if they are permitted to narrate anything, as what heaven is and how things in the heavens are to be understood, they will *tell so many lies* that a man would be astonished.

According to these testimonies all these are lying spirits for all deceive; one class “for our good,” the other, “for their own amusement”! Judged by the Saviour’s rule, all are then of the

devil, for his lusts they do.

That the spirits, from whom the communications come and by whom supernatural things are performed, are not the spirits of the dead is evident from the testimony of the apostle already quoted:

1 Corinthians 10

²⁰ The things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils.

And also from the inspired declaration that:

Ecclesiastes 9

⁵ The dead know not anything.

Moreover, the manifestations of Spiritualism are by a host of spirits, whereas revelations and manifestations from God are by one Spirit. Says the apostle:

1 Corinthians 12

⁴ Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.

⁵ And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord.

⁶ And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which works all in all.

⁷ But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

⁸ For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;

⁹ To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;

¹⁰ To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues;

¹¹ But all these work that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will.

As already shown in the quotation from Mr. Faber, special warning is given in the Bible against satanic delusions in the last days. In addition to the texts which he cites, our Lord

himself says:

Matthew 24

²⁴ There shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

Again, we are told by the apostle, that:

2 Corinthians 11

¹⁴ Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.

And St. John, in describing the closing scenes of this earth's history, says:

Revelation 16

¹³ And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.

¹⁴ For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

¹⁵ Behold, I come as a thief.

Thus it is seen that the great and overpowering delusions of the last days, that shall deceive and sweep down to everlasting destruction all who are not rooted and grounded in the truth of God,—all who do not stand firmly on the divine declaration, “The dead know not anything,”—will come through what is known as modern Spiritualism, which is nothing more and nothing less than ancient witchcraft or devil worship in a new garb, the better to deceive the people to their eternal ruin.

17. The Sleep of Death

Advent Review, April 5, 1898

To His disciples, Jesus said:

John 11

¹¹ Our friend Lazarus sleeps; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.

Lazarus had been sick; and the disciples, thinking that now he was “taking rest in sleep,” answered:

¹² Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well.

¹⁴ Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead.

First Jesus said, “Lazarus sleeps.” Then he said, “Lazarus is dead.” When he said, “Lazarus sleeps,” Lazarus was dead; and it was with direct reference to Lazarus being dead that Jesus said, “Lazarus sleeps.” It is, therefore, perfectly plain that the direct teaching of the Lord Jesus is that when a man is dead, he is asleep.

When Jesus said, “Lazarus sleeps,” Lazarus was dead. In saying to his disciples, “Lazarus sleeps,” He was informing them that Lazarus was dead. In so saying, He meant that Lazarus was dead; for He so explained His word.

It was only the misconception of His meaning by His disciples that caused Jesus to say anything further than that Lazarus was asleep. But seeing this misconception, He said, further, “Lazarus is dead.”

It is, therefore, perfectly plain not only that Jesus definitely taught, and intended definitely to teach, that the dead are asleep; but that He taught, and intended to teach, His disciples to think and speak of the dead as being asleep.

It is, therefore, perfectly plain that, upon the authority of Christian truth, the dead are asleep, and that the sleep of the dead is distinctively a Christian conception.

That many people—even professed Christians—do not believe this, does not in the slightest affect the truth of it. Jesus taught it, and it is the truth. He taught it that men, and of all people His own disciples, should believe it. Those who do not believe it simply rob themselves of a great Christian truth.

18. Jesus and the Resurrection

Advent Review, April 19, 1898

WHEN Paul was at Athens, he seemed to the Athenians to be...

Acts 17

¹⁸ ...a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection.

Now if Paul had preached Jesus and the immortality of the soul, would he have seemed to them to be a setter forth of "strange gods"? Not for a moment. With men and the immortality of the soul, they were perfectly familiar; indeed, such was their whole thought. Of the immortality of the soul, many of their gods were made.

Paul could have preached to them forever Jesus and the immortality of the soul, without once being thought to be a setter forth of strange gods; such would have been precisely in the channel of their thought from ancient time.

But Jesus and the resurrection was to them altogether new and strange. That the dead should be awakened, and rise up, and stand alive again, was so utterly foreign to all their ideas that to them such preaching was only the setting forth of strange gods; and as it was always feared of new gods that they might supplant the old, they at once brought Paul to the highest court for examination.

From this whole record it is perfectly certain that Paul never preached Jesus and the immortality of the soul.

19. They Are Dead

Advent Review, July 19, 1898

THAT Prof. Charles A. Briggs, D.D., of Union Theological Seminary, whose extravagance in “higher criticism” and “salvation after death” have caused much discussion in the last three or four years, is now advocating prayers and sacrifices for the dead. Not only this; but he declares that he finds...

...a considerable amount of such prayer for the dead unconsciously, yet logically and no less truly, offered in funeral addresses and prayers by the most radical Protestants.

He says:

A Christian who thinks that the initial stage of salvation must begin in this world before death, will limit his prayers for the dead to their growth in grace and holiness; but a Christian who thinks that salvation may begin after death, will naturally extend his prayers so as to include the conversion and regeneration of the dead.

In his prayers for the dead, each Christian will make his practice of prayer conform, in a measure at least, to his theory of salvation. Thus, prayer for the dead is a privilege and duty for all who practice prayer for the living; and sacrifice for the dead is the duty for all who practice sacrifice for the living. The dead saints and the living saints are so united in one holy communion that in all religious activities all saints share alike.

But where is the sense of talking about these “dead saints” who are said to be so much alive that they can be converted, and can pray in return to those who pray for them? If all that is true, they are not dead at all; but are more alive than they ever were before. To such nonsense and inconsistency are those led who respect the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. No.

Ecclesiastes 9

⁵ The living know that they shall die; but the dead know not anything.

The living know something; but the dead know nothing. The living are alive; the dead are not alive—they are dead.

Isaiah 38

¹ You shall die, and not live.

So says the word of God; but behold, these moderns will have it that people die and live both at once. It is sheer paganism; and paganism is sheer devilry.

20. Science on the Immortality of the Soul

American Sentinel, August 25, 1898

IT IS quite well known that for years certain bodies of scientific men have been investigating the phenomena of modern spiritualism, with the object of subjecting to the test of science the claim made and apparently substantiated by spiritualism, that the dead are conscious and capable of communicating with the living.

The first reports from these scientific commissions were adverse to this claim of consciousness after death, the various phenomena shown in proof of it being ascribed to trickery. It was stated that science afforded no proof in support of the popular belief in the immortality of the soul.

But the belief still remained, and spiritualism continued to claim as its due that its phenomena be recognized as of genuine character. And now, this long-sought confirmation from "science" seems about to be gained. While no positive confirmation has yet come from a scientific source, the question is asked, and in a way which implies an affirmative answer,

"Has the immortality of the soul received a scientific demonstration?"

In the *Literary Digest*, of August 13, this question forms the basis of a lengthy discussion, in which is quoted the testimony of two men of high scientific attainments, one a professor in Harvard University, and the other a prominent member of the London Society of Psychical Research. Introductory to the statement of their testimony the *Digest* says:

The reading public has heard more or less of "The Strange Case of Mrs. Piper," a Boston Spiritualistic medium and mind-reader. This woman, under the tests of such able psychologists as Professor James, of Harvard University, and Dr. Hodgson, of the London Society of Psychical Research, has furnished psychic phenomena which, so far as they are ac-

cepted as genuine, tend to demonstrate scientifically the immortality of the soul.

The Society of Psychic Research was established for the purpose of examining, without bias, the alleged phenomena of Spiritualism. Among the mass of evidence it has collected in its sixteen years of life it has found nothing, up to this latest examination of Mrs. Piper, that was deemed to have established the future existence of the soul, although in the tenth report (1894) of the society the statement is made that "between deaths and apparitions of the dying persons a connection exists which is not due to chance alone."

Of the experiments conducted through the mediumship of this woman, it is not necessary to speak at length. The impressive feature of them was the apparent proof that an unseen intelligence existed who spoke through the medium and revealed facts which could not have been known to the public nor by any possibility have come to the knowledge of the medium through what is known as "mind-reading."

The conclusion was, naturally, that an invisible intelligence did exist which was the disembodied soul of the dead person from whom the communication purported to come. The London Society for Psychical Research challenges any one to show that there was in these manifestations any possible room for fraud.

Such statements coming from a source of recognized authority in the scientific world, warrant the conclusion that the time is not far distant when the voice of "science" will speak distinctly in confirmation of the claim that the soul of man is immortal. "Science" will join with theology in proclaiming this dogma as the truth. Then whoever does not accept it as such will be under the ban not only of theology, but of "science" itself. He will be set down as an ignorant and unreasonable person.

The point especially to be noted in all this is that "science" is incapable of correctly solving the problem presented by

spiritual manifestations. Such problems do not lie beyond the range of true science, but true science extends far beyond the range of the powers of the human mind. Science, as defined by the human mind, and by that only, confirms the theological dogma of the immortality of the soul; but as defined by the higher Mind it teaches exactly the contrary.

When science, as known to man apart from the Word of God, has fully investigated the phenomena which Spiritualism presents, when it has proceeded as far as it can go, it is obliged to pronounce the claims of Spiritualism to be true. And in this it leads man into a most positive and dangerous untruth; for the claim of natural immortality is an untruth, and is plainly pointed out as such in the Text Book of the highest science of which man can have any knowledge. And that is a science which deals with spiritual problems and with interests the highest that can pertain to man's existence.

That Text Book plainly states that:

Ecclesiastes 9

⁵ The dead know not anything.

Psalms 115

¹⁷ The dead praise not the Lord.

It says that the thoughts of man perish at his death:

Psalms 146

⁴ His breath goes forth, he returns to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.

It declares that:

1 Timothy 6

¹⁶ [God] only has immortality.

The highest science is the science of salvation, set forth in the Word of Omniscience. That which is opposed to the science of salvation is:

1 Timothy 6

²⁰ ...science falsely so called.

And such is the “science” which would teach the dogma of soul immortality.

It is high time that people everywhere should recognize that salvation is science; that the statements of the Word of God are true science, and that true science has spoken unequivocally against the widespread but pagan doctrine of the soul’s consciousness after death.

21. Satan's New Move

Advent Review, October 11, 1898

IN THE *Independent* of September 29, Prof. James H. Hyslop, of Columbia College, NY, reports what to him is the “amazing” discovery of “experimental evidence” of the immortality of man.

And how was this discovery made? Answer:

Dr. Richard Hodgson, who has been spending years in experiments with a medium,...has announced his conviction that he has facts to make immortality an easier hypothesis than any that can be opposed to it.

By a long and careful series of experiments with a trance medium, he has at last obtained distinct evidence of the individual's survival after death.

This report from Dr. Hodgson is adopted and published by the “Society for Psychical Research;” and Professor Hyslop, with perfect soberness declares it to be:

...one of the most amazing pieces of work [that he] ever read. [He declares that] it must produce a crisis in the study of such phenomena; [that students of the question] have come to the parting of the ways, [and] must begin to feel the tremendous nature of the conclusions involved.

[He declares that] it has gotten beyond the stage where it is safe to sneer, without an intimate knowledge of the subject; [because] when a well-organized body of cool-headed men, skeptical and agnostic in the extreme, and having national reputation to maintain, puts out a paper like that of Dr. Hodgson's, it has to be accepted or refuted.

Professor Hyslop says:

It is this impossibility of laughing the subject out of court that constitutes the seriousness of the situation; [that now people] must wonder whether further resistance to Spiritualism is worth while.

The seriousness of the situation with which the world is brought face to face by these “amazing” “evidences of immortality,” Professor Hyslop says, is...

...not because it is dangerous to admit the probability of immortality on scientific grounds; [but because] the moment you admit even the possibility of proving immortality after the manner of experiment with trance mediums, you open up the flood-gates to a perfect inundation of insane follies, which it will require all the resources of civilization to cope with.

But whatever we may deplore in such matters, the report of Dr. Hodgson calls us to face them; and it will not down by laughing. It commands either a definite acceptance of immortality or the entertainment of suppositions which it must appal any man to make.

No society, no doctor, no amount of experiments by all the societies and doctors on earth, can ever prove the immortality of man, nor the “individual's survival after death;” because it simply is not true: and nobody, nor all people together, can prove what is not true.

Immortality is the gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

1 John 5

¹¹ God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.

¹² He that has the Son has life; and he that has not the Son of God has not life.

The individual does not survive after death; for it is written:

Ecclesiastes 9

⁵ The dead know not anything.

Psalms 146

⁴ His breath goes forth, he returns to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.

1 Corinthians 15

¹³ If there be no resurrection of the dead,...

¹⁸ Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.

If the individual survives after death, he has not perished, even if there never be any resurrection of the dead: he is altogether independent of any resurrection of the dead. Indeed, if he “survives after death,” he is not dead at all, and couldn’t have any resurrection of the dead, even if he wanted it.

Here, then, is the word of God from beginning to end, telling men that they are mortal; that immortality has been forfeited by sin; that immortality has been given to men by Jesus Christ; and that every soul can have it for the taking, through faith in Jesus Christ.

Satan tells men that all this word of the Lord is not true, but that they have immortality in themselves. Men accept this word of Satan, and then take up investigations and experiments to demonstrate it as “scientific.”

And where is it that they go to make their investigations, to apply their experiments? To “trance mediums”! They go to trance mediums, and there see queer manifestations, and phenomena that they do not understand and can not explain; and presto! “man is immortal”! “individuals survive after death”!

But these experimenters say that they get evidence that shows that there is intelligence and design in these phenomena. And, further, that this intelligence is such as to show that it came from the individuals who are dead.

Yes, this is what they say, and this is what convinces them. But just here is where they make their leap, and surrender to credulity. No one can fairly deny that through trance mediums there are queer manifestations, and phenomena that are beyond explanation on any other basis than that of intelligence. No one can fairly deny that these things do evidence

intelligence such as could come only from individuals.

But that these individuals are the persons who are dead is altogether another question. This conclusion is reached by a leap. There are intelligences that know all the identical things that those knew who are dead. And it is perfectly easy for these individuals to impersonate, in all these things, those who are dead. And that they are of a character to do this ought to be plain to every one, from the statement of Professor Hyslop, that when this thing shall be accepted, it will let loose elements which will “require all the resources of civilization to cope with.”

From what source but the devil could come such a mischievous thing as that? From what source but the devil, then, could come the evidence which “commands” the reception of a hypothesis, the results of which must be so dangerous as to require all the resources of civilization to cope with it?

In view of all the developments in other matters that mark the hastening of the end, it was about time that Satan should make some master-stroke. And in this thing reported by Professor Hyslop, he seems to have made just that stroke. Soon he will be working with...

2 Thessalonians 2

⁹ ...all power and signs and lying wonders,

¹⁰ And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in those that...receive not the love of the truth.

The word of God, the Bible, is the truth. This is the only safeguard. And now is the time. Are you ready? The man who is on God's side will take God for his partner.

22. Oppositions of Science Falsely So-called

Advent Review, July 11, 1899

THE papers all over the country are making much ado over President Hyslop's espousal of Spiritualism. Whole columns—two, three, or four—of the papers, daily or weekly, religious and secular alike, are devoted to this subject.

This Professor Hyslop is professor of ethics and mental science in Columbia University, New York City, and he declares that:

He has positively demonstrated the life after death of man and women, and this in the most rigorously scientific manner, using all the methods of the laboratory, and exercising that extreme caution and repetition of experiment so severely demanded by the inductive method.

And in what way, suppose you, did he conduct this "most rigorously scientific" investigation? Precisely as all such investigators have from the beginning of the world—simply through a Spiritualist medium.

To what, suppose you, did he apply "all the methods of the laboratory"? Only to a Spiritualist medium.

And all that was accomplished by these "most rigorously scientific...methods of the laboratory" was simply and only to discover that the medium herself was not a fraud; that she was honestly the channel of the communication of intelligences. That is all.

And by this he satisfied himself that there are intelligences outside of humanity. The way it is stated in the report of the result of these "rigorously scientific" methods, is that the investigators...

...have been convinced that through the mechanism of Mrs. Piper's body it has been proved that there is in man a subtle something which survives after death, preserving the intel-

lectual faculties that manifest themselves through the organs of the body.

That is to say that, from all he was able to discover, he concludes that the manifestations of intelligences through this medium were by the spirits of men who had lived on the earth and died.

But this is simply logic by a leap. It is the result merely of his own reasoning. It is a total forsaking of the inductive method; for it is sheer deduction; because when he finds indisputable evidence of intelligences beyond mankind, it does not necessarily follow that these are the spirits of men who have died; and this for the simple reason that there are multitudes of spirits who never were men.

There are angels of God, and there are “angels that sinned,” and they are all spirits. So it is altogether a gratuitous conclusion that these scientific men express,—that the intelligences of which they have found evidence, and with whom they have communicated, are the spirits of dead men.

And this simply illustrates the fact that the science that is applied and extolled as science in connection with Spiritualism and its manifestations is not science at all; that when it comes to the crucial point, the grounds of science are abandoned, and only the natural reasoning and credulity of the investigator are employed.

And what did the professor find in his investigations? One thing particularly that he found is that one of the principal spirits who communicated...

...was frequently caught telling lies; and when confronted with proofs of his mendacity, would laugh, and say: “One must have one’s joke.”

And this was so common in the case of that particular influence that one professor investigator declared:

Whatever the medium is, I am convinced that this influence is a preposterous scoundrel.

And another professor said that:

It by no means follows that the trance personality is as honest as the waking one. Indeed, all analogy would be against the assumption.

And the general statement of the whole subject is that:

There are foolish as well as wise spirits, vain as well as humble ones; in a word, the spirits of men are no different from men themselves. Naturally, when such an excellent medium as Mrs. Piper is found, all spirits wish to communicate through her. Such direct communicators as Pellew and Phinuit were often overpowered by numerous others spirits, who interjected their own influences, thus producing an unintelligible jumble in the communications. Until the arrival of "Imperator," whose earthly name is known only to Mr. Myers, of London, the medium was the sport of every vagrant ghost flying hither and thither on the winds of the spirit world.

The case, therefore, stands thus: Professor Hyslop and his fellow investigators, by their "rigidly scientific" methods, got into a nest of lying spirits; and these spirits told the investigators that those spirits were the spirits of certain men who had lived in the world; and these "rigidly scientific" investigators believe what the lying spirits say, and publish it to the world as "great discovery," "positive demonstration," etc., etc.

Now, how do these investigators know that those spirits are the spirits of men, when they do know that the spirits are "preposterous scoundrels," and inveterate liars?

This again shows that the conclusions which these investigators have drawn "in the most rigorously scientific manner," have no science about them. Scientific grounds are utterly abandoned, and their conclusions are drawn altogether from the statements of spirits of whom all that the investigators

know is by what the spirits themselves say, except that the spirits lie. So that the sum of it all is that the two single results obtained from all their “rigorously scientific” investigation are that:

1. There are intelligences beyond mankind, and
2. These intelligences do lie.

The investigators, indeed, can know that, in certain instances, these intelligences tell the truth; for the investigators can test the statements, and discover whether they be statements of fact; but in all such instances the evidence that what the spirits said is true, rests not upon what the spirits said, but solely upon the existence of the facts themselves.

But the crucial question, namely,

“Who are the intelligences that communicate?”

—this the investigators never can *know*, because the persons whom these spirits profess to personate as having lived in the world are dead, and the investigators cannot learn from these whether the spirits are telling the truth. Consequently, the only thing that the investigators can certainly know, upon the word of the spirits themselves, is that the spirits do lie.

It is therefore literally true that when the investigators reach the crisis of the investigation, all scientific ground is abandoned, and only credulity and natural reasoning are followed—and this in the face of their own knowledge that the spirits are tricksters, liars, and “preposterous scoundrels.”

And these deductions drawn by natural reasoning through credulity from such sources, are set forth as thoroughly competent scientific evidence and authority “so severely demanded by the inductive method.”

So much is made known so far. Yet the world is promised more, and is asked:

...to wait for the startling report promised for a year hence by Professor Hyslop.

However, he is willing, while the world is waiting a year, to give:

...a few hints of what they have learned concerning the one subject that interests every one; that is, the nature of the spirit world.

And the first of these “hints” is that:

The disclosures made by the spirits themselves of the sphere inhabited by them will shock all good Christians.

And what are these “disclosures,” for which all good Christians as well we all other persons are asked to wait a year for the full statement of, and to be shocked with? Here they are:

1. “The first revelation that comes to the spirit [after entering the other world] is that there is no hell, no heaven, no purgatory.”
2. “Spirits do not know more of God than men on this earth know; but they seem to be conscious directly, in a general way, of the continual, imminent presence of a supreme, beneficent power, felt rather as light and warmth than as personality.”
3. “The unjust are not punished for their sins committed on the earth. ‘There is no division there into goats and sheep,’” says the professor.
4. “What we call wickedness is usually mere ignorance of those higher laws which insure individual happiness even on earth.”
5. “Men cannot be held responsible for their ignorance.”
6. “A knave simply has some defect of vision which makes him see awry, so that he can not recognize what is best for his own selfish interests.”
7. “The law of the next life is progress.”

8. "In the spirit world...they know that Christ was not God, but a great and a good man."

From all this it is perfectly plain that, although modern Spiritualism has made many changes in the phases of its manifestations, it has not changed a hair's breadth in character. It is the same essentially immoral and atheistic thing that it was in its first manifestations more than fifty years ago. It denies the revelation of God, who is essentially good, and puts forth revelations of its own, which are essentially evil. It sets aside human responsibility and moral accountability, thus opening the way for all manner of evil to go unchecked. And all this is commended to the world as "the law of progress."

Now, by simply believing the Bible, all that has been discovered by this so-called "rigorously scientific" investigation of these high-standing university professors could have been learned by them without one hundredth part of all this trouble; without being obliged to trust to their own credulity, and to the deductions of their own natural reasoning through their credulity; and without being landed by it into a vortex of universal and essential deviltry.

The Bible tells all people that there are intelligences beyond mankind; that there are "angels of God" and "angels that sinned;" that there are "God and His angels" and "Satan and his angels;" and that these lying, scoundrelly, atheistic, and essentially immoral spirits are the:

Revelation 16

¹⁴ ...spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world.

But, lo, with all these "rigorously scientific" professors, the believing of the word of God, the Bible, and resting on what it says, is credulity, when, as a matter of fact, that word being the very ultimate truth itself, it is the highest possible science; and this because the evidence of its truth rests not upon something else, but is inherent in itself.

Then, in the place of this ultimate truth, the highest possible science, which they count credulity, they put what they call science, even the most rigorously applied science, which, at the ultimate, is plainly only sheer credulity, the utter abandonment of science, and the certain launching out into a deep totally unknown except as to the questionable, and even degraded character of the spirits that inhabit it.

It is not at all necessary for the world to wait a year for “disclosures” in this connection, “that will shock all good Christians.” What is already made known by Professor Hyslop and his fellow investigators is sufficient to shock not only all good Christians, but also all other people, good or bad.

Isaiah 8 [Polychrome translation]

¹⁹ And when they say to you: Consult the ghosts and the familiar spirits that cheep and that moan, give this answer, Should not a people rather consult its God? on behalf of the living should men consult the dead?

²⁰ To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.

1 Timothy 6

²⁰ Keep that which is committed to your trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings [“unintelligible jumbles”] and oppositions of science false so-called,

²¹ Which some professing have erred concerning the faith.

23. The Cruelty of Infidelity

Advent Review, August 15, 1899

THE following sketch, in a newspaper dispatch, of the scene at the bier of Colonel Ingersoll in the home where he died, is worth reading over and over for the important and impressive lesson that it contains:

DOBBS FERRY, N.Y., JULY 25.—Desolation describes the scene tonight at Walstein, within whose walls lies the body of Col. Robert G. Ingersoll, agnostic. About his bier cling three women—his widow and his two daughters. To them the form on the bier is all that is left of that father and husband. They have no hope for future union, no consolation in Christian faith, no solace in religion. The dreariness, the utter loneliness, has overpowered those whom the great infidel has left to mourn him; and they have again refused to surrender to the incinerating urn the one tangible thing between them and the eternity of separation. Therefore the cremation of the body will not take place until some time Thursday—perhaps not then.

This in spite of the fact that the funeral was held this afternoon. It was the most solemn surrender of the dead. Strong men declared that nothing had ever appealed to them so strongly before for religion and Christianity as the utter desolation and hopelessness of that family of mourners. Not a note of consolation, not a soothing note of music, not a prayer for sympathy, or help, or mercy.

Than such a scene what could more strongly appeal for Christianity? Christianity is the assurance that we shall meet, in joy and eternal companionship and blessedness, beyond the tomb.

But even if Christianity were not an assurance, even if it were only a guess, who would not wish for only that as a ground of hope and consolation rather than to think of the dreariness, the utter loneliness, hopelessness, and desolation, that hangs upon the lives of these three mourning women?

And who shall say that only such a ground of hope would not be to these tender, desolate women infinitely better than the utter emptiness that must press them with unbearable weight at every thought of their loss of him who was all to them? There would be some relief in a hope of again meeting their loved one, even if that hope rested on nothing more substantial than an admission of the mere possibility that it might be so.

The unbelievers do not pretend to know that hope is vain. Colonel Ingersoll himself did not profess to know. He professed only that he did not know. He was a professed agnostic; and “agnostic” signifies “unknowing.” For unbelievers to admit a hope only upon a guess—agnostically, without knowing—would be entirely consistent; because that is precisely the ground upon which they exclude hope.

But the exclusion of hope, at the death of a loved one floods the life forever with utter loneliness and desolation; while the admission of hope; even only on a guess, is a positive benefit in that it allows at least some rays of comfort and consolation to enter the life, and relieve the perpetual dreariness and loss.

Unbelievers, therefore, exclude from the lives of human beings a positive benefit, when, in perfect consistency with their profession, they could freely admit it. Unbelievers, therefore, arbitrarily persist in holding human beings in utter desolation and hopelessness, when, upon their own principles, they could admit comfort and consolation.

What could possibly be more rigid and cruel, or more cruelly rigid, than that is? It is said that the cruel rigidity of Calvinism, in its “horrible decrees,” was the cause of Colonel Ingersoll’s unbelief. Even if that be so, it is certain that he did not escape cruel rigidity of doctrine when he adopted agnosticism instead.

But the unbelievers says,

“What benefit could it really be to entertain a hope, if the future turns out to be indeed the blank that we suppose it to be?”

The answer is that it would be a real benefit in breaking up, even if only by a hope of a hope, the utter loneliness and desolation of these mourning souls while they must live—a real benefit because even if the future were all to turn out the blank that they suppose it to be, that part could never be known. The benefit would be real as long as they lived; and when they died, they would never know that their hope was vain. Consequently the benefit of it would be just as real as if the hope were grounded in absolute certainty.

The unbeliever can deny benefit in only such a hope, only on the ground of a possibility that it might be discovered to have been vain. But the admission of a possibility of discovering that even such a hope had been vain, is an admission of consciousness after death, which at once annihilates the denial of ground of hope.

Thus it is impossible, on any grounds whatever, consistently to deny to human beings a hope of meeting their loved ones beyond the tomb. And as Christianity supplies precisely the fullest assurance of this hope, in soul-ravishing fruition, it is impossible, on any ground whatever, consistently to deny to human beings the hope that Christianity gives.

24. Origin of the Doctrine of Natural Immortality

Present Truth, June 11, 1903¹³

IN ORDER to get a clear understanding and appreciation of the standing of the papacy at the moment when the Roman Empire vanished, and she found herself alone in the midst of that vast scene of destruction and anarchy, it is essential to know the source of her strength, by which she was able to survive. And, in order to know this, it is essential that we sketch a certain portion of her preceding history.

In that dismal mixture of downright heathenism, and the profession and forms of Christianity in the philosophical schools of Ammonius Saccas, Clement, and Origen, in Alexandria, there was given birth to the element which, above all other things, have ever been the mainstay of the papacy—monkery, or monasticism: from the Greek word signifying,

“living alone, solitary; a man who retired from the world for religious meditation and the practice of religious duties in solitude; a religious hermit.”

In the philosophy of Ammonius, Clement, and Origen, all Scripture contains at least two meanings,—the literal and the hidden. The literal was considered the baser sense of the Scripture, and therefore a hindrance to the proper understanding of the hidden meaning with its train of farther hidden meanings, and, accordingly, was despised and separated as far as possible from the hidden sense, and counted as of the least possible worth. It was said:

“The source of many evils lies in adhering to the carnal or external part of Scripture. Those who do so will not attain to the kingdom of God.”

¹³ Most of this article was included as Chapter VIII in the book, *Ecclesiastical Empire*.

And that, therefore,

“The Scriptures are of little use to those who understand them as they are written.”¹⁴

Now, the basis of that whole scheme was their conception of man himself. It was because, in their philosophy, the body is the baser part of man, that the literal was counted the baser sense of Scripture.

It was because the body often betrays good men into sin, that, in their philosophy, the literal sense of Scripture was held to lead men into error.

In their system of philosophy, the body of man was but a clog to the soul, and hindered it in its heavenly aspirations; and therefore was to be despised, and, by neglect, punishment, and starvation, was to be separated as far as possible from the soul.

And from this it followed, in their imagination, that the literal sense of Scripture, which corresponded to man’s body,—was, likewise, a hindrance to the proper understanding of the hidden meanings of the Scripture, and was, therefore, to be despised, neglected, and separated as far as possible from the hidden sense or soul of the Scripture.

Heathen Philosophy

Whence came to them this philosophy of the nature of man? It was the adoption entire of the heathen conception of the nature of man: it was the direct continuation, under the Christian profession, of the heathen philosophy of the immortality of the soul. For, about the close of the second century,

...a new philosophic body suddenly started up, which in a short time prevailed over a large part of the Roman Empire, and not only nearly mellowed up the other sects, but likewise did immense injury to Christianity. Egypt was its birthplace,

¹⁴ Mosheim, *An Ecclesiastical History*, Vol. I, Cent. III, Chap. III, Part II.

and particularly Alexandria, which for a long time had been the seat of literature and every science. Its followers chose to be called Platonics [or Platonists]. Yet they did not follow Plato implicitly, but collected from all systems whatever seemed to coincide with their own views.

Plato had taught that the souls of heroes, of illustrious men, and eminent philosophers, alone, ascended after death into the mansions of light and felicity, while those of the generality, weighed down by their lusts and passions, sunk into the infernal regions, whence they were not permitted to emerge before they were purified from their turpitude and corruption.¹⁵

This doctrine was seized with avidity by the Platonic Christians, and applied as a commentary upon that of Jesus. Hence a notion prevailed that only the martyrs entered upon a state of happiness immediately after death; and that, for the rest, a certain obscure region was assigned, in which they were to be imprisoned until the second coming of Christ, or, at least, until they were purified from their various pollutions.

Of the inquiries of the ancient philosophers of Greece and Rome with regard to the immortality of the soul, it has been well observed that...

...their reason had been often guided by their imagination, and that their imagination had been prompted by their vanity. When they viewed with complacency the extent of their own mental powers, when they exercised the various faculties of memory, of fancy, and of judgment, in the most profound speculations, or the most important labors, and when they reflected on the desire of fame, which transported them into future ages, far beyond the bounds of death and of the grave, they were unwilling to...suppose that a being, for whose dignity they entertained the most sincere admiration, could be limited to a spot of earth, and to a few years of duration.¹⁶

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Gibbon, *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Chapter 15.

The Fruit of Vanity and Self-Love

Thus it is plain that vanity, self-love, self-exaltation selfishness—is the root of the philosophy of the immortality of the soul. It was this that led them to consider themselves, in their souls, “immortal and imperishable” (for so Plato definitely puts it), and so, essentially a part of the Deity.

And this is confirmed by revelation. For, when God had said to the man whom He had formed and placed in dominion over all the earth and over every moving thing upon it:

Genesis 2

¹⁶ Of all the trees of the garden you may freely eat,

¹⁷ But of the tree which is in the midst of the garden you shall not eat of it, for in the day that you eat thereof you shall surely die.

Satan came with the words:

Genesis 3

⁴ You shall not surely die; for God does know that, on the day you eat thereof, your eyes will be opened and you will be as God.

The woman believed this Satanic word. So believing, she saw what was not true—that the tree was...

⁶ ...to be desired to make one wise,

—a philosopher; and...

⁶ ...she took of the fruit thereof and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat.

Christ Our Life

This is the origin of the philosophy of the immortality of the soul, in this world. The only reason why man did not die that day, even in the very hour when he sinned, is that there, at that moment, Jesus Christ offered Himself in behalf of man, and took upon Himself the death that would then have fallen upon the man. And thus He gave to man another chance, a

probation, a breathing space, that he might choose life. This is why God could immediately say to the deceiver:

Genesis 3

¹⁵ I will put enmity between you and the woman and between your seed and her seed: it shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.

See also *Haggai 2:7*, *Romans 16:20*, *Hebrews 2:16*. And so it is written:

John 10

¹⁰ I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

He came that they might first have life; and, without His then offering Himself, man never would have had life after he sinned.

And, having come that the man might first have life, this life to the man was and is solely for the purpose that he might use it in securing life more abundantly, even eternal life, the life of God.

Thus it is only by the gift of Christ that any man in this world ever has opportunity to breathe at all. And, the sole object of man's having an opportunity to breathe, is that he may choose life, that he may live and escape the death that is due to sin.

Earth-Life a Vapor

And so it is written:

James 4

¹⁴ What is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.

And, what is death—the death which men die in this world? It is even a sleep (see *John 11:11-14*; *1 Thessalonians 4:15-16*; *Acts 24:15*; *John 5:28-29*) from which there is waking only in the resurrection of the dead.

So the entering of Christ—Christ’s gift of Himself when man had sinned—gave to man this life which is but a vapor, and which ends in this death which is but a sleep, between that life which is life indeed, and that death which is death indeed Therefore, to all mankind it is spoken for ever:

Deuteronomy 30

¹⁵ See I have set before you this day life and good, and death and evil.

¹⁶ Therefore choose life, that both you and your seed may live.

John 5

²⁴ He that hears my word and believes on Him that sent me, has everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

Life that is Life Indeed

Accordingly,

1 John 5

¹¹ This is the record that God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.

¹² He that has the Son has life; and he that has not the Son of God, has not life.

And this life which is life indeed, beyond this life which is a vapor and this death which is a sleep, is assured only in Christ, through the resurrection of the dead: as it is written:

Colossians 3

⁴ When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall you also appear with Him in glory.

1 Thessalonians 4

¹⁵ For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

¹⁶ For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first;

¹⁷ Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

And, without the resurrection of the dead, there is no hereafter; for:

1 Corinthians 15

¹⁶ If the dead rise not...

¹⁷ ...your faith is vain; you are yet in your sins;

¹⁸ Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.

And:

³² If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantages it me if the dead rise not? Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.

Immortality Only by the Gospel

This is the true course, and the only true course, to immortality: not merely immortality of the soul, but the immortality of both soul and body. For Christ has bought, and will redeem, the body equally with the soul; He cares, and would have men care, for the body equally as for the soul; as it is written:

3 John

² I wish above all things that you may prosper and be in health, even as your soul prospers.

1 Timothy 6

¹⁶ God only has immortality.

2 Timothy 1

¹⁰ [Christ] has brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel.

Thus immortality is the gift of God, and is obtained only by believers of the Gospel. And to these it is given only at the resurrection of the dead; as it is written:

1 Corinthians 15

⁵¹ We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

⁵² In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

⁵³ For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

⁵⁴ So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

⁵⁷ Thanks be to God, which gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Christ and Him Crucified

This is the truth as to immortality. This is the true way of mankind from mortality to immortality. But, it is directly antagonistic to the Platonic or pagan idea of immortality, and of that way to it.

This is evident on its face; but it is aptly confirmed by an incident that occurred at the very seat of the original Platonic philosophy—in Athens itself.

Paul, in one of his journeys, came to Athens, where he remained several days, and talked...

Acts 17

¹⁷ ...in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him.

And, in all his speech, he preached the Gospel:

- Christ and Him crucified:
- Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God:
- Christ and the resurrection of the dead: and
- Life and immortality only through Christ and the resurrection of the dead.

Acts 17

¹⁸ Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans and of the Stoics encountered him. And some said, What will this babler say? other some, He seems to be a setter forth of strange gods.

And this...

¹⁸ ...because he preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection.

This was altogether a new doctrine, something which they never had heard. Therefore,

¹⁹ They took him, and brought him unto Areopagus, saying, May we know what this new doctrine, whereof you speak, is?

²⁰ For you bring certain strange things to our ears: we would know therefore what these things mean.

And when, standing on Mars' Hill, he preached to them the Gospel, and called upon all...

³⁰ ...to repent:

³¹ Because He has appointed a day in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He has ordained; whereof He has given assurance unto all men, in that He has raised Him from the dead.

³² When they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear you again of this matter.

This account demonstrates even by inspiration that the Christian conception of immortality is not in any sense that of Plato and the other philosophers. If Paul had preached in Athens the immortality of the soul, no one in Athens would ever have counted him "a setter forth of strange gods." Such preaching would never there have been called "new doctrine." Nothing of that sort would ever have been "strange things to their ears."

But Christianity knows no each thing as the immortality of

the soul. Therefore Paul preached:

- immortality as the gift of God through Jesus Christ and the resurrection from the dead;
- immortality to be sought for and obtained only through the faith of Christ, by believers in Jesus;
- immortality only through Christ and the resurrection of the dead.

He preached that, without the Gospel, all men are lost, and subject to death. For, to the Greeks he wrote:

2 Corinthians 4

³ If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost,

⁴ In whom the god of this world has blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

He preached the Word,—not that the soul is “immortal and imperishable,” but that:

Ezekiel 18

⁴ The soul that sins, it shall die.

Psalms 37

²⁰ The wicked shall perish.

Isaiah 41

¹¹ Behold, all they that were incensed against you shall be ashamed and confounded: they shall be as nothing; and they that strive with you shall perish.

¹² You shall seek them, and shalt not find them, even them that contended with you: they that war against you shall be as nothing, and as a thing of nought.

Psalms 37

¹⁰ Yet a little while and the wicked shall not be; yea, you shall diligently consider his place, and it shall not be.

Romans 6

²³ The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Ezekiel 33

¹¹ As I live, says the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn, turn from your evil way; for why will you die?

