

THE OLD  
JERUSALEM GOSPEL

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BY JOSEPH LUFF

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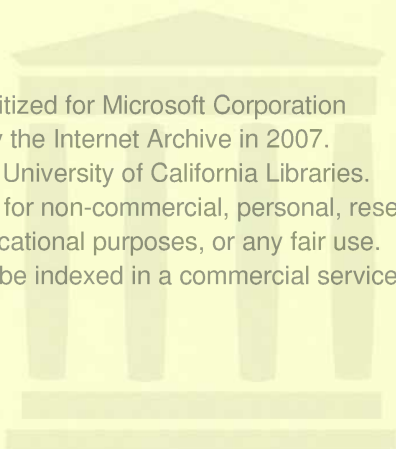
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# THE OLD JERUSALEM GOSPEL

Twenty-nine Sermons Representative of the Faith of the

Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ  
of Latter Day Saints

BY  
ELDER JOSEPH LUFF

**"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Jesus.**

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## PREFACE.

No apology is offered for the issuance of this work, for none is needed. The world knows, alas! too little of the faith of the people its contents are intended to represent.

Hundreds of volumes, of varying dimensions, have been published regarding the Latter Day Saints by persons either pitiaibly ignorant of their faith or censurably vicious and unscrupulous. As a result falsehood or misrepresentation has tintured those publications throughout, and the little struggling church has been a sufferer at the hands of a world kept blind by such means.

For thirty-two years the author of this work has been a preacher of the doctrines of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, and this volume is simply the pulpit from which he delivers, in his simple way, a discourse upon each of the subjects named. No merit, other than truth and plainness, is claimed for their matter and formulation. His humble prayer accompanies them that they may prove the vehicles of light and soul-satisfaction to many, that thus God and his only-begotten Son may have honor and glory.

Let no one be debarred from reading under the impression that this volume is a feeder for Utah Mormonism, for neither the preacher nor the church he represents has any affiliation with that body, nor are they believers in the doctrines that have made that body obnoxious to the moral sense of the world.

JOSEPH LUFF.



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## Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of Man.

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For we are also his offspring.—Acts 17: 28.

All ye are brethren. . . . One is your Father, which is in heaven.—Matthew 23: 8, 9.

For the contents of the Bible we of to-day are in no sense responsible; the Book was here before we came. Only for the treatment it receives at our hands can we be held accountable. Pleasing or painful, winning or repelling, rigorous or lenient as its aspect and implied requirements may appear, they must for ever stand to us, severally, as the expression of whatever will we perceive behind them. To modify its phraseology will in no sense affect the fixedness of whatever purpose it was intended to serve. To modernize its recommendations will not release us from whatever of obligation they were intended anciently to impose.

Between it and us human creeds may interpose to relieve us from the arbitrary force of its decrees, but when these creeds are dead, this law will live, and we in future days may sadly find that we have not escaped, but simply deferred, arraignment before its inexorable bar. It may be, too, that what we then shall lack will tell the tale of blessings missed between the now and then, because of such postponement.

We approach this Book to-day with reverential feeling, for to us it tells the will of Heaven. Its story is the God revelation. Hence,

“Where its voice is heard all controversy dies,  
And human skill is wasted that aims at compromise.”

Anxious to know our origin, our mission, and our destiny, we consult its pages. It is important that we shall know what part in life's great drama our Creator intended or desired we should play, that thus performing we may stand acquitted finally and gain promotion at his hand. Life can be a success only in so far as this purpose is served. Hence we ask:

1. To whom are we indebted for present existence, and what are our Creator's attributes?
2. What is our heritage here under his design?
3. Upon what conditions is the enjoyment of our heritage dependent?

Opening the book, our first question is answered in plainness:

God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, . . . hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation.—Acts 17: 24-26.

Our Father which art in heaven.—Matthew 6: 9.

Have we not all one Father? hath not one God created us?—Malachi 2: 10.

But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him.—1 Corinthians 8: 6.

One God and Father of all.—Ephesians 4: 6.

For I am the Lord, I change not.—Malachi 3: 6.

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above,



and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.—James 1: 17.

For there is no respect of persons with God.—Romans 2: 11. (Also see 1 Peter 1: 17; Acts 10: 34.)

Three points are thus settled; namely, God is our Father, he is unchangeable, he is impartial, or no respecter of persons.

Faith in these declarations pledges us to an acknowledgment of the common fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man. It fastens upon him the responsibility of our existence as to time and place, as fully as it does the existence of Paul, or Moses, or Abraham, and their surroundings, for it declares that he “determined the times before appointed and the bound of their habitation,” of “all that dwell upon all the face of the earth.” In view of this foreordination, when we also consent to the foreknowledge claimed in Isaiah 46: 9, 10 and Acts 15: 18, it is but reasonable to expect that a Father who never intended to change, and who was no respecter of persons, would so ordain from the start that not one member of his family would ever be deprived of any good he made possible for another. We are justified from these declarations in looking for one universal provision for the entire family; so far, at least, as relates to the interests of the soul he had assigned a tabernacle here.

It is with gladness, therefore, that we hail the announcement of Ecclesiastes 3: 14, 15:

I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it: and God doeth it, that men shall fear before him. That which

hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past.

God's original gospel provision was commensurate with the moral exigencies of the race, and neither time nor circumstance has ever increased or decreased human necessity in that direction. "That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth" and always will require of men the same as he required in the past, as a condition upon which his infinite provision shall cover those necessities. We have neither need nor disposition to apologize for the character of that original, ancient, divine provision. If it represented God once, it must represent him for ever, for he can not change. "Nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it," for with any addition to it or subtraction from it, it would cease to represent his invariable mind. To lessen its obligations or increase its exactions would indicate a "respect of persons," which his eternal fatherhood is not chargeable with according to the Book.

Again we open the Book, and in answer to our second question read:

Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.—Galatians 4: 6.

Ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.—Acts 2: 38, 39.

The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same

Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues; but all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.—1 Corinthians 12: 7-11.

These signs shall follow them that believe: In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them. They shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.—Mark 16: 17, 18. (Also see John 14: 26; 15: 26; 16: 13-15.)

I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit.—Joel 2: 28, 29.

Glorious heritage, indeed, and worthy of such a Father. By means of this we are to cry, "Abba, Father!" By this we are to know that he is our Father and prove his unchangeability and impartiality. His Spirit is to be in us. That Spirit is life (Ezekiel 37: 14; John 6: 63; 2 Corinthians 3: 6; 1 Peter 3: 18; Revelation 11: 11), and that life, being one with God (1 John 5: 7), is eternal. Eternal life is our heritage even here. It is to be given us, first, that we may know our Father and our elder brother, Jesus Christ, for "this is [the object of] life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." (John 17: 3.) This knowledge can not be obtained except by this agent. (1 Corinthians 12: 3; Matthew 11: 27.) It is given that we may commune with him through the exercise of

the gifts enumerated. It is given that futurity may be unveiled, and we may gaze on things to come. It is given that we may be preserved from the treachery of enemies who seek to inflict evils upon us. It is given to heal our diseased bodies. It is given that we may abound in righteous fruit. (Galatians 5:22; Ephesians 5:9.) It is to redeem our bodies from the grasp of death at the resurrection morn. (Romans 8:11; 1 Corinthians 15:44.) It is made accessible to us through the suffering endured by Jesus Christ. (Galatians 3:13, 14.)

To slight this proffered seal of sonship is to trample on the blood that made it available. He is an unworthy son who lightly esteems a heritage so divine and dearly bought. Eagerly we turn again and press our third question: "Upon what conditions can we enter and enjoy this heritage?" Will the Book answer this important question as plainly as the others? Let us open and see:

He that heareth my words, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life.—John 5:24.

Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.—Ecclesiastes 12:13.

Observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.—Matthew 28:20.

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.—Acts 16:31.

This is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ.—1 John 3:23.

God . . . commandeth all men everywhere to repent.—Acts 17:30.

Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name

of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.—Acts 2: 38.

He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; . . . and these signs shall follow.—Mark 16: 16, 17.

They were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.—Acts 19: 5, 6.

Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost. . . . Through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given.—Acts 8: 17, 18.

Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.—Hebrews 6: 1, 2.

What could be plainer? By creation I am God's son, but the possession of my inheritance depends upon my obedience. Here I am clearly informed as to what was required of other portions of the common brotherhood of man, and our Father has not changed. He is not partial. Hence, if I would enjoy that heritage, he "requireth [of me] that which is past," or, what he demanded of others.

We frankly admit that these spiritual gifts are not to be found among what are commonly known as evangelical churches to-day. We grant that the popular educators of the age have long pronounced them unnecessary; but these same teachers have put this book in our hands and insisted that we abide its counsel. Acting upon their advice, we have opened and read of what our Father in heaven has done for man, and found that "whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put

to it, nor anything taken from it." Hence, as a part of his family we claim under the ordinances that provide for the race and protest against human proscription. Right here an objection is urged, that our admission as to the absence of these things in the modern churches is against this argument. In reply, we invite the objector to go with us on a tour of investigation among those religious bodies to examine well their articles of faith, their creed formulas, and to listen carefully to their public and authorized enunciations. Let him, with us, catechise those theologians who are supposed to voice the popular religious sentiment, and then answer us one question: "Are the conditions being observed upon which this divine pledge was to hold good to the race?" If not, the objection fails.

It would be the extreme of folly to claim exemption from duty and at the same time expect the reward of service. The divine law has been given for our government: "Whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."—James 1: 25. But, "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination."—Proverbs 28: 9.

The church we represent has suffered ostracism since its organization in 1830, because it could not affiliate with Christendom on any terms that involved a compromise with the divine law. It may be that baptism is not "for the remission of sins"; but, if so, the misconception originated with God.

It may be that the laying on of hands, as an ordinance, is unworthy the notice of men who can frame creeds and confessions; but it comes to us direct from him who made the world and all things that are therein. Our folly, like Paul's heresy, consists in "believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets," and in conscientiously observing what they enjoin. (See Acts 24: 14-16.) If we hope for as full a salvation as was promised the ancient saints, we should claim no exemption from the obligations imposed upon them, and we should not esteem that church an enemy to us that clings most closely to God. "Who-soever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son."—2 John 9.

This is no truer of men than of churches, and if a church has not God and Christ, what can it confer upon man? This scripture means, if it means anything, that God will stay with his doctrine; hence he who stays the closest by that doctrine lives nearest to God. The importance of the conditions already referred to is thus magnified, in that they tell us what this doctrine is that God and Christ stand so closely by. As already shown from Hebrews 6: 1, 2, it embraces faith, repentance, baptism, laying on of hands, resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. He who feels disgraced or offended when asked to contend for a faith that reflects the best wisdom of God ought to be ashamed to own God as his Father, and deserves to remain



for ever destitute of the Holy Spirit by which that faith shone so gloriously resplendent in Bible days. For God to confer that Spirit and its gifts on those who reject those principles of ancient law, would be to cast dishonor on the law itself and forfeit claim upon the respect and love of martyrs long since dead, whose blood, like that of their Master, was poured out in expression of their faith in him who authorized the proclamations: "I change not"; "I am no respecter of persons"; "My purposes shall stand"; "The word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word, which by the gospel is preached unto you."—1 Peter 1: 25.

Where the law is dishonored by man, the Spirit is fenced out, and the church is dead. A dead church can transmit no life to its adherents. A human body may be preserved after death by chemical processes for a long time, and thus be made to serve a purpose in demonstrating human skill; but for the purposes of its original creation it is useless. A church may exist for ages and command the support of millions who admire its ingenious escape from ancient Bible obligations; but where those doctrines are not, neither is the Spirit, and that church is powerless to perform the functions that alone can confer life on those affiliating.

Who wants a church for ornament, or religion for a show? Who wants the Bible for a means to prove that his wisdom has outstripped that of his God? Who wants to pray merely because it is pleasant pastime?



All who believe that the church, religion, the Bible, and prayer are of divine appointment and too sacred to be made the toys of human caprice, please go with us a little further and look through "nature up to nature's God"; judge of his design in providing for spiritual man by his arrangement for physical man and nature throughout. "The invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead."—Romans 1: 20.

From Genesis 1: 14-17 we learn that God "set" the sun, moon, and stars in the firmament of the heavens to rule by day and night, to give light and to be for signs and seasons, and days, and years, as well as to separate the day from the night. All are agreed that not only our well-being, but our very existence itself is made dependent upon these orbs—life, light, heat, vegetation, the tides, and in fact almost all things material are the result of their service. Who can imagine the anarchy of matter that would be entailed by the cessation of their functions for a single second?

When, therefore, God "set" them in the firmament, he did not seek to provide merely for Adam or the people of any favorite generation, but for the race of man and the earth as man's habitation. One general provision was made for all time, and nothing in the line of human necessity has since arisen for which that provision has not been found commensurate. In the line of physical necessity "that which hath been is now; and that which is to be

hath already been"; and to meet that necessity what God once did "shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it." As long, therefore, as human life is to be continued and the products of the soil, atmosphere, and tides, together with light, are essential, so long will their original causes continue.

Nor will the Almighty ever attempt an improvement upon those orbs with a view to better serving the purposes unto which they were originally ordained. His wisdom at the commencement was as great as it now is, and was manifest in appointing a means commensurate with all the existing and subsequently recurring exigencies of physical creation for ever. Should I, therefore, be asked why these orbs shine as they shone centuries ago, I should find ready and full answer in the fact that the same necessity that called for their first appointment continues. God's ordinations were to meet necessities, and not to confer exceptional good upon certain favorites. Wherever the need exists, those involved therein are comprehended in the provision once made. Hence, no man has ever found occasion to complain of, or apologize for, any of these orbs of day or night because of their being inadequate to the service assigned them. Nor has human ingenuity ever suggested as good or better means of accomplishing the work. It was Godlike, not only in the fullness of its efficacy, but also in the perpetuity of its adaptation and design. It was a Creator's supply for the needs of creation—the provision of a Father for his family.

Follow the entire work of creation through, and the same principle holds good. The organs of which the human body was composed when Adam was created are the organs essential in man to-day, and the functions remain unchanged. The eyes to see, the ears to hear, the feet to walk, the hands to labor, the tongue to speak, and the brain to think. The external agents and influences which operated upon, excited, or inspired those members in early man still exert their power upon man of to-day and will do so while the race continues. God set them in the human body, and the lapse of centuries has never shown a need for improvement. Physical man is "of the earth earthy," and his framework was ordained as a means of adapting him to the conditions of earth life. Hence, while light remains the eye as an organ will be affected thereby, and the ear by sound. While labor is required, either mental or physical, the brain and hands will exhibit the wisdom of the God who adapted them thereto; so with the feet for travel and the tongue and mouth for speech, the nose for smelling, etc. Never has the thought entered the mind of man that these organs will ever cease to be essential while light, and sound, and odor, and motion, and labor, and communication are associated with mundane conditions. Just as he decides regarding the sun, and moon, and stars in the firmament, so he concludes concerning these organs in the body of man—they were ordained of God with specific objects in view, and while the ancient necessities continue unchanged

the appointments hold good, and will never be extended or modified either in character or design.

All of this clearly emphasizes the wise man's words, already quoted, "What God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be added to it, nor anything taken from it." If, then, as already shown, "the invisible" or spiritual things of God "from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made," what conclusion must we reach as to the perpetuity of his appointments for spiritual man? Let us read:

God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.—1 Corinthians 12: 28.

Let us now learn of the purpose to be served by this:

He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.—Ephesians 4: 11-13.

Let us remember that the same word is employed here as in Genesis regarding the sun and moon—God "set" them in the church. What was the necessity? "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."

Let us not forget that "what God doeth, it shall

be for ever." This was a provision, not to favor a few members of his family, but for the entire family. No man will dispute that the necessity still exists. Saints need perfecting, the ministry work is in demand as much if not more than ever, and the church needs edification. Who, then, can be so foolish as to believe that what God once ordained to meet this necessity is no longer required; that the church can as well get along without apostles and prophets as with them? As well might we conclude that a man can get along without eyes and ears and other members as with them, or the earth and its inhabitants without the sun and moon. The argument of Paul in 1 Corinthians 12: 1-27 is directed against such position.

As in the physical, so in the spiritual realm, the necessities have never changed. "That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past." To meet those necessities, "whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever"—what he once required of man he still demands. Man to-day should not be satisfied with less assurance of sonship to God or certificate of inheritance than was enjoyed by children of the same family and Father centuries ago; but while this is true, he should not expect those tokens on any other terms than were declared in the Father's will at that time. He who appreciates his Father's provision will be satisfied with no less favor. He who honors his Father's wisdom will ask no easier terms. While, therefore, we spread our hands and

cry, "Our Father, which art in heaven," let us be consistent in our pleading, remembering the pertinent question of the Savior: "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" Let us heed the counsel, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith," and to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

## Unchangeable and Impartial.

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For I am the Lord, I change not.—Malachi 3: 6.

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.—James 1: 17.

Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.—Hebrews 13: 8.

There is no iniquity with the Lord our God, nor respect of persons.—2 Chronicles 19: 7.

God is no respecter of persons.—Acts 10: 34.

And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation.—Acts 17: 26.

He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.—Hebrews 11: 6.

One prominent distinction between our faith and that of many others is manifest in this: We believe that God is. By this we mean that in every characteristic of being, disposition, law, and purpose that ever revealed him to man, or that was resident in him, he still exists. That the gospel approaches to him which himself built by Jesus Christ still remain, and if man to-day will draw near to him by those approaches, he will obtain the same view, behold the same glory, feel the same power, and

rejoice in the same principles as did those of Bible times. This is the testimony of reason, of the Bible, and of the experience of those who have tried it.

The conception of God which makes him a God of miracles and of will to perform them for man's benefit in the past, and of his intention to perform them in the future in bringing about the resurrection, the overthrow of evil, and the creation of a new heaven and a new earth where righteousness alone will pervade the atmosphere, but which strips him of that miraculous power to-day, or divests him of the will to exhibit it for man, is foolish. The need of God's special interference is as great as ever it was, to say the least, and every day and everywhere man's condition is exhibiting features of necessity which the wisdom of man can never supply, and every effort to supply it but magnifies the trouble and adds to the chaos of religious disorder and discontent. God is not the God of favored centuries, generations, cities, localities, or people. He is the Father of the race, and as such his obligations are unvaried without regard to place or time, if all members of the race or family will but respect alike his law. This is the only distinction. The disobedient are without title, but the obedient always have equal claim from Adam till the millennium.

An earthly parent with a large family once placarded his palace with announcements of his impartiality and unchangeability, then spread his tables bounteously with all the health- and joy-giving products of air, and earth, and sea—the



cereals, and vegetables, and fruits, and flowers, and delicious beverages. He then invited the older members of his family to enter the banquet-hall, where the great arc and incandescent lights furnished light, and permitted them to gaze upon and enjoy a most magnificent spectacle and royal banquet. They feasted and rejoiced, and chatted one to another in happiness akin to bliss, and wrote and recited pœans of praise to their father who was so generous and considerate. As they were thus engaged, their speeches and expressions of joy were noted down, together with a list of the meats and drinks upon which they feasted. This was done by certain of them whom the father had selected and requested to so do. The records were preserved, the tables were cleared, and the happy company passed out of a door at the opposite end of the hall from which they entered. The lights were extinguished, and the father, who, with his gorgeously attired servants, had been conversing with and waiting upon his children, withdrew from the banqueting-hall and retired to his parlor for a season, and had all of his actions published, that his character and will and whereabouts might be everywhere known. His riches continued, and his estate was magnificent.

In a short time the younger members of the family grew up, read the records, rejoiced in their prospects, entered the banqueting-hall by the same door, under the same directions as had the older ones, marched around the immense room, read all the placards which told of the father's unchangea-

bility, impartiality, etc., toward all his household, and finally seated themselves on the same chairs once occupied by the others. Upon each plate before them was found a copy of the record which had been kept of the things eaten, drunk, and said. There were none of those things remaining, however, no flowers, fruits, nuts, cereals, vegetables, or beverages, as of old; the lights were not burning, and they had to supply themselves with matches or candles to read the records referred to. The father and the brilliant servants were not there; but they waited, on the strength of what the wall placards announced and what they had learned in the accounts of himself published by their father. Still he came not, nor those servants, nor were the electric lights turned on. They murmured, and looked often at the empty dishes before them, and cried out for the father's approach and the supplies indicated. Just then there entered a few poorly attired persons, who claimed to be servants of the father, and requested the children to refrain from such complaint and supplication, as it was displeasing to the father, who was too busy or too little interested in them to visit them. These self-called servants also informed the children that their portion was to be found in the printed records before them on their dishes. Astonished at this, the children asked how they could feed and be nourished upon the mere story of what their older brothers and sisters ate and drank and enjoyed; they asked why they were being so treated; why this discrimination by a self-claimed unchangeable and

impartial father. The answer given was: "Simply because you were not born ~~born~~ enough." The children asked whether they were responsible for that, but were turned away with the reply that the "word" was to be their portion; but that all the evidences of loyalty and affection for their father, such as were displayed by the others of whom they read, were required of them also without diminution, under penalty of disinheritance and final destruction.

What think you, hearers and readers, of such a parent and such a case? You tell me you do not believe a word of it. No father could be so manifestly unjust and partial and cruel to his own children while he retained his senses and riches, and especially while publishing himself to the contrary. It would be outrageous, and is too far beneath contempt to admit a belief. Well, you are right. I have only given you a parable; but does it not truly depict a spiritual condition if the theories of religion now extant and the apologies of their advocates are to be respected? The Bible tells such a story of spiritual feasting by our brothers, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Peter, James, John, Paul, and their confreres; it tells what they ate and drank and said and did; of the Father being with them by his Spirit and Son, and the angels who ministered to them—the light of direct revelation let in upon them; and how their souls were enriched by Pentecostal baptisms of miracle and of glory. I read the placards upon the walls: "I am the Lord, I change not"; "God is no respecter of persons"; "For we are

also his offspring" (Acts 17: 28) ; yet, when I enter the same door and sit down at the same table as did my older brothers, the light from God (revelation) must not be expected; the angel servants, who are "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation" (Hebrews 1: 14), are not to wait on or bless me; God is not to commune, as of old, with his family; some of the ancient gospel dishes may remain, but they are to be kept empty. I am required to feed and grow fat on the story told of others in the Book; I ask, "Why?" and am told that though of the same family, I was not born soon enough, and that is the only reason. Yet, according to the sixth quotation in my heading text, God determined the times and boundaries of human habitation beforehand. Moses and Paul were born when and where they were because God settled it so beforehand; so with me—I could not help it. So the whole Bible story is worthless to me, except to prove that Christ's religion wears out in time. It can flood its believers with miracle and glory at one time, but possesses no such power later on. One generation gets all the actual food, fresh from God's and Christ's and angels' hands, but the other must either grow fat on the Bible or "Word," or history of what the first enjoyed, or must starve and be damned for starving. What a brilliant idea of fatherhood! What an intellectual conception of unchangeability! What a glowing tribute to God's impartiality! A picture that would damn any earthly father, yet is offered to me as a photograph of "our Father which art in heaven"!

Oh, pinnacle of inconsistency! Oh, acme of blasphemy!

Let not the believers in such a theory pretend to approach God religiously in word or ceremony. "He that cometh to God must believe that he is."

A lecturer once came to a certain neighborhood and brought with him a cargo of pamphlets. To his auditors he told of a section of country from whence he came, where corn yielded one hundred bushels to the acre, wheat seventy-five bushels, and oats, and barley, and vegetables in proportion. He then threw his pamphlets broadcast, and in them the readers found a similar showing. Beautiful springs and streams of water were referred to, and mention made of regular rains, and mellow sunshine, and genial climate, and much else to favorably impress.

In due time several of those auditors sold their old possessions and went to the section thus advertised. They plowed, and planted, and cultivated, and looked for the wonderful yield which had been described, but it failed to materialize; the rains were very irregular and scant; the springs and streams could not be located. Neighbors, who had been there for years, gave no better evidence of success in farming. They became indignant, and sought and found the man (and the company he represented) who had painted the glowing picture and distributed the tracts in their old home region. To him they told their story of disappointment and vexation. In reply, he expressed surprise that they should have expected any such things as he had

talked to them about or as they had read about in his pamphlets. "For," said he, "those harvests were reaped over a thousand years ago, and we simply published the story as we found it in history, or as tradition gave it to us, though, of course, our object was to have you colonize this section." The enraged colonists turned, and asked him, "Can we and our families subsist on the grain and vegetables that others raised and consumed over a thousand years ago? We are starving for food." To this he replied, "You have the pamphlets."

Again you show incredulity, and tell me this is another parable. I admit it, but ask, "What do you want religion for?" The farmer does not buy land merely to have the county records show him the owner, or merely to be the possessor. He has crops in his mind. No honest and intelligent person wants to get religion merely to have some church-book show the enrollment of his name, or to be called a Christian. He has Christ's communion, divine help and favor, Spirit endowment, and eternal life in his mind. Bible lecturers may extol the description of gospel products on Pentecost, in the Asiatic churches, and along the line of the ancient apostolic march, and they may print and circulate cheap Bibles all over the world in support of what they tell; but enter their churches and find a duplication of those gospel gifts, miracles, apostles, prophets, etc., if you can. When you discover their barrenness and inquire about it, you are told these things existed nineteen hundred years ago. You ask how



your soul can grow and be enriched upon what saints received and utilized nineteen hundred years ago; you are in spiritual need now! They will tell you: "You have the Bible."

A man once stood upon a pulpit platform, and preached and expounded the Scriptures very readily and satisfactorily, and electrified and edified his hearers. At the close of his series of discourses he was plied with questions which he answered cheerfully and convincingly. Before leaving he announced his itinerary, telling where he would be each succeeding month the following year and at what time he would return to them, and that everywhere he would be the same as then. Anxious that their friends at the different points named should enjoy what they had, these persons wrote to them, and advised them to go and hear at the times indicated. The answers which came back surprised them, for their distant friends told them of having gone to hear, but of being disappointed in not witnessing what had been described to them. Upon the preacher's return to that place, he was found one night fixed like a statue, motionless and speechless. All the questions they presented to him elicited no motion or speech, till they became vehement, when he moved his finger, or swayed his head, or winked his eyes, but said not a word. Each one of the crowd was left to guess what these gestures meant, and they differed about it and disputed, but he never deigned to interpret himself or end their contention. Yet, notwithstanding all that their friends

had written back to them, and all that they witnessed for themselves on the preacher's return, they were unanimous in their testimony that he had not changed—he was exactly the same to-day as yesterday and all time before when among them. Once a fluent talker, now a dummy; once active and intelligent and deeply interested, now almost motionless, obtuse, and indifferent; once anxious and careful to answer and explain, lest misunderstanding should obtain, now austere and careless as to whether they agreed about him or not.

“Parable number three!” you exclaim. All right. But from what condition did I get my suggestion? The Bible purports to give a history of God's dealings with men for over four thousand years. He was always counseling and directing, always approachable. Visions, angels, dreams, revelations, signs, miracles, etc., figured in the fluent responses he gave to inquirers. His word was: “Hitherto ye have asked nothing in my name; ask and receive, that your joy may be full.” (John 16: 24.) “Seek,” “ask,” “knock,” he insisted, and was always ready to reply, and relieve, and enlighten. Then, as in my texts, he left word of his unchangeability. Yet, after four thousand years of such an unbroken display (except where sin prevailed among his people), Christendom represents him as uttering no word, sending no angel, giving no vision or spiritual dream, performing no miracle, healing no sick in this age, as formerly, but still the word is true that he is unchangeable and impartial.



It was Pope who wrote:

Lo, the poor Indian! whose untutored mind  
Sees God in clouds, or hears him in the wind.

Had he substituted the word *Christian* for *Indian*, and referred to the modern product, it would have fitted nearly as well; for except in "clouds" and "wind" and undecipherable providences, he sees no God to-day. He must go to the Bible and through it as a telescope look back nineteen hundred years to get a glimpse of the real God, and if the Indian can read, he can do that as well as the so-called Christian.

Oh, that the world could get one view of God to-day, compare him with the Bible showing of his impartiality, unchangeability, and miraculous power, and divine fatherhood, and know that as he was he is. John says that God, the Word (Christ), and the Holy Ghost are one (1 John 5:7), and we ask the world to believe that they and the angels are not dead; they have not dissolved partnership; they have not abandoned business, nor changed employment. The one thought of the past is the paramount interest with them still. But the people have wandered away from the gospel and church established by Christ, and have built churches and taught doctrines to suit their own fancies, and God will not put his seal upon that which is not his. He will not appear in them as in his own. Hence, the old, old appeal which God authorized Jeremiah to make is in order to-day:

Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk

therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.—Jeremiah 6: 16.

But, alas! as that verse closes with the people's answer, so does the popular note cry out to-day, "But they said, We will not walk therein."

## The Modern Stumbling-Stone.

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Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits.—Matthew 7: 15, 16.

This wisdom have I seen also under the sun, and it seemed great unto me: There was a little city, and few men within it; and there came a great king against it, and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it: now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor man. Then said I, Wisdom is better than strength: nevertheless the poor man's wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard.—Ecclesiastes 9: 13-16.

The fortunes or fate of revealed truth seem to be nearly alike in all ages. In the blood of its advocates and defenders can be traced the line of its march in the dispensations of history, and the records now being faithfully made will furnish to the world nothing but duplicates of what is already possessed. Like its Author, truth comes to its own, but its own receives it not.

The inquisition connected with the bloody apprenticeship it seems destined to serve, is generally instituted by the Phariseism of its time. Those busiest in painting and garnishing the tombs of dead prophets are generally first to bring the stone, the

fagot, and the cross for living ones. Those who make themselves hoarse in crying, "We know that God spake to Moses," are generally ready to vary their speech with an occasional, "Away with him! Crucify him!" when their attention is called to Jesus Christ.

All ancient revelation was once modern, and its first advocates in any age were anathematized. Noah's proclamation was as divine and genuine as God could authorize, yet it convinced not a single soul outside of his own family. It was new and somewhat novel, was the only objection that could be urged against it. They had their traditions of God, handed down from Adam, and yet in their lives and teachings they were far from righteousness; hence Noah's preaching was an offense to them. Pharisees of this age shed tears as they read and think of one hundred and twenty years spent by this faithful patriarch in a fruitless effort to reclaim those heedless hearers, and they denounce the hard-heartedness and stiff-neckedness of such people, yet they forget or are indifferent to the intimation, "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the days of the coming of the Son of Man." They are to-day despising as grand an overture from heaven as was extended by Noah.

Jesus asked his auditors to "search the scriptures," for they testified of him, and said, "Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me"; but they did not believe Moses nor the Scriptures intelligently. They believed the corrupted traditions that had reached them, and which

were being presented as interpretations of the Scriptures by their priests; hence their eyes were blinded to the true intent and facts of "Moses and the prophets." Jesus came to magnify, fulfill, and unfold the law. God sent him for that purpose; but their traditions stood between them and him, hence they murdered their best friend, for whom they had been pleading and waiting.

Paul stood up for the "hope of Israel," and endeavored from their own Scriptures to prove Jesus to be the central figure connected therewith, the Christ indeed; but he was branded a heretic and denounced as a pestilent fellow, a stirrer-up of strife. He was beaten, imprisoned, and finally slain. Unto all these distresses he was delivered by the very persons upon whom he ought to have been able to rely for protection and succor, for they claimed to be the custodians of the "law and the prophets," in the contents of which he declared himself a believer.

So to-day we are called heretics, not because we denounce the Bible, but because we uphold it. We appeal, as did our Master, to the Scriptures, and "contend for the faith" therein revealed; but we are confronted with creeds and commentaries as an answer in which the wisdom of men alone stands revealed. Thousands are building churches to the names of dead apostles and prophets, but will not believe that there stand among them living ones. Not only this, but, like others of former time, they will distort and misapply the Scriptures to defend

a tradition, though they crucify Christ's golden truth in so doing.

In evidence of this, let the text chosen be introduced. Since 1830, or thereabouts, the words, "Beware of false prophets!" have been used by creed defenders against Joseph Smith and those engaged with him in proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ, until they have become household words, and the impression has obtained among thousands, if not millions, of honest people that this application of Scripture was legitimate. Their only ground for thus believing is the testimony of the chief priests and Pharisees among them. If the reader has been thus influenced, let us offer a few thoughts in regard to the matter, both as to the incorrectness and injustice of such treatment of Scripture and men, and also with reference to the causes that have led thereunto.

Let it be stated that we are the victims oftentimes of a prejudice that has been created by false education. While nearly all churches and societies have been called upon to furnish a representation of themselves for publication in encyclopedias and school-books, our enemies, or those interested in the overthrow of our church and work, have almost invariably been called upon to speak and write of us. Within the last three or four years some corrections of these have been published in later issues of some of these works. The result of this has been just as might be expected. When the name of Latter Day Saint is mentioned in a community, or one of our elders appears there to preach for the

first time, instead of going to hear him speak for himself, a resort is had to the encyclopedias, and from thence as cruelly false and base an impression as is possible to obtain is gathered, and the prejudice against us is strengthened in proportion. If the early-day Pharisees alone had been consulted in order to learn the mission and character of Christ, and only their testimony had been handed down, very few in this age would tolerate even the mention of his name in their homes.

Next, let us consider the text referred to, and examine the application made.

Jesus had chosen his ministry and endowed them with supernatural gifts, and declared that when the Comforter should come it would testify of him and show them things to come. These divine endowments were for their enlightenment and protection after his departure. He also told them that the prince of this world was coming, and would lie in wait to deceive and seek to overthrow the work commenced. To deceive those endowed with gifts of prophecy and miracles, the enemy would need to do as in Moses' day, when the rods of the magicians became serpents, also,—imitate the divine; hence he would inspire men to prophesy and perform miracles closely resembling what was accomplished by the divine Spirit in the apostles. Foreseeing this, Jesus kindly and clearly forewarned them in the words before us, "Beware of false prophets!" A provision was made against these false spirits which would seek to destroy the church by decoys of this kind. In First Corinthians, twelfth chapter, we

have mention of nine supernatural gifts given to the church, among which are prophecy, tongues, and miracles, and all who read will agree that these were appointed to the church because there was a necessity for them. What, then, shall be said of that strange gift, also named in the same chapter, the "discerning of spirits"? Was that not also given because in God's foreknowledge it was found to be necessary? If so, it is evident that God and Christ knew that false spirits would attempt to inspire men in the church to prophesy, as they had done in the days of Elijah and others. This gift was to make detection possible, that the church might be saved. The gospel, as then introduced, reopened the way of communication with God, and the enemy stood ready to take advantage of the confidence of the people in these divine gifts, and to transform himself like unto an angel of light, if necessary, in order to "deceive the very elect" by his counterfeiting work. Jesus knew that not only would the divine Spirit—the Comforter—come when he left, but "many spirits" would go "abroad in the world." Hence he cried, "Beware of false prophets, who come unto you in sheep's clothing!"—appear and prophesy much like yourselves, in order to win you from the favor of God in time.

Now, compare the situation of that time with that of the age when Joseph Smith began his work. Where was the church that believed in those supernatural endowments, as a necessity, when this young man made his first proclamation? Every one of them declared that prophecy had ceased long cen-



turies before, never to be heard again in the Christian church on earth. They had no confidence in such things; hence there could be no advantage taken of confidence that did not exist. There was nothing of the kind on earth. Satan's work of counterfeiting could not begin where no genuine was in existence. Suppose a banker should throw back a coin you presented, and tell you it was counterfeit. In reply, you ask how he has decided, and he gives you nothing but his word to condemn it; therefore you insist that he shall produce a genuine coin for comparison, but he informs you that there is not one in existence. Would you not ask him what the counterfeiter had to work by when yours was made? Would you not promptly tell him that all coin in existence of that denomination, according to his statement, must be spurious, and, if he had nothing but spurious coin to compare with, it was presumption for him to denounce yours? Might it not be that yours, being unlike what was in circulation, thus bore one evidence of possibility in favor of its genuineness?

If there was not a living true prophet on earth with which to compare this young man, how did they pronounce him false? How could he come to deceive a people by imitation who had no faith whatever in any such thing as a prophet in the church?

Again, let us notice the description given of the kind referred to by Christ: They were to come in sheep's clothing. But it will be well to keep in mind that true prophets would also appear in "sheep's clothing." It would be interesting in this con-

nection to know just who were the "sheep" at the time when Joseph Smith began his religious career. The sheep's clothing referred to certainly will not bear a strictly literal interpretation. It did not mean that prophets would come with literal sheepskins on them. It can only mean that they would, in every noticeable respect, bear a striking resemblance to the "sheep" or members of "the fold"; they would talk, and act, and appear like them.

Let us see: The first announcement that this young prophet made to the churches was, "You are all wrong, and your creeds are an abomination in God's sight." This he said on the strength of what the angel told him, and this was what provoked the bitter and persistent persecution which ever afterwards followed him. His language was unequivocal, and he placed himself on record openly before the world in a way to invite criticism and condemnation, rather than favor and flattery. The first announcement made by him was a virtual challenge to every religious body on earth. No hypocritical deceiver would ever attempt to openly denounce every religion in existence with the hope of ingratiating himself into the affections of those connected therewith. To reach this thought directly and avoid possibility of being mistaken, let us again ask, Who were the "sheep" in his day? There were Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, and possibly others, close to his home. If either or all of these represented the "sheep," and his aim was to lure and destroy, did he put on the doctrine and enter the fold of either of them? Did he imitate the

Methodist customs, or pat the Presbyterian confession, or talk sweetly about Calvinism, in order to gain the good will of each or all? A deceiver would have so done, according to Christ's warning and prophecy, if these were indeed the "sheep"; but an honest man and a true prophet, if he spoke on the matter at all, would do just as Joseph Smith did. He claimed that he had been visited from heaven, and that the Lord had told him the churches "were all wrong, and their creeds an abomination in his sight." He served this notice on all the churches, by the authority of heaven, and took the consequences. Hence, as all thinkers must admit, he did not fill the program for a false prophet; therefore every application of this text to him and his work is a perversion of its divine intent. All who are acquainted with his history know that if he had agreed with the churches and favored their proceedings, he might have lived to this day. Whatever else may be said of him, he certainly presented himself and his calling honestly before the world. He donned no fleece for the purpose of affiliating with those of like appearance. He came before men with a doctrine so utterly unlike everything found in the churches of his time that all raised their hands and voices against him and denounced him. They loudly proclaimed that he bore no resemblance to the "sheep," whatever. Let this fact be noted, for it will be referred to later.

He claimed to have been visited by the angels of God and to have received information regarding the early inhabitants of America; that the descendants

of Joseph in Egypt had dwelt here; that they had been visited by the Savior after his crucifixion at Jerusalem; that his church had been organized as in Jerusalem; that divisions occurred among the people, followed by wars and calamities. He was told that a record had been kept on metal plates by the righteous among these people, and that just prior to the death of the last prophet, Mormon by name, he was commanded of God to hide up the plates in the earth, and told that in the latter days they would be disinterred, and in the Lord's hands become a testimony by which the restitution work among Jew and Gentile would be introduced, and the identification of the offspring of Israel be made easier. The angel also showed Joseph Smith the location of the buried plates and gave him authority to obtain them, after which, by inspiration, he translated them and published their contents to the world. This was shown to him to be in fulfillment of Isaiah, the twenty-ninth chapter, also of Ezekiel 37: 15-28, and other Bible prophecies.

During and after the time of translating and publishing this record (Book of Mormon) to the world, which was completed in 1830, many revelations were given to him, by the authority of which the Church of Christ was organized after the ancient Bible pattern, men and women having been baptized and a ministry ordained. Thus was this strange work commenced upon earth. But what of its doctrine? Did the representatives of this new church seek favor at the hand of other churches by repeating the old theories and traditions which a

few centuries had made popular? No! By the Holy Spirit given them, they read and understood the Bible as it was intended by the writers of it, and they were helped by the plain teachings of the same doctrines as found in the Book of Mormon; hence they went forth and preached Christ after the manner of eighteen hundred years ago, and invited men and women into the church reorganized by command of God, in fulfillment of prophecy, and identical in organization and doctrine with the church of the first century. They promised just what Jesus had authorized anciently (see Mark 16: 17, 18) and what had been included in the commission, as renewed to themselves.

Instantly the sects of the day rose up and their pulpits scintillated fury. Creeds felt the force of the onslaught made by the Bible in the hands of inspired men, and churches, long at a disagreement, combined to crush this new evangel. Powerless to resist by scripture or reason the advancement of this divine enterprise, the creed worshipers seized upon this text and, prostituting it to unholy service, cried aloud, "Beware of false prophets!" Then, turning to their creeds, they exclaimed, "Great is our Diana! These men say our creeds are an abomination in God's sight, and that they are doomed; but our ancestors have framed them, and by them we will stand, for they shall never be overthrown!"

Against this combination, which was backed by the press and wisdom of the age, this little church planted its proclamation of divine authority and

began to storm the citadels of heresy. The doctrine that infants were predestined to damnation was attacked with such weapons as, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven"; "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye can in no wise enter in"; "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive," and other equally pointed scriptures. It was denounced as monstrous and utterly unlike the declared purpose and character of God. The dogma that hell was a lake of fire and brimstone into which all who failed to become Christians were to be cast, and there to be tortured eternally, never finding release or cessation, was declared to be an infamous misrepresentation of the divine purpose and without warrant in the Scriptures. It was shown that hell was but a prison house into which the unsanctified spirits of men were cast between death and the resurrection, and where the mercy of God could still reach them and from whence redemption was possible, and that after the final resurrection, even hell itself would be cast into the lake of fire (see Revelation 20: 14), where none but the finally and hopelessly incorrigible would ever be cast. It was also proclaimed, on Bible authority, that every act of goodness would be brought into account in the judgment, and not a cup of cold water given to a disciple would escape the notice and remuneration of God. That every man would be rewarded or punished according to his earnings or deserts, some inheriting the "glory of the sun," others the "glory of the moon," and still others would differ in glory



as the stars vary in magnitude. (1 Corinthians 15: 41.) That every man should receive according to his works.

It was announced also that death of the body did not end human probation, but that every man and woman would hear the gospel of Christ in the spirit world before the resurrection, if no opportunity had reached them while in the flesh; that the millions of heathen would there come into remembrance, and the atonement of Christ would be published till all who had lived on earth would have privilege to believe and obey, and that Jesus had opened up the work of preaching in the spirit prison house, just as he had commenced it among men in the flesh and for the same purpose. (See 1 Peter 3: 18-20; 4: 5, 6; John 5: 25.)

The prophecies of the Old Testament were freely used to prove that the Jews would again come into remembrance; that the former fertility and glory would be restored to Palestine; that Israel and Judah would return there and be reinstated; and that, according to Isaiah 29: 11-17, as interpreted and explained by the Book of Mormon, the day of that wondrous restoration was at hand. The crowning result of all this was declared to be the second coming of Christ to dwell among his people on the earth. It was announced that his coming would be as literal as at the first. Further, it was taught that the new church, as then organized, was to be one of the great factors in developing these promised conditions, and, as a testimony to those believing the proclamation, the Holy Ghost was promised to give

prophecy, tongues, miracles, healings, etc., as in former times.

In consequence of this proclamation, the pulpit and press retaliated upon the new religion with open denunciation and abuse, as well as secret methods, to overthrow. The fire and brimstone definition of hell was more boisterously proclaimed than ever, and scripture was distorted from its original intent to bolster this fearful misrepresentation. Calvinism bristled and reasserted its predestination ideas with an enthusiasm worthy of a better cause, and all churches combined in denouncing the Book of Mormon and Joseph Smith for daring to assert the approaching restoration of Palestine and its reoccupation by the Jews. The second literal appearance of Christ was branded as the base materialistic conception of an untutored carnal mind, and worshipers everywhere were exhorted to look for the coming of Christ only in the hour and article of death. It was to be only a figurative or spiritual coming. Probation after death was execrated upon sectarian altars, and the old quotations, "There is no repentance beyond the grave," and "As death leaves us, so judgment will find us," were vociferated loudly, though neither preachers nor hearers had ever found them in the Bible. The ordinance of "laying on of hands" for healing the sick and for the gift of the Holy Ghost was said to be a piece of blasphemous jugglery, and everywhere holy hands were raised against this innovation upon popularized religious customs of the age.



Truly it was a time of testing to the infant church. Judged from a human standpoint, all the odds were against it. Palestine for seventeen hundred years had lain a barren waste; the Jew was a hiss and a byword in all the earth, and citizenship was denied him under popular governments. Not a circumstance could be pointed to as indicating the possibility of his return to build up and reinhabit the land of his forefathers. The wisdom of the world had for generations been strengthening creed fortifications till everything was being interpreted in their light and by their standards, even the Bible itself not escaping. What had these advocates of the new revelation to fall back upon in facing these giant conditions? Upon what could they rely for support and defense in executing the mission assigned them of God? Simply the impregnable barrier behind which their Master sheltered himself when confronted by the arch enemy,—“It is written.” There they stood and compelled the churches of the day to attack their own pretended foundation, the word of God, if they would uproot or annihilate this faith. It was and is to this hour a duplicate of the spectacle heaven gazed upon when the early-day apostles were denounced as heretics for contending for the faith set forth in the very Scriptures their persecutors pretended to revere. Christ, in the preparation work for the final “restitution of all things,” is as great a stumbling-stone to this age as was Jesus the crucified eighteen hundred years ago. The gospel then was too insignificant to command the admiration of the Pharisees, and

to-day it is too contemptible to enlist the respect of churchianity.

When the work began, however, notice was served on its despisers, as in Christ's day, that it was the kingdom of God in the germ, and though, like the tiny mustard-seed, it seemed too small to excite respect, yet it would grow until the birds of the air would lodge in the branches of it. And we who live in the time of its maturing can see the fulfillment of this in the fact that its philosophy has extended and permeated society until every once popular creed is tottering to its fall, and every revision thereof is being made in a way that brings them nearer into line with this doctrine which provoked their hatred and called forth their anathemas seventy-five years ago. They are meeting the advanced education, sentiment, and demand of the present by striking out of their creeds what this church condemned over half a century ago, and they are now beginning to introduce into their sermons and platforms many of the features which were embodied in this faith when they despised it at that time.

The revision of the Bible has practically eliminated the old idea of hell, and scarcely any of the forward men of thought will now use sputtering brimstone as a means of winning souls to Christ. The creeds are being revised so as to eliminate the infant damnation feature, as also the theory of eternal roasting because God had ordained some thereunto for his own pleasure and glory.

Many of the leading divines in England and

America have either directly or indirectly taught or favored the idea of probation after death in some form, among whom may be named Cannon Farrar, Henry Ward Beecher, Professor Briggs, and others. The Congregational Church is divided pretty evenly upon this question, and some have been ordained to carry consolation to the heathen by publishing this doctrine. The chief school of its theology has been made a feeder for this so-called heresy, until the law of the land has been invoked by creed lovers to stop it.

Twenty-three years after the Book of Mormon was first published, the early and latter rain, after seventeen hundred years' absence, returned to Palestine, and the land has since become fruitful, as in ancient years. This has caused the long exiled Jew to turn his eye thitherward, and many thousands have gathered there to build the waste places and to abide until their Messiah shal come. A line of railroad has been constructed from Jerusalem to Jaffa, and from American shops have been furnished the locomotives that now dash across the territory once traversed by the weary feet of the Son of God. Meanwhile, the Jew has been relieved of much of the disability that once attached, and has climbed to the head of nations, and helped control and regulate the machinery of Gentile governments. Wealth unto multiplied millions has poured into his lap, and by it he has placed vast territory subject to his control, and made nations heedful of his diction. In fact, he has thus established his feet more firmly than some of the dynasties of the pres-

ent. Religious leaders of the present are engaged in convening conferences wherein the Jew and Gentile pulpiteers may announce their views, compare their arguments, and better understand and appreciate each other. Governments have been considering means of relief for the oppressed Hebrews in certain places, and indications on every hand omen the speedy fruition of the ancient Jewish hope, for which through long years they have prayed. The Zionistic movement is becoming international in its importance.

The second coming of Christ is now a theme in almost every popular pulpit, and the more venturesome ones among our preachers are vying with each other in trying to emphasize their faith in this glorious event. Scarcely a man of note among the churches will now seriously question the probability of it. The press has fallen into line, and the popularity of the theme is already assured. Not only this, but scores of pamphlets and leaflets of various sizes are being published and circulated by the authority of popular churches, through chosen committees, setting forth the scriptural warrant and reasonable ground for belief in the doctrine of healing the sick by faith, including prayer and the anointing with oil and the laying on of hands. Thus, one by one, the points of doctrine embodied in what the world denounced as heresy seventy-five years ago are being incorporated into the systems of the present, and are being hailed with delight as evidencing the progress of intelligence and piety in the church.

As we enter these institutions where theology

is prepared for the masses, to suit the growing demands, it is at least interesting to be able to step up to the tables on which these doctors of divinity have been dissecting the old creeds, and pick up a discarded fragment of Calvinism, or a dismembered branch of Arminianism, or a number of abandoned points of Protestantism, around which once clustered the devotion of worshipers a generation or two ago, and for the preservation of which the fagots were piled and the torch applied, and to be told by the men who hold the scalpel that these are damnable heresies, unfit to be taught and unworthy of place in the theology of this enlightened age. Our interest changes to gratification when we learn that the places from whence these offensive dogmas have been carved have been filled with fragments of what we recognize at once as being part of the doctrine proclaimed by Joseph Smith three quarters of a century ago. When he "piped," they would not "dance"; when he "mourned," they "would not lament." When he preached the above items of doctrine, or denounced the creeds, he was derided and persecuted, and slain as a dangerous and damnable heresy-breeder; but now that the despicable "mustard-seed" has become a tree, and the tottering creeds are seeking shelter in its branches, or plucking twigs therefrom to cover the deformity discovered in themselves, they all enter for the dance. But who among them all has ever given credit to the young man who first faced the fire and endured the obloquy that these doctrines invited or provoked? The second part of our text

tells of a poor wise man whose wisdom delivered the city, but who was not remembered by those who enjoyed the benefits of his service. Religious history of this and the past generation, if faithful, should tell of the divine wisdom given a young man by which provision was made seventy-five years ahead for the exigencies of Christendom. It should tell of the curses that were heaped upon him by those who should have loved him best. It should tell how, after denouncing his doctrine as infamous, they finally pilfered from that doctrine the points requisite to deliver their creeds from disaster. It should tell that, notwithstanding this was done and Christendom reveled in the temporary advantage thus secured, and the deliverance of their citadels from dishonor and ruin, they even failed to remember that same young man, but boasted in the advancement they themselves had made under the wise direction of hired theologians and skillful revisers.

Reader, if those doctrines, now becoming popular, are true, they were no less true seventy-five years ago, and the clergy who denounced them were not the servants of God. If the religions of that time were the standards by which the religion introduced by Joseph Smith was measured when they pronounced him an impostor, what shall be said of the men who are now patching their "fleece" or philosophy with pieces taken from his system, which was so utterly unholy and impious then as to invite upon it their most terrible imprecations?

Joseph Smith introduced his doctrine by God's



command, and never attempted to don any fleece then known to religious bodies in order to gain favor with the flock. For this boldness they denounced him as a false prophet. Since then the God who authorized him has been supplementing his work and the work of his co-laborers, and what is the result? Simply that the world is rising to indorse his utterance. If he voiced an untruth when he said the churches were wrong and the creeds were an abomination in God's sight, if he was guilty of blasphemy in this, what shall be said of the wise men who are now revising a certain creed, and some of whom declared that specific features therein were damnable heresies, that they did not believe in and ought not to be held by them, and should not extend the infamy and disgrace of them to their children? In short, let us ask you to remember that the points referred to a few paragraphs back were no part of the creeds seventy-five years ago, and in so far as they may be now, they justify us in pointing to the men who use them in connection therewith, and, asking you to "beware of false prophets, who come unto you in sheep's clothing." These doctrines belong not to the creeds, but to the gospel proclaimed by Joseph Smith and for which he was denounced a false prophet by the admirers of the very systems that have been repaired by material first declared in this generation by him. If it is now being discovered that he alone wore the genuine sheep's garment, then all those unlike his were false.

Hence, we submit finally the fact that "by their fruits ye shall know them." The fruit of a prophet is

prophecy. If the prophecy is fulfilled, then he was a true prophet. If not, then he was a false prophet. This is the only legitimate test; but failing to see any hope of defeating the young man's work by such honorable means, his enemies misapplied this scripture, as they did the other part, and traduced his reputation, as the Pharisees did that of Christ. He was charged with various crimes against the law, including immorality, and these charges were held up as evidence that he could not be a prophet of God. Those who thus vilified him were reckless of the fact that even were their charges true, such judgment as they passed thereupon would destroy the testimony of Moses, and David, and Solomon, and even Abraham and Peter, and numerous other Bible worthies. If they could show in Joseph Smith's life lapses from virtue, and these could prove that God had never chosen him as a prophet, and his revelations and testimony were false, then, to be consistent, they would have to strike out all the Bible that contains the testimony of the others, for they certainly lived wide of the mark appointed of God as a gauge of moral conduct.

This will not do, however, for should I prophesy to-day in God's name of the coming of a pestilence one week hence, and it should come as predicted, its coming would confirm me a true prophet, even though I fell into sin before it came and perished by it when it arrived. By the fulfillment or the failure of the young man's prophecies alone we determine him a true or false prophet, and we submit the foregoing evidences in support of the claim



that he was sent of God. Much other evidence is at hand, but we forbear introducing it, as we have already passed the limit of our intended space; hence we conclude with our humble testimony to the truth of the gospel delivered to Joseph Smith by an angel of God and by him proclaimed to the sons of men. Of his character we only know what those who had opportunity to learn have said of him, and from that we have always believed and do now believe him to have been a good man. If he lived by the doctrine he published, he must have been very good. Of the message he brought we ask no man's opinion. Its divinity is self-evident; its potency for good in the human character we have abundantly proven; its adaptation to human necessity is witnessed by its effects within the church that has closely adhered to its principles. If an increased love for Christ and humanity, a closer communion with God, a more intense dislike for iniquity, and a more complete consecration to the cause and interests of holiness and heaven are the fruitage of heavenly sowing, then the claim of divine origin for the doctrine he published is fully vindicated, and we expect to lay these evidences at last, together with the testimony of the Bible, at the feet of God and his Son, Jesus Christ, as reasons for our adhering thereto. To us this later revelation is a treasure of untold worth, and we rejoice in its possession, though to others it has proven to be "the modern stumbling-stone."

## All or None.

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If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed.—John 8:31.

In the mission and ministry of Jesus Christ are revealed the exact measure of human necessity. God took the measure accurately and furnished the supply. There is neither excess nor lack therein. It is absolutely complete.

The above utterance of the Savior gives no promise to those who merely make a start in his service, or who only go so far as to believe that he is the only begotten Son of God on whom rests the burden of saving men by his free grace. James says "Devils also believe and tremble." They acknowledged the divinity of Christ on different occasions; but their faith in and their confession of that divinity did not make them sons of God or heirs of the kingdom. Jesus himself said:

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.—Matthew 7:21.

Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?—Luke 6:46.

By this it is made plain that while belief in his appointment as Lord and Christ is needful as a com-

mencement in our religious career, it is only a beginning, and unless supplemented by a continuance in the course prescribed by him, will not secure for us an entrance into his kingdom and glory. Nicodemus acknowledged that Jesus was a "teacher sent from God" (see John 3: 1-7), but staggered at the first lesson that teacher gave him regarding the work necessary for those who would enter the kingdom of God. His mind, versed only in carnal concerns, could not readily discern how a birth or baptism of water and the Spirit could constitute a gateway to that kingdom. But the divine teacher was proclaiming the word which his Father had commanded him, and the pupil must either "continue" in the word as fast as given, or fail to graduate.

Others went even further than Nicodemus, but finally reached a point where they resolved to drop Jesus because his word exacted more than they were ready to yield. "This is an hard saying; who can hear it?" said they, and "from that time many of his disciples went back and walked no more with him." (John 6: 66.) They were ready to indorse Jesus as far as his counsel suited them, but were not willing to surrender all their predilections at the shrine of their profession of faith in his divinity. They had mental reservations, and exercised the privilege of asserting them when asked to follow Christ beyond the limit of their traditions. They wanted to divide time and place with Christ, allowing him to be teacher in some matters, but requiring that he should surrender that office to them and their traditions in others. How significant the

question and answer that followed their departure! Turning to the twelve, Jesus inquired, "Will ye also go away?" To which Peter replied, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." The twelve understood that those "words" must be continued in, in order to secure eternal life, and they could not be found elsewhere. Much as the carnal will might incline them to turn away, it was a vital question, "To whom shall we go?" They might find other leaders, whose words would not demand so much obedience and self-denial, but where could one be found who offered so sure a guarantee of eternal life? To them it was a clear case: they must either continue in his word, or forfeit their title to the kingdom of God. They must live by every word that proceeded from the mouth of God, and Jesus was the mouth of God to them. He had the "words of eternal life."

The Jews, to whom the words of the text at the head of this article were addressed, had started on the journey toward the kingdom, but never reached it. They believed in Jesus, and called him "Lord;" but instantly his "word" shot like a thunderbolt at their traditions, they challenged his right and counsel as an educator, and drew from his lips the startling words, "Ye are of your father, the Devil." They mistook the nature of the obligations to be assumed in seeking to enter into the kingdom; they failed to consider that instantly they undertook to enter into dispute with Christ, they were following the leadership of him who, in the Garden of Eden, contradicted God, and they were therefore his chil-

dren to whom they yielded themselves servants to obey. They failed to "continue" in Christ's word, hence were not his disciples indeed, though they believed in him; they were aliens still.

The lapse of ages since then has not changed the conditions and terms of discipleship. The everlasting truth, written by the Apostle John, is applicable to-day. Hear it:

Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.—2 John 9.

"Abideth in"—not merely starteth in pursuit of. The words *abide* and *continue* are identical in meaning in their connections here, and John is in harmony with his Lord in the testimony borne. Why is it that like testimony is not everywhere borne to-day by those who assert their right to teach for God? Why is it that thousands of such are engaged in picking out favorite and congenial texts from the sayings of Jesus and the apostles, and parading them before the minds of their hearers, to the exclusion of other equally important sayings which bear on the same great question? Why announce that "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins," and with the next breath denounce, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he can not enter into the kingdom of God," when both of these statements fell from the mouth of "God manifest in the flesh"? Why publish as a truth that "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," and then deny that "these signs shall follow them that believe," when both

statements belong to the same commission and form a part of the Savior's command and promise? Why teach that the promised Comforter will give "joy and gladness," and then hesitate to declare that it will "testify of me," "teach you all things," "bring all things to your remembrance," and "show you things to come"? Why publish a need of teachers and pastors and deacons in the church, and at the same time assert that apostles and prophets are unnecessary, when Jesus, by his Father's direction, made them a part of his church, as a means of "perfecting the saints," and set them in the organization "for the work of the ministry"? Why, oh, why start out with a pretension of belief in Christ as the only divine Counselor, and then drop him at every point where his "word" clashes with the utterance of a human creed? If Christ be worthy of any, he is worthy of all acceptance, and if he be proven unworthy in one instance, he ceases to be a safe foundation at all.

The late champion of agnosticism in America took considerable license with the Bible. He did not decry nor absolutely discard all the sayings of Jesus; but he picked up for his admiration all that struck his fancy favorably, and denounced all that did not agree with his conception of matters. Against this sacrilegious procedure the pulpits rose in a show of righteous indignation; but where was the greater sin? Was it in being blind and acting as the sightless do, or in declaring "we see," yet doing likewise? Jesus, when asked by the cavilers, "Are we blind, also?" answered, "If ye were blind, ye should have

no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth."—John 9: 41.

We admit that the agnostic's course was condemnable; but he did not profess any faith in the divinity of Christ, hence used his sayings as he would those of Huxley or Paine; but what shall be said of the same course when it is being pursued by men who start out with the announcement of their faith in Christ as "God manifest in the flesh," who "spake as never man spake"? What shall be thought of those who preface all their teachings with a devout exhortation to accept Jesus as the "light of the world," and who tell us to "let God be true," though he prove "every man a liar," and then proceed to pick out for us the portions of Christ's sayings we should believe, and advise us as to the folly of accepting any of the remainder? Let the agnostic's course be condemned without stint, if we will; but let not the man who condemns him extol those who do the same work in more sacred places and under title of authorized representatives of Christ.

"If ye continue in my word" shows no halting-place nor hesitating corner along the entire line of Christ's counsel for the one who would be a disciple indeed. He who announces his discovery of a place where he can rightfully cease to "abide in the doctrine," thereby asserts the forfeiture of his title to the kingdom. If divine judgment alone can be trusted to formulate a saving plan for the race, it alone can be relied on to judge of the virtue to accrue from the several integral features of that plan, after having measured the necessity it is to



meet. What God has lodged in those details can only be secured by observing them in their order, and the real believer in Christ will not only accept as true the announcement, "Thy word is truth," but will as cheerfully attest his confidence and prove his discipleship by heeding the counsel, "continue," "abide."



## Repentance—What Is It?

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Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance.—Matthew 3: 8.

I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.—Matthew 9: 13.

All should come to repentance.—2 Peter 3: 9.

And they went out and preached that men should repent.—Mark 6: 12.

God . . . commandeth all men everywhere to repent.—Acts 17: 30.

What is repentance, and what part does it perform in the work of salvation?

Repentance is the relinquishment of any practice, from the conviction that it has offended God. Sorrow, fear, and anxiety are properly not parts, but adjuncts, of repentance; yet they are too closely connected with it to be easily separated.—Rambler.

With this definition we agree, and hence introduce it by way of contrast with that which answers in many places for repentance, but which fails to contribute to society's improvement.

The church which finds in belief, as an abstract principle, the alpha and omega of its theory of salvation, does not offer to society a guarantee such as the Author of Christianity intended. Christ intended that his economy should be measured by the same standards as he introduced for the meas-

urement of others. When he said of false prophets, "By their fruits ye shall know them; do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles?" he justified the inference that true prophets could be discerned by adopting the same rule of observance. Whoever reads the Sermon on the Mount, wherein is outlined the character and career of sainthood, will be convinced that the "fruits" of such kind of living would furnish to society its noblest elements and truest safeguard. While enjoying such "figs" and "grapes," society would never pronounce the vines that yielded them either "thorns" or "thistles."

The mission of the gospel, as announced by Christ, was and is "not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." If the above definition of repentance be a correct one, then society could have no better assurance of safety than would result from the success of Christ's mission.

Such repentance implies reform, yet we often hear the word used and applied as though it had no other meaning than grief or sorrow. Paul the Apostle justified the conclusion that repentance is a consequence of sorrow, for in his second letter to the Corinthians he wrote: "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death." (7: 10.) In the following verse he declares that the repentance he referred to had borne fruit in carefulness, declaring of themselves, fear, vehement desire, and zeal. Here was the evidence that their repentance was after a "godly sort." The "fruits" were of a character to advertise the virtue of the tree upon

which they grew. In proportion as the fruits were desirable the tree would rise in estimation.

When John the Baptist was approached by the people, the publicans and soldiers, separately, after he had given them the withering rebuke found recorded in Luke 3:7, wherein he called them a "generation of vipers," they each asked in turn, "What shall we do?" His answer dealt with the line of work belonging to each, and demanded reform. He knew what their practices had been, and he met them on their separate grounds with the doctrine of repentance as it applied to them. Here is the account:

Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the ax is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. And the people asked him, saying, What shall we do then? He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise. Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do? And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you. And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages.—Luke 3:8-14.

This was practical, and embodied the intent of the gospel principle in their cases. So it applies everywhere.

The kind of repentance which dictionaries classify as "legal repentance" is of the sort which Paul called

"the sorrow of the world." There is no righteousness in it, and it ought not to be taught as a Christian principle. It consists of a feeling of sorrow which comes to the criminal because of the punishment about to be inflicted for his wrong-doing. Had he not been arrested, convicted, and condemned to punishment, he would have felt no regret for the injury he had done his victims. So in religion, the fear of hell, the touch of disease, the prospect of death, the thought of going to meet a long-offended and revengeful God, produce sorrow; but the sorrow is for self, and not for those injured by his career of unrighteousness, nor because he has violated the laws of his heavenly Father. To call such sorrow gospel repentance is a sin, and should be "repented of." It worketh death; it is selfish in its every detail. It is a motion of the carnal mind, and "to be carnally minded is death."

On the other hand, genuine repentance follows sorrow for wrong done, said, or thought. Its regrets are that in the past God has been dishonored, and fellow mortals have been injured, good laws have been violated, and society's claims outraged; all this in proportion to the degrees of former sinfulness. Its resolutions are to "cease to do evil and learn to do well"; its motto is "restitution for wrong done," so far as may be possible; its business is to "restore the pledge," and, like Zaccheus, to face about, and instead of following a career that wrought injury to the people, begin one that will confer blessings to the extent of the ability possessed. Listen to this little man:

And Zaccheus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold. And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come unto this house.—Luke 19: 8, 9.

This is in agreement with the law set forth under Moses as bearing upon this subject, and which contains the will of God as shown in the rendering, as follows:

And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, If a soul sin, and commit a trespass against the Lord, and lie unto his neighbor in that which was delivered him to keep, or in fellowship, or in a thing taken away by violence, or hath deceived his neighbor; or have found that which was lost, and lieth concerning it, and sweareth falsely; in any of all these that a man doeth, sinning therein: then it shall be, because he hath sinned, and is guilty, that he shall restore that which he took violently away, or the thing which he hath deceitfully gotten, or that which was delivered him to keep, or the lost thing which he found, or all that about which he hath sworn falsely; he shall even restore it in the principal, and shall add the fifth part more thereto, and give it unto him to whom it appertaineth, in the day of his trespass offering. And he shall bring his trespass offering unto the Lord, . . . and the priest shall make an atonement for him before the Lord: and it shall be forgiven him for anything of all that he hath done in trespassing therein.—Leviticus 6: 1-7. (Also read Exodus 22: 1-17.)

In this instruction it is clear that the restitution to the injured party or parties was to precede the bringing of an offering to the Lord, and forgiveness was promised only on that condition. As we have shown, this rule or principle of restitution applies also under the gospel, and where it is ignored there is no genuine repentance, and those who seek

church affiliation or baptism by climbing up any other way are "thieves and robbers" in heart. They belong, as John said, to a "generation of vipers."

The farmer who had wittingly sold his cholera-smitten hogs to a neighbor, and thus entailed a loss to the neighbor and a gain to himself, might "get religion" and sorrow for sin after the legal or worldly sort, without making good that neighbor's loss, when it was in his power so to do; but if his sorrow was of a "godly sort," and wrought "repentance, not to be repented of," one of its first-fruits would be manifest in restoring that which had been dishonorably obtained.

The man who, by oppressing the poor, practicing sharp methods, extorting from his fellows, has enriched himself in this world's goods, and, before departing from this life, desires to make his peace with God, can possibly do so; but how rarely are such persons ready to meet the divine exactions! Tears, sackcloth and ashes, alone, are not the emblems of repentance in such a case; repentance in such an one should carry on its wings relief to the oppressed and support to the needy. It should make terrible inroads upon his accumulated stores of wealth; it should mean just what was intended by the spirit of Exodus, the twenty-second chapter.

All the faith a man can exercise, and all the baptisms a man may receive, can never absolve him from the obligation to be reconciled to his fellow and to society, where it is in his power to become reconciled, by restitution, full, frank, and free.

Our faith, or baptism, or sorrow can never pay

the bills we owe, nor will Christ free us from the obligation to pay them if we possess the wherewith to cancel them. Society finds a better assurance of the value of our religion in the restitution we make than in all the prayers we offer or the testimonies we bear. If it is out of our power to do this, then we may have claim on divine clemency, for God is not unreasonable.

Repentance not only implies reform in such matters, but in all others. It means a surrender of all that is wrong, whether in doctrine or morals, as fast as the discovery of error is made. It means a casting out of the Adam as a preparation to admit the Christ; it means a disclaiming of the right of self to govern, and a practical confession that we belong to him who "has bought us with a price."

No subject should be more constantly proclaimed nor elaborately explained than this. The world needs it badly, and the church would be improved by having more of it. Society would hail it because of its fruits, and angels in heaven would feel more joy over it than over all the efforts being made to win the righteous and bedeck religion with the wealth and glitter of the world. It is a conversion manifest—a change of heart—and when it occurs, prepares us for the change of state, and of relationship to God, which is brought about by baptism of water and the Spirit. Baptism does not remit sin that is unrepented of, so far as we have reason for believing, and while baptism is "the door" into the kingdom, repentance is the approach to the door. He that



"climbeth up any other way" is without divine passport to celestial life.

Not only is all this included, but it means also a renunciation or abandonment of everything in religious faith or doctrine found to be in conflict with the teachings of Christ. The Pharisees were willing to take some of Christ's gospel as a patch with which to repair or piece out their own philosophy, or as "new wine," with which to replenish their carnal or "old bottles"; but they were promptly informed that such an admixture or combination would not be tolerated of God, and it would prove ruinous to both philosophies if practiced. "The rent would be made worse,"—the "bottles would burst," and the wine be lost. The message of Jesus was not his own, but was given him of God (see John 7: 16), and God's seal was on it, which meant its absolute perfection. It was the "law of the Spirit of life" (Romans 8: 2); it was the "perfect law of liberty" (James 1: 25); hence, it stood alone, complete in itself, with obligations, promises, and immunities distinctly and all its own. No compromise with anything else could be considered, and all who secured its benefits must do so by first renouncing all other theories, and then being baptized and made absolutely new "creatures" by its operations of grace. It meant a complete surrender of all other religious theories, a forswearing of all allegiance elsewhere, and being adopted as citizens under the banner of Jesus Christ. The system was absolutely perfect within itself, and those under it never needed to look outside of it for any essential to their eternal well-



being. The assemblage at Pentecost was made up of "devout men out of every nation under heaven." (See Acts 2:5.) Yet they were commanded to "repent" (verse 38), and be immersed into the new philosophy, leaving behind their conflicting doctrines and traditions. This was requisite that upon their baptism into the kingdom an absolutely new and separate nationality should be established, where neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, could be found as such, their faith distinctions of the past having been obliterated, and where simply as "children of God, by faith in Christ Jesus," they were to be known, and to be recognized as disciples of Christ by the love they bore for each other. (See Galatians 3: 26-28; John 13: 35.)

Where complete surrender in faith and conduct is not made, genuine repentance is not to be found, and, though forms and ceremonies may be observed, the lineage may still be traced back as before profession was made. (See John 8: 30-44.)

## Is Water Baptism Essential to Salvation?

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To us this question sounds about the same as would the inquiry, "Is faith in God necessary?" Why it should be asked by persons who have read the Bible carefully is a mystery to us; but it is being asked, and that, too, by honest and intelligent persons; hence we venture a very plain answer, and a few plain reasons for that answer. We shall use the Bible in so doing, believing that God's word will be taken in preference to ours.

Our answer is, "Yes, water baptism is essential to salvation."

In support of this answer, we proceed in the same way as if faith, instead of baptism, were the principle inquired of. Not a man who accepts the claim of inspiration for the Bible will doubt the necessity of faith unto salvation after reading:

But without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.—Hebrews 11:6.

He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.—Mark 16:16.

These and similar passages for ever settle the question in favor of faith being an essential to salvation. Consistency, if nothing else, would demand

that if equally strong, plain, and comprehensive texts could be found supportive of water baptism, that question would be settled just as quickly. Can they be found? Let us see as we pass along. We shall go carefully and note the testimony of witnesses as we proceed, then give a list of their names, in order, at the close.

Zacharias, the priest, was visited by an angel while attending to his priestly office, and told that his prayer had been heard, and that a son would be given him by his wife Elizabeth. He was to call the child John. The angel further said of the promised child:

For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.—Luke 1: 15-17.

By this we learn that John was to be the forerunner of Christ, and was to turn many from disobedience to the wisdom (or counsel) of the just (God), and thus make ready a people for what Christ should bring.

In due time the babe was born, and at the time set for its circumcision, friends gathered to witness the ceremony. Some suggested the name Zacharias for the child, but its mother insisted that it must be called John. When its father (who had been without power of speech ever since the angel gave him the promise of a son) was appealed to, by signs,

to settle the question, he secured a writing-tablet and wrote, "His name is John." Instantly upon writing this, his tongue was loosed, and he was led by the Holy Ghost to prophesy concerning the babe, in these words:

And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; to give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins.—Luke 1:76, 77.

We call attention to these passages because they introduce John to us as the agent of God, appointed to do a specific work, and Zacharias as a prophet of God, whose inspired testimony declared that by the doing of that work remission of sins was to come to the obedient.

Right here is a good place to ask and answer the question, "What was the work John was sent to perform in order to give remission of sins?" Let us read again:

There was a man sent from God whose name was John.—John 1:6.

He that sent me to baptize with water.—John 1:33.

I baptize with water.—John 1:26.

John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.—Mark 1:4.

This proves, first, that John's baptism was a water baptism; second, that God sent him to perform it; and, third, that it was the work by which remission of sins was to come to the people.

So far, then, we have gained two strong, unimpeachable witnesses; one inspired of God to prophesy that John's work would bring remission of sins, and the other sent of God and filled with the

Holy Ghost from his mother's womb to qualify him for the work referred to, namely, "baptizing in water for the remission of sins." Please write down the names of these two God-chosen witnesses, Zacharias, the priest and prophet, and John the Baptist. Surely no sane man will dispute that they testified that water baptism is for the remission of sins.

Next we introduce Luke, the historian. Is he a competent witness? Let us see:

Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eye-witnesses, and ministers of the word; it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.—Luke 1:1-4.

Eye-witnesses and men having perfect understanding of all things connected with the case from the very first are generally accounted first-class witnesses. Such was Luke, according to the above. Therefore, being duly qualified, we ask for his testimony upon the matter before us. Here it is:

The word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.—Luke 3:2, 3.

We shall take the liberty of entering the name of Luke on the roll of witnesses who testified that by the command of God baptism was observed for the remission of sins. This makes three reliable witnesses.

We now turn to those twelve men who had been chosen as apostles to represent God's government, and ask as to their competency to testify. The fact that Christ selected them should be sufficient on this: but we want to make the case clear, hence we introduce the Master's charge and promise to them. Listen to it:

[Jesus] commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. . . . Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.—Acts 1: 4, 5, 8.

The sense of this is, without question, that these men were to receive power by the Holy Ghost, to become witnesses in Christ's stead, not only in Jerusalem and all Judea, but their testimony was to hold good to the uttermost part of the earth. Now, according to the following chapter, these men waited in Jerusalem as commanded, and the Holy Ghost came as promised, and under its power they testified. What was their testimony on the point under consideration? "Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice." Here follows his memorable appeal and argument, which caused the people to be "pricked in their heart" and ask, "What shall we do?" to which the spokesman, Peter, replied for himself and the eleven who were standing up with him and were appealed to: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of

Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." (Acts 2: 14, 38.)

Evidently the same Spirit that was with John the Baptist from his birth and with Zacharias and Luke, was the "power" of Pentecost that moved these apostles to thus speak, for their testimonies are alike. Thus we have secured fifteen witnesses, all of whom were amply qualified and authorized to speak for Christ—not a dissenting voice among them.

Next we place on the stand a special witness, named Ananias, and as we proceed we will associate another with him. We find word concerning him in the ninth and twenty-second chapters of Acts. Saul and Tarsus, the church persecutor, was met on the way to Damascus by the Lord, who told him in answer to his question, "What wilt thou have me to do, Lord?" "Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do."—Acts 9: 6.

Obedient to this command, Saul went, or was led, to Damascus, and in due time was visited by the servant of Christ, Ananias, who uttered these words: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."—Acts 22: 16. There was nothing ambiguous about that command, and Saul "arose and was baptized." (Acts 9: 18.)

We note, further, that Ananias, in delivering his message to Saul, said:

The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldst know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth. For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard.—Acts 22: 14, 15.



This leads us to conclude, as is stated, that Saul was to be a witness of what he heard from the mouth of Christ and of what he had seen and heard from Ananias.

What had he heard from the mouth of Christ? We have already shown the command to go to Damascus, and the promise that he would be there told what he must do. What was he told to do when Ananias came? Be baptized to wash away his sins. This, then, is the testimony of Ananias, the special messenger, and Paul, the chosen witness. Will the reader please add the names of Ananias and Saul to the former fifteen witnesses who clearly testify that baptism is for the "washing away" or "remission" of sins? Surely these are sufficient; but, at the risk of surfeiting the inquirer, we place others on the stand.

We have already shown clearly that the Holy Ghost led Zacharias to testify as he did in this case, and that John the Baptist was filled with the Holy Ghost from his birth. We have also shown that it was the Holy Ghost or the "power" promised the apostles that made them witnesses for Christ. The Good Book says also that when that promise was fulfilled, "They were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."—Acts 2: 4.

And with this incontrovertible evidence before us, we fear nobody's objection as we write down the name of the Holy Ghost as a witness in favor of baptism for the remission of sins.

With feelings of strong confidence, we now intro-



duce Jesus Christ to the reader as a witness in the case. Here he says: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he can not enter into the kingdom of God."

—John 3:5. If, as is everywhere admitted, this birth of the Spirit means baptism of the Spirit, the same must be said of birth of the water. Hear him again: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved."—Mark 16:16.

Remember, it was Jesus who sent Ananias to Saul with the command to be baptized and wash away his sins. For evidence of this, read: "Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me."—Acts 9:17.

It was Jesus who promised, and afterwards sent, the Holy Ghost on Pentecost to inspire the apostles to testify as they did.

This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear.—Acts 2:32, 33.

Without hesitation, we inscribe the name of Jesus Christ as having testified, and having authorized and inspired others to testify, that baptism is for the remission of sins.

Did the Father authorize or sanction the doctrine? Let us see: The Holy Spirit that gave the apostle "utterance" on Pentecost was "the promise of the Father." (Acts 1:4.) John the Baptist was sent of God to preach and baptize with water. (See John 1:6-33.) The Pharisees and

lawyers rejected the "counsel of God" by refusing the baptism of John. (See Luke 7: 29, 30.) This could not be possible unless God had counseled them to observe it. The voice of the Father was heard, as Jesus came forth from the water, after he had received baptism at the hands of John: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."—Matthew 3: 17.

Is this enough evidence? By it we have shown that God counseled or commanded the ordinance, sent John to administer it, approved openly of his Son's submission to it, and furnished the "power" on Pentecost to inspire its proclamation, with an extension of the promise of the Holy Ghost to as many as should obey it. What would be convincing evidence if this is not? If anything is needed to complete the matter, it surely will be found in the declaration of Christ:

I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak, therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.—John 12: 49, 50.

This surely settles the matter, for if Jesus, as already shown, both taught the necessity of water baptism, observed it himself, and sent Ananias and the twelve apostles to preach it—all by the commandment of the Father—we have the undoubted right to place the name of God, the Eternal Father, on our list of witnesses who testified in favor of water baptism being essential to salvation.

Now, let us thoughtfully and in the light of our eternal hope inspect the array of witnesses. We

place them, by their choice, all on one side of this great and important question, and we provide a column for the signatures of those who dare to testify against or contrary to them. Look at this, kind reader, and then answer the questions we propound:

### WATER BAPTISM.

FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS.	NOT NECESSARY TO SALVATION.
<p style="text-align: center;">Witnesses:</p> <p>ZACHARIAS. JOHN THE BAPTIST. LUKE. PETER AND THE REST OF THE ELEVEN. ANANIAS. PAUL, OR SAUL. THE HOLY GHOST. JESUS THE CHRIST. GOD THE FATHER.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Witnesses:</p>

Is there any witness who has ever testified, or who now testifies, on the subject, whose word or judgment you would sooner trust than any or all of these? Has any man lived, or does he now live, who holds better authority to speak on this subject than these? Have you the evidence upon which to impeach any one or all of these witnesses? Does your hope of life depend upon your agreement or disagreement with the testimony of these witnesses?

Can God, Christ, and the Holy Ghost testify as above, and yet approve of any man's testimony or attitude to the contrary? Have you any reason for believing that God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit have changed their mind on this subject? Would you not feel safer and happier on the side where God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit stand? These questions are asked in all seriousness. If there is any name or list of names upon whose testimony you would rather take your chances in the judgment, write them in the opposite column above; add to them all the titles that theological seminaries can confer; multiply the names and titles till you have exhausted your sources of supply; roll up the scroll and take it with you to the bar where men are to be judged by the words that Christ has spoken, and there make it the certificate of your right to eternal life. Essay the task of proving that God, Christ, the Holy Ghost, and all of heaven's appointees of the apostolic age were mistaken in this matter, and, after so doing, fall back upon the men whose word you have taken in preference to Christ's; show that all these refused or failed to believe that baptism was essential, and then await the result. What will it be? Angels and archangels will gather around the Author of eternal truth, and raise the banner containing Christ's words: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he can not enter into the kingdom of God."—John 3: 5.

That divine Spirit which moved Paul to write to the Romans will inspire this company first to point

to the inscription upon the banner they have raised, and then to exclaim:

What if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar.—Romans 3: 3, 4.

Reader, we believe you would not dare to enter a name on the blank column above, and declare your acceptance of it in preference to those we have given. Nay, more, we believe you would not wish to do it. You want these, whose names are given, to be your friends when the river of death has been crossed. Hence we advise you to move unto their side of every question now, and be not ashamed because of human reviling or scorn, for Jesus has said:

Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.—Mark 8: 38.

We have answered affirmatively the question propounded, and have put forward the best authority in heaven and on earth as witnesses. Their testimony we leave with you.

## The Laying on of Hands.

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God came from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran. Selah. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise. And his brightness was as the light; he had horns coming out of his hand: and there was the hiding of his power.—Habakkuk 3: 3, 4.

Is there divine warrant for the observance of this ordinance in the church now? we are asked. To this we reply by asking, Is there warrant for the preaching of the gospel of Christ now? The correct answer to one of these questions must also be the proper one to the other. A whole can never exist without its essential parts. If the ceremony of the laying on of hands was ever a part of Christ's gospel, it must always be a part of it. The Bible says of God that he is unchangeable. (See Malachi 3: 6; James 1: 17.) It directly declares the same thing of Christ. (See Hebrews 12: 8; 1: 12.) In announcing that God, Christ, and the Holy Ghost are one (see 1 John 5: 7), it indirectly says that the Holy Ghost is unchangeable. In 1 Peter 1: 25 we have it plainly stated: "The word of the Lord endureth for ever, and this is the word, which by the gospel is preached unto you."

With these facts before us, we may ask consistently, Did this unchangeable God ever make the lay-

ing on of hands a part of his gospel theory and practice? Did this unchangeable Christ ever put himself on record, by teaching or practice, regarding this ordinance? Did this unchangeable Holy Ghost ever attach its authoritative sanction or indorsement to the ordinance? Does this word of the Lord, which is to endure for ever, and which is preached in the gospel, certify to the laying on of hands as being a divinely authorized rite? If the answers to these questions be in the affirmative (as we think they must be if correct), then the matter is settled without further discussion; for with the thought of unchangeability in God, Christ, and the Spirit, and of the perpetual endurance of the Word, we are pledged to the conclusion that what once expressed their mind, or contained an expression of their mind, must represent them for ever on the subject then being dealt with.

We believe that neither God, Christ, nor the Spirit is wiser to-day than when they devised the gospel plan, and that if there was divinity in the statement that the gospel was once perfect, there can be no divinity in a statement that calls a theory or practice the perfect gospel now, if it does not embody in it all that was in it then. Perfection can not be added to nor subtracted from and still be left perfect. Infinite wisdom could not pronounce the plan perfect with the laying on of hands in it as an essential part, and afterwards approve as perfect a system from which that ordinance had been eliminated, either entirely or partially. Such an action would be a reflection on the name and



character of God, and would justify us in concluding that divinity was a creature of education, and was developed by the blundering processes common to humanity. Man invents, and then improves his inventions by addition or subtraction as he discovers his work to be defective or inadequate to the service desired; but who will dare to charge, even by innuendo, such imbecility to God? Who can take up the Bible and read of the service performed by the laying on of hands as an ordinance, and then conclude that that rite failed of the results intended, and therefore this discovery led our heavenly Father to dispense with it as a work of supererogation?

What has its abandonment brought to the church? Let the contrast be made of churches to-day with the church as pictured in the New Testament, and the answer will be suggested at once. Where that ordinance was legally observed by authorized ministers, it secured the Holy Ghost to the church, as witnessed in wisdom, knowledge, faith, prophecy, tongues, interpretation of tongues, discernment of spirits, miracles, healing, love, humility, purity, virtue, divine life, and unity. Its abandonment has resulted in folly, and uncertainty, loss of communion with heaven, inability to discriminate between the subtle forces operating on earth, forfeiture of claim on God for healing in sickness and deliverance from danger, strife, contention, instability, division, and spiritual death.

The world is slow to recognize the truth of the wise man's words:

I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him. That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past.—Ecclesiastes 3: 14, 15.

Every attempt to improve upon God's plan has widened the distance between man and heaven, and it is time that people came to the conclusion that God was not experimenting when he incorporated the several principles mentioned by Paul in Hebrews 6: 1, 2 in his gospel plan.

If the above statement from Ecclesiastes be true, then it is evident that God, in his work, provides for human necessity, regardless of the time when that necessity shall be revealed, whether it hath been, is now, or is to be. It plainly declares that what he doeth shall stand for ever, without change, and he requireth that which is past of those who shall exist to the latest period. If, then, the gospel was provided to supply man's need of a means of salvation, and that need still exists, it is evident that only the gospel as originally furnished can supply it now.

Coming back, therefore, to the main point, let us see whether the laying on of hands was really a part of the gospel originally, and, if so, what was its officework. In Hebrews 6: 1, 2 the apostle mentions it as one of the "principles of the doctrine of Christ"; and in Galatians 1: 11, 12 he declares that he received that gospel by revelation from Jesus Christ. This settles it as being a part of the gospel.

In James 5: 14, 15 the sick in the church were

commanded to send for the elders to anoint them with oil and pray for their recovery. This is accompanied with the promise that the prayer of faith shall save the sick; and in Mark 16: 17, 18 we have the promise that the believers should lay hands on the sick, and the sick should recover. Associate with this the account of Christ's own conduct, as recorded in Mark 6: 5; 8: 23-25; Luke 5: 12, 13; 4: 40; 13: 11-13; also the conduct of his ministry, as evidenced by Acts 5: 12; 14: 3; 19: 11; 28: 8. These prove that the healing of the sick was one of the services it performed in the gospel work.

In Matthew 19: 3-15; Mark 10: 13-16, as well as Genesis 48: 8-19, we have evidence that it was observed for the blessing of children, and in the latter instance it seems that it was a matter of importance which hand was placed upon either of the heads of the children, which could not possibly be the case if the ordinance had no divine virtue connected with it. This fixes its necessity in such service.

In Acts 8: 14-19; 19: 1-7; 1 Timothy 4: 14; 2 Timothy 1: 6, 7, as well as Deuteronomy 34: 9, we have an assurance that it was observed in conferring the Holy Ghost, and we are thus convinced of its essentiality if we would possess that Spirit.

In Acts 6: 5, 6 and 13: 1-3, as well as Numbers 8: 10; 27: 18-20, we find it in practice for the ordination of God's ministry, and hence its virtue is proclaimed as a means of conveying divine authority and power.

If these scriptures are reliable, the case is made

out and proved that the laying on of hands was a part of the gospel teaching and practice, as well as an ordinance of God, in very early ages. By it were conferred upon believers the greatest benefits to soul and body that history makes mention of, or human hearts can desire. It therefore remains for unbelievers to prove a perfect gospel without the ordinance, and an unchangeable God under its abandonment by divine sanction.

We will not attempt to explain why so simple, though natural, an ordinance should have so important a place to fill, nor will we try to show how virtue can attach to the imposition of human hands. It is enough to know that Jesus, by his Father's command, ordained it a place in the gospel, and authorized men to preach and observe all things he had commanded. Our hope of salvation is founded on our faith in Jesus Christ. "The works that I do shall" ye "do also," said he; and, "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." If, therefore, there is a divinely commissioned ministry on earth, they have been sent as was Christ, and are to do the works that he did. No man can do this and discard the laying on of hands as an ordinance, neither can he preach the gospel and omit it. If a gospel be preached which does not include this ordinance, it is not Christ's gospel, and we may quote inspiration here by the way of warning:

Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.—Galatians 1: 8.

We think these to be good reasons for believing

that there is divine warrant for the observance of the laying on of hands as a sacred and essential ordinance in the church now, and why such an ordinance, fraught as it was with the greatest and grandest blessings both to soul and body, should ever have been excluded, even in part, from religious service, is a mystery too deep for our explanation. Equally mysterious is it, that professing Christians can be found who will cry out against its admission to their faith when you name it to them. Surely their eyes are closed to things divine. The hiding of Christ's power, says my text, was in the horns that came out of his hands, and his gospel work throughout attested it well.

## How? And Why?

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

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For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar.—Romans 3: 3, 4.

Because we believe, teach, and contend for all the details of the old Jerusalem gospel, we are accounted, oftentimes, as fanatical, and are plied with questions which might all be disposed of with a word, viz: The Bible teaches it, hence we believe it; but as many of the questioners are of honest intent, we frequently must stop and reason.

In another part of this volume will be found a sermon on the subject of "Water baptism." It is so simple in its arrangement and presentation that any child of understanding can at least comprehend it. Every word of its real matter of merit is a quotation from the Bible; and yet we have met with antagonism severe over it, even from intelligent persons who admitted the clearness of the case made therein, but who would not accept the conclusion because they could not see how God could do things in the way he declared, or because they could not see the value or utility of the means God had said were necessary and effective. We are not

apologists for God; we are simply preachers of his word, believing that there are no mistakes in Christ's utterances or work; and believing further, with Paul, that the "foolishness of God is wiser than men." (1 Corinthians 1: 25.) It may be true, as some of our critics have charged, that to preach baptism in water as a means unto salvation, is a mistake; but, even so, the mistake is not ours; God made it, and sent Jesus, and Jesus sent his apostles to publish it and to perpetuate it. We feel safer in banking on what may be accounted God's mistake than on the philosophy of the wisest of men which antagonizes it. We never expect to go to these creed-makers or philosophers hereafter to ask salvation or judgment at their hands; hence, it matters little whether we please them or not. We do expect that the words spoken by Jesus will judge us at the last day (see John 12: 48), and that the power to save or condemn rests in his hands; hence we are more anxious to be at an agreement with him, whether he was mistaken or not.

After admitting our position on the water baptism subject to be unanswerable from the Scriptures, one party informed us that though Jesus and the apostles taught it so, he could not teach it so, for the reason that he could not see how water could in any way figure in saving the soul—how it could wash away sin. We answered that we could not give the details of the process that lay hidden under the command and between our going down into the water and the sin being taken away. How God connected the two we did not know, except that



obedience gave us claim on his promise. To this he made answer that that was the reason he did not believe and preach it, though it was clearly taught. He claimed to teach salvation by faith. "Faith in whom?" we asked. "Faith in Jesus Christ," he replied. We asked to be excused for disbelieving him, but his own words compelled us to, for any man who admitted that Jesus taught a certain thing as necessary, yet rejected it on the grounds stated, had very little faith in Christ, but unlimited conceit in himself. We are convinced that Jesus taught it; hence we believe it and teach it, whether we can fully discern the details of the *modus operandi* or not; because we have more faith in Jesus than in ourselves. That is our idea of salvation by faith. But to a few of the questions that have been asked:

1. How can water wash away sin?

Honestly speaking, I do not know just how God manipulates the plan so as to connect my immersion with the salvation of my soul, except that he fulfills his promise when we obey his commands. There is a story in Joshua 6: 1-20 to the effect that at the command of God the childre of Israel, led by their priests, who carried the ark of God and each a ram's horn, marched around the great city of Jericho once a day for six days and seven times on the seventh day; then, after a blast from the horns, set up a shout, and the walls of the city, thick enough to build houses upon, fell down flat, and left the people of Jericho at the mercy of the invaders.

Question: Was it the noise of the horns, or of the shout, or the rocking of the earth caused by the tramp of Israel's feet, that made those walls fall exactly after the seventh round on the seventh day, etc., had been completed? Of course, you will say, "No!" Well, would those walls have fallen if they had not taken that walk and done that shouting? You, as a Bible believer, say, "No!" If, then, the combination of sound and foot motion did not cause the fall, and it would not have occurred without them, what caused it? Write your intelligent answer upon a piece of paper and I will paste it under your question, "How can water wash away sin?" and will be content to let it go at that.

In 2 Kings 5:1-14 a story is related about Naaman being commanded, after going a long journey to see the prophet of God, to go and dip seven times in Jordan to be cured of his leprosy. He did as he was told, after some hesitation, and the flesh of his whole body became pure as that of a little child. Did the water of that river possess virtue to cure leprosy? You answer, "No!" else there would be no lepers, for all would dip and be healed. Then would Naaman have been healed without dipping, after hearing the command to go and dip? Again you answer, "No!" Would four or five dips have answered, after seven were ordered? You answer as before. Then, if the water had no virtue to heal, and the healing depended upon his dipping in it exactly the number of times commanded, what did the healing? or how was it done?

Your answer will do also to the question you asked, "How can water wash away sin?"

In fine, God is the benefactor. We are dependent. He has the right to state the terms on which he will bless. It is for us to accept, without question, or do without the promised good.

2. Can I not be converted without baptism?

Yes; but conversion does not entitle you to admission into the kingdom. There are thousands of converted people outside of it. Jesus said (see John 3:25) that no man could enter except he was born of water and of the Spirit.

To illustrate: I came to America from the British dominions. After coming, my feelings underwent a great change. My prejudices as a Canadian against the Yankees melted away, and I became pleased with American laws, institutions, and privileges. What I once hated I now loved, my heart was changed, I was soundly converted, and often joined in singing "My country, 'tis of thee," etc. I determined to have place with this people. I liked their ways and the surroundings much. I wanted to help uphold the laws and support the government, and send men to legislature, and to be eligible to American offices, and the like. I was an American at heart; but I was not an American in fact. This nation, like all others, reserves the right to say how aliens shall become citizens. It had a door and doorkeepers, and through the one by the aid of the other I must enter, or for ever stay on the outside of the rights of citizenship. So with "strangers and foreigners" to the commonwealth of

Israel. Your heart may be changed; you may be soundly converted to that degree, but conversion to God and love for Jesus must be shown, not only by saying, "Lord, Lord," but by doing the things commanded, if we would have our estate changed from that of aliens to citizens. We must be translated out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son. This can not be accomplished except as Jesus has said, though we may sing hymns to his praise and pray and give alms as devoutly as did Cornelius (see Acts 10), who was "a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway." God sent an angel to this good man to instruct him, and he was finally commanded to be baptized—to enter the kingdom as Jesus had commanded.

3. Will not my former baptism do?

- This question is often asked by those who have been immersed in water, under the impression that immersion of itself is baptism, which is not the case, else any accidental plunging or ordinary dipping would fill the requirement; but I am told by them it was performed by a clergyman. What does that fact add to its virtue as a baptism? What more benefit from a clergyman's hands than from the hands of any one else? Who will answer this? Everybody puts up a hand, and replies that the clergyman has a right that others do not have. Where did he get it? Has he heard from God, and received a commission to act? "No," I am told; "nobody hears from God in this age." If that be

true, the minister appoints himself, or some person with no more authority than he has appoints him. If God has not been heard from in his case, he has no more right to act as God's agent than you have, and his work in baptizing you will not secure the enrollment of your name in the Lamb's book of life.

In answering the question, we reply: If you have been legally baptized once, that baptism will do. But remember, it takes three things to constitute a legal baptism: (a) A proper candidate—one who is a believer, and has truly repented of sin and renounced evil. (b) A proper mode—immersion. (c) An authorized administrator—one who has been called of God, as was Aaron. (See Hebrews 5:4.) Any one of these three elements failing to enter into the performance, it does not "bind in heaven"; hence is useless as a process unto salvation.

When, after my conversion to Americanism, I desired to become a citizen, it was necessary that I secure the services of a judge or magistrate who held governmental authority to induct me into the estate of a citizen. The mere possession of a statute-book containing the formula and the recital of that formula to me, securing my indorsement and oath, and the issuance of a certificate to me, was not enough. They were requisite, but, though they all figured in the ceremony, and I was as sincere as human heart could be, it would all have been waste work had the man administering that oath and issuing that certificate been without a commission

from the Government. All will admit the correctness of this; but many who do will turn around and ask me why their former baptism will not do, when they know that even though the mode was correct and their hearts were sincere, yet the administrator had not received and did not believe in the need of a special call from God, or an appointment to act for him. They know that the signing of the name of a firm to a contract by one who was never appointed as agent by that firm does not bind the firm for anything, while that act by an authorized agent does bind for all it specifies; yet they seem to think that a baptism to which the name of God and Christ is attached by the administrator in the performance will "bind in heaven," whether God appointed the man his agent or not. Let them remember that many are to come in the last day and tell of the many works they have done in Christ's name who will be told to depart, for they had never known God—had never received any commission from him. (See Matthew 7:22, 23.)

4. Why will not sprinkling do?

We answer this curtly and briefly: Simply because there is no authority in the Scriptures for it. It would be as sensible to ask, "Why will not turning a somersault do?"

5. Were not the spiritual gifts to cease?

This question is generally associated with a reference to 1 Corinthians 13:8, where it is said that prophecies shall fail and tongues shall cease; also to 2 Timothy 3:15, wherein Timothy is said to have known from his childhood the Scriptures, which

were able to make him wise unto salvation, and similar passages. This latter text is used to prove that inasmuch as Timothy had enough Scriptures to make him wise unto salvation in his childhood, therefore no more revelation from God in the spiritual gifts was necessary.

We answer the main question by saying, Yes! The first text referred to says so plainly; but in the same and following verses proceeds to tell that that would not take place till "that which is perfect is come," and we see God "face to face," and "know as we are known." Hence we hold them, as elsewhere shown in this volume, to be absolutely necessary for the "perfecting of the saints" until that day shall have come.

The second text proves too much, if it proves anything against the doctrine of continued revelation; for Timothy had no Scriptures in his childhood except the Old Testament. Hence, by the objector's argument, it follows that if, because he had enough in them to make him "wise unto salvation," no further revelation should be accepted, the New Testament is excluded, and the text itself, which is part of the New Testament, would be ruled out. People, when they attempt to saw off revelation from the gospel tree trunk, had better first look to see whether or not they are themselves seated on the limb that is to fall as a result of their work.

6. Why do you not show us a sign or work a miracle?

This question comes often, and from those who ought to know better than ask it.



To be clear, I answer: "Because I can not." Those who demand a miracle or sign to prove our work true put themselves in an unenviable light. They have a conspicuous leader in that work. (See Matthew 4:1-11.) Satan demanded that Jesus prove the Father's promise of angel protection true by throwing himself from the pinnacle of the temple. "It is written," said he; now prove it to me. But Jesus refused to tempt God, and simply quoted more scripture in justification. The Pharisees (see Matthew 12:38-40) asked a sign, and were reproved by the Master. Signs are to follow the believer, Jesus promised. These were not believers. Jesus was bantered by the mob that applauded his crucifixion, for a sign, but he did not grant it. (See Mark 15:29-32.) He could not do any mighty works where the people did not believe. (See Mark 6:5, 6.) We have not power to work miracles. That belongs to God. If our faith is sufficient to secure the operation of that power for our benefit, the signs and miracles appear. Nothing beyond that is claimed.

In John 17:14-21 we have evidence that even the disciples of that day failed in an attempt to heal, and Jesus was appealed to and he succeeded, and afterward told the disciples that their lack of faith was what caused the failure; but also that a certain kind of devils did not go out except by prayer and fasting.

It seems that neither Paul nor Timothy nor the saints about them had faith enough to heal Timothy of his "often infirmities" and his stomach ailment;

hence Paul advised him to take a little wine for the trouble, and cease drinking water. (See 1 Timothy 5:23.) Paul was compelled to leave his fellow traveler, Trophimus, behind him at Miletum, sick. (See 2 Timothy 4:20.) I presume he would not have done this if he or both of them or the saints there combined had had faith enough to heal him. Poor Paul himself, whose visions and revelations were so numerous that there was danger of his becoming "exalted above measure" because of them, was afflicted with what he called "a thorn in the flesh," for the removal of which he earnestly prayed to God thrice; but it remained. (2 Corinthians 12:1-10.)

Like ourselves, these servants of Christ were without the power of faith sufficient to secure some things they asked for; but yet the gifts and miracles abounded in their lives and time, as is abundantly witnessed. Like us, they were confronted with demands for signs, which they did not furnish, and even the Good Master himself was without power to do great things where unbelief prevailed; and, like us, he was subjected to the impious banter of those who knew not what they were doing.

But, as we have already shown, signs were to follow believers, not to gratify unbelievers, and they do not make true converts of all who witness them. He is a poor convert who believes a message to be unworthy his respect or acceptance, yet who will embrace it because a miracle has been wrought by its promulgators. Faith comes by hearing the word of God, preached by those sent of

God. (See Romans 10: 14-17.) Those who will not believe in this way will not believe because of miracles—even though one rise from the dead. (See Luke 16: 31.) With this we will close, though many other questions of similar import come to us. But space crowds us. These answers may not be fully satisfactory to all; but deeper study and earnest seeking will bring to the honest ones the satisfying evidence of the truth of our message. Those who seek shall find. Those who do shall know. So Jesus said, and that is authority enough.

## The Office-Work of the Holy Spirit.

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After that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise.—Ephesians 1: 13.

The importance of an understanding of this subject can hardly be overestimated; nor is it in our power to convey more than a very limited conception of it. Most people are agreed that the operation of the Holy Spirit should furnish a great part of our experience as followers of Christ, but in what way to look for it or discern its presence and work, and what are the direct results of its motions within us, are questions that have given rise to a great deal of controversy. Why this should be so we may not tell. Perhaps, and most probably, it is because people do not take the pains to read the Bible for themselves, and even what reading they do takes on the coloring of the traditions under which they have been trained.

Some very intelligent people hold that all of the Spirit's presence and power we are entitled to in this age is that which is resident in the written word, and applies itself to our lives as that word is believed, but gives no tangible evidence of its presence. Others claim that it is to be enjoyed as a joy-giving agent, making buoyant the spirit, and filling the life with peace, and, in some unseen and

perhaps mysterious way operating to make our prayers effective, and to preserve our feet in ways of goodness.

To us it is all this and more. It is the third agency in the Godhead—the power by which all the divine behests are executed in, above, and beneath our sphere; by which prophets wrote, seers saw, miracles were wrought, devils were cast out, sick were healed, and life was given to and preserved within the body of Christ. Like God and Christ, what it was it is, an unchangeable, impartial, and eternal existence. The Bible account given of it and its work is not only of historic value, but is intended as a guide to our thought and hope, that it may lead us to where it has been, and may be found and load us with the treasures within its gift; that the experience of our gospel life may be identical in character and degree with that of those who thus lived before us. In fact, it is to put us in communion with God, and give us access to all spiritual good. All that it ever did it can and will now do, as occasion shall call for it, or necessity be revealed. Hence, to know what it may be expected to do, we have but to read the Bible, and learn what it did do. It will never cease to be, nor will it ever change its office-work.

But let us gather a few evidences from the book as to its work:

1. (For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.)—2 Peter 1:21.

2. It descended in the form of a dove to bear wit-

ness of Jesus as the Lamb of God. (See John 1: 33.)

3. It is the power that quickens or gives life. (See John 1: 63; 2 Corinthians 3: 6.)

4. It gave utterance to the disciples on Pentecost. (See Acts 2: 4.)

5. It talked with Philip and others, and directed their course. (See Acts 8: 29; 10: 19.)

6. It restrained men from pursuing a course intended. (See Acts 16: 7, 8.)

7. It bore witness with human spirits to their discipleship. (See Romans 8: 16.)

8. It helps human infirmities and makes intercession for us. (See Romans 8: 26.)

9. It reveals the things prepared of God for those that love him and the deep things of God. (See 1 Corinthians 2: 9, 10; Ephesians 3: 3-5.)

10. It baptizes the obedient into one body. (See 1 Corinthians 12: 13.)

11. It is the only power by which we can truthfully testify that Jesus is the Lord. (See 1 Corinthians 12: 3.)

12. It gives a diversity of gifts—namely: wisdom, faith, knowledge, healing, miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, divers kinds of tongues, the interpretation of tongues. (See 1 Corinthians 12: 4-11.)

13. It gives liberty. (See 2 Corinthians 3: 17.)

14. It quickened Jesus after his death to go and preach to spirits in prison. (See 1 Peter 3: 18.)

15. It bears witness with God and the Word in

heaven and with the water and blood in earth. (See 1 John 5: 6-8.)

16. It addressed messages to the churches. (See Revelation 2: 7, 11, 17, 29; 3: 6, 13, 22.)

17. It moved upon the face of the waters and caused light at God's command. (See Genesis 1: 2, 3.)

18. It dwells in the saints. (See 1 Corinthians 3: 16.)

19. It washes, sanctifies, and justifies. (See 1 Corinthians 6: 11.)

20. It is one with God. (See 1 John 5: 7.)

That this wondrous and blessed Spirit was intended to be permanently with the church is evidenced by the fact that the church was created for that purpose—that God might have his habitation there by or through the Spirit. (See Ephesians 2: 22.)

Its mission work, while thus acting as God's representative in the church, was and is as set forth in the following:

But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.—John 14: 26.

It is thus to be a teacher, and to influence human memory and reproduce therein the things Jesus had proclaimed. Again:

When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: and ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.—John 15: 26, 27.



These disciples of Jesus were chosen to be witnesses, and this they could not be unless the Spirit, according to this verse, should come and testify of him and the truth of his mission and claim; for, as we have before shown, "no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost."

Nevertheless I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged. I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye can not bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you.—John 16: 7-15.

Here its promised work is equally clear as a reprover of the world of sin, judgment, and righteousness. In the church, it is to guide into all truth. How necessary this is in the midst of religious chaos, such as reigns to-day—a bedlam of jarring creeds and inharmonious theories, all claiming their divine origin, and asking our acceptance.

It is to open up the future, giving prophetic sight to the saints, and to take of all the things of the Father and Son and reveal them to the church. These words are too plain to admit of misunderstanding or misapplication. It is to remain with the church for ever. for we read:

And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world can not receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.—John 14: 16, 17.

Of course the abiding of the Spirit is made dependent upon the faithful observance of all things commanded of Christ, as shown in Matthew 28: 20.

The long desolation period of Palestine because of Christ's rejection was to continue until the Spirit of the Lord should be poured out from on high, and then the change upon the face of all the land and people and all creation was to be marvelous and glorious, as shown in Isaiah 32: 13-18.

This thought is more clearly emphasized in the prophecy of Joel, as we shall see. In the second chapter a prophetic story of desolation is told, followed by a promise of restoration of prosperity and honor and glory to Israel, and in the twenty-eighth to thirty-first verses is to be found the following:

And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit. And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come.

This remarkable prophecy has not yet had its complete fulfillment, as the careful reader may note. It is true that in Acts 2: 16, Peter, in referring to the outpouring of the Spirit on Pentecost, used the words, "This is that which was spoken by the

prophet Joel," etc.; but it must be clear to all who have read the context carefully in both Joel and the Acts, that Peter could only have meant that the Spirit of which Joel wrote was the same as did the work on Pentecost—not that Joel's prophecy had its fulfillment then. There were no dreams, nor visions, nor prophesyings by daughters and servants and handmaidens, nor was the sun darkened, nor the moon turned into blood; nor was the Spirit of God poured out then upon "all flesh," as there were only about one hundred and twenty persons under its remarkable afflatus at that time. When Joel's prophecy has its fulfillment, Palestine will be in process of restoration to former glory, and, according to Isaiah 11, the cow, and bear, and asp, and cockatrice, and lion, and lamb shall come under its potent spell—the vicious nature and poison of the one kind will be subdued, and the fear of the other will be destroyed, and a little child shall lead the lion and lamb, while infants shall play where the reptiles dwell. There will be nothing to hurt or destroy in all the land when the descent of that promised Spirit shall occur upon all flesh.

The bestowal of the spiritual gifts referred to in Number 12 of the foregoing enumeration had for its object the organizing of the church and the conferring of offices, such as apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. Also the perfecting of the saints, the work of the ministry, and the edifying of the body of Christ, until all should come in the unity of the faith, unto perfection and the measure of the Christ stature, and shall be borne

beyond the danger of being deceived by false doctrine and the evil machinations of men. Read carefully Ephesians 4: 8-16, and be convinced that the office-work of the Spirit was not intended to cease till the dawn of the day of the church's final perfection and glorification.

Against this claim some have used 1 Corinthians 13: 8, or that portion of it which declares that prophecies shall fail and tongues shall cease; but such persons have always failed to note that knowledge is put on the same list as a vanishing gift, and only charity is never-failing, according to that very verse. They have also neglected to read the following verses down to the twelfth, which locate the time of the disappearance of these gifts just where the Ephesian letter does—viz, "when that which is perfect is come," when we no longer see through a glass darkly, but "face to face," and shall know as we are known.

While a church of Christ on earth is necessary, God's kind of officers must be in it to do God's kind of work. While we are mortal and human, and only partially informed in things of God, prophecy, knowledge, and interpretation of tongues will be necessary to bring us information, as occasion demands.

While evil spirits and evil men and seducers are abroad, the gift of "discernment of spirits" will be needed; while sickness, affliction, and accidents prevail, the gifts of healing and miracles will be in demand. Tongues will be in order till we all learn the one "pure language" promised, and we catch

the dialect of the redeemed. These rungs in the divine ladder will all be necessary for our climbing till we reach the height and full measure of Christ's stature—the perfection promised; after that the ladder may be dispensed with, for it reaches no higher, and we never intend to descend. But in that day of holy estate and blissful surroundings, charity—divine love—will still remain, and be the inspiring and impelling power which throughout the endless circle of revolving years shall fix our gaze on the Matchless One, by whose grace we were made heirs of such an inheritance, and shall tune our hearts and tongues to sing, "Unto him who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, . . . be glory and dominion for ever and ever!" Let those whose vanity leads them to believe they can climb to that estate without the helps which Christ thought to be necessary and so lovingly provided pursue their chosen course. As for us, we shall contend for them as a part of the "faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

### Authority from God—Is It Essential?

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Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you.—John 15: 16.

To sign the name of another to a document involving his character or estate, except under a properly executed commission to so act, is accounted a crime in earthly courts, and is punishable under the statutes. To assume magisterial offices and perform their functions without governmental appointment and legal qualification is a prerogative that inheres in no man under organized governments. This fact is almost universally recognized by man, so far as relates to things human, but is most recklessly disregarded when dealing with matters pertaining to the kingdom and government of God. Precedents of sacred history, commands of the King of kings, and warnings of the most startling character are all ignored or disposed of cavalierly by thousands of persons who don the titles of divine magistrates and go through the forms of administration prescribed in the law without a scintilla of evidence to prove their right to officiate in any holy office whatever.

No sane man would claim the office of postmaster in one of our towns upon the sole ground that he had a copy of the postal rules and regulations for

the government of that office in his possession, and had found appended thereto a commission given to some other man a hundred years before. He would well know that such a step would lead to his arrest and conviction as a trespasser or conspirator. He would not don the ermine of the bench and attempt to administer the oath that is incident to naturalization of foreigners upon the mere discovery of a printed copy of a commission given to some judge a century before, together with a volume of the United States statutes. His native sense would tell him that not only would his work be wasted, but he would invite upon himself the severe penalties that follow conviction for forging the signatures of office.

Is there any good reason why this understanding of law and government should be lost sight of when we enter the spiritual realm? Is there any provision in the divine economy by virtue of which one man may act under a commission given to another? Does the ordination of one man or one dozen men make every other man who reads an account of it a minister of the same authority? Or does the ordaining and commissioning of a dozen men to one office delegate authority to other men to officiate in a different office?

To all these questions thus put the answer comes—No! At least every reasoning student of the Scriptures will thus answer, and yet the world is flooded with men and women whose conduct leads us to believe their answer would be *yes* to all the above questions.



To illustrate: Jesus commissioned eleven men, whom he had before ordained. (See Mark 16: 15-18.) They were apostles. Did that ordination and commission make apostles of all believers who would afterward read those verses? If it did, why do men persistently deny the existence of apostles now? If it did not, what office did it confer upon all others except the eleven? Did it make them prophets, teachers, evangelists, deacons, bishops, elders, or pastors? If any of these offices were conferred, what duties and prerogatives attach to them, or does the commission apply equally to all offices? In the latter case, why not publish the commission and act under it, without curtailing it?

As the situation confronts us now, we have men who tell us first, that the apostolic office is defunct; second, that there is no commission on record except that which belongs to the dead apostolic office; third, they themselves are acting under an apostle's commission; fourth, they have been ordained under that commission as deacons, bishops, elders, teachers, or evangelists—almost every office but apostles. That is to say, Christ, if his call reaches them at all, commissioned them as apostles, but the church has ordained them evangelists, or deacons, or teachers, or pastors. This is equivalent to saying that the offices existing in this country before the Declaration of Independence are all defunct; but, finding an old document that entitled somebody to admission to the court of King George, we are by it entitled to a seat as a senator of the United States.

or a member of the President's cabinet. What a travesty on human intelligence!

The ordination that was observed in the case of the twelve apostles, or the seventy who were afterwards selected, did not include Paul. A separate call and ordination was needed in his case (see Acts 13: 1-3), and yet he was an apostle. He understood that his case was no exception, for in writing to the Hebrews he stated that no man should take the honor of the priesthood (ministry) unto himself, but must be called of God, as was Aaron. Going still further, he declares that Christ himself, though a son, learned obedience, and glorified not himself to take the office of minister until called of God to be a priest after the order of Melchisedec. The fact that such an "order" of priesthood existed, and that Melchisedec had been ordained thereto, also that Moses, Joshua, and others had been ordained of God, did not include Christ as a priest or minister, nor did he become one until God called him and made him an high priest. (See Hebrews 5: 5-10.)

What a pity that this sublime exhibition of the divine order should be so dishonored! What a sad thing to think that men will arrogate to themselves priestly prerogatives, or allow themselves to be persuaded into the performance of ministerial functions, without any call from heaven! What a painfully anomalous position does that man occupy who with one breath declares that God has not spoken directly to man since the days of John's banishment on Patmos, and with the next breath

announces himself a minister of divine ceremonies and an officer in the church of God! By whose voice was he called to minister, if God has been silent for eighteen hundred years? By what authority does such a man sign the name of Jesus Christ, God the Father, or the Holy Ghost to his baptismal and other administrations, as he certainly does when, with hand upraised, he utters the words, "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost"?

The agent whom a firm sends out properly credentialed can, under the rule of his appointment and within the territory assigned him, sign the firm name, and the firm is bound by what he binds; but what firm will agree to be held by the inscription of its name by unauthorized men and women all over the world? The name used by the former confers all the contract implies upon the other party to the procedure, even to the last available cent that the firm possesses; but the use of the firm name by the unauthorized or self-made agents confers nothing upon the party with whom they deal, nor does it obligate the firm for a farthing. The official use of a government's seal and signature by a duly commissioned ambassador within the purview of his appointment binds the government represented, and confers upon the nation or individuals treated with, all that is implied in the treaty; but a duplicate of all his work by another who had not been ordained to such services by the nation would effect nothing except the exposure of the impostor to legal punishment. The nation or persons dealing, without

investigation, with such a self-styled ambassador, would suffer simply by failure to reap what they hoped to realize.

When the Master sent out his agents, he authorized them to operate in the name (by the authority) of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost (see Matthew 28: 19), and said that what was bound by them on earth would be bound in heaven, and what they loosed on earth would be loosed in heaven. (See Matthew 16: 19; 18: 19; John 20: 23.) Under such credentials they, when administering according to the law, could safely sign the names of the Godhead, and the candidates receiving their administrations were thus made legal claimants upon the treasury on high. Heaven is bound by the work of its duly commissioned agents, but under no obligations to respect the operation of usurpers or self-made representatives. What, then, do they "bind" or "loose" in heaven? What do their ceremonies confer upon the candidates? Who will answer? No wonder that our churches to-day do not present a scene corresponding with the life of the body nineteen centuries ago. No wonder spiritual gifts and miraculous power are wanting. God does not certify to the work of men he did not call. They followed only as long as the minister's work on earth "bound in heaven." When men began to "heap to themselves teachers," God withdrew, and took the man-child, or, in other words, took the authority back to himself (see Revelation 12: 5), and divine authority ceased on earth, only to be restored when, in the fullness of times, he should

send the "angel fly[ing] in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach." (Revelation 14:6.) The question is a serious one—eternal interests hinge upon it; hence let us ask of all who announce themselves as ministers of Christ, "By what authority?" Produce your credentials.

In his eagerness to save the church from disaster, Paul frequently pointed its members to the record of their fathers, and especially to those parts of it where the consequences of wrong-doing were exposed. In writing to the Corinthians, he was especially earnest in his tones of caution. After referring to the terrible calamities which befell many, he makes his application thus:

Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.—1 Corinthians 10: 11, 12.

If the lessons taught were written for the "admonition" of those "upon whom the ends of the world are come," we of to-day ought surely to be interested therein. It is therefore in order for us to go over some of the ground referred to, and learn by comparison whether or not we are standing as they stood who fell and suffered so severely. Undoubtedly we are among those who think they stand. Let us therefore examine the ground we occupy, and take "heed" lest we fall.

Our object in canvassing the ground of this discourse is to determine the safety or otherwise of the position occupied by men who publish themselves as God's ministers, and at the same time

admit that they have never been called to that service "as was Aaron." (Hebrews 5: 4.)

First, we furnish the evidence as to Aaron's call, and then show how God warned all, under heavy penalties, against usurping the rights of the priestly office:

And take thou unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office.—Exodus 28: 1.

And thou shalt put upon Aaron the holy garments, and anoint him, and sanctify him, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office.—Exodus 40: 13.

And the Lord said unto Aaron, Thou and thy sons and thy father's house with thee shall bear the iniquity of the sanctuary: and thou and thy sons with thee shall bear the iniquity of your priesthood. . . . I have given your priest's office unto you as a service of gift; and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death. . . . I also have given thee charge of my heave offerings of all the hallowed things of the children of Israel; unto thee have I given them by reason of the anointing, and to thy sons, by an ordinance for ever.—Numbers 18: 1-7, 8.

These texts clearly evidence that Aaron was called to the ministry by direct revelation from God through a living prophet, also that the calling was confirmed unto himself by the voice of God. One thing further is plainly shown—viz, that all but those thus called and ordained were warned not to officiate, under penalty of death. Read the fourth chapter of the same book, and it will be seen that even the sons of Kohath, who were set apart to the services of the tabernacle of the congregation, were forbidden, under penalty of death, to interfere in anything relating to the priest's office. They were



required to bear the sanctuary from place to place, but were forbidden to go near it, or even look upon it, until all the holy things thereof were covered by Aaron and his associate priests. They were not allowed to even watch the performance of covering these things.

They shall not touch any holy thing, lest they die. . . . they shall not go in to see when the holy things are covered, lest they die.—Numbers 4: 15-20.

This was no idle threat, as we shall presently see. God intended it as a law to govern “throughout their generations.” If they ignored that law, they suffered the consequences. In evidence of this awful fact, we present the following from the sixteenth chapter of Numbers:

Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, together with two hundred and fifty princes, famous in the congregation, men of renown, rose up against Moses and Aaron, and charged them with taking too much upon themselves. They announced that the congregation of the people were holy and the Lord was with them all, and that Moses and Aaron were no better than the rest. They asked, “Wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord?”—Verses 1-3.

That they were seeking to exercise the rights of priesthood, on the ground that they were as good as Moses and Aaron, is clear; for Moses fell on his face, and referred the matter to God for decision, and said that on the morrow the Lord would reveal whom he had chosen. He then charged them to bring their censers (priestly emblems), and attempt



to offer incense before the Lord on the morrow, and let God decide whom he had chosen; for, said he, "Ye take too much upon you, ye sons of Levi."—Verses 4-7.

To confirm this conclusion, we offer the next three verses, verbatim:

And Moses said unto Korah, Hear, I pray you, ye sons of Levi: Seemeth it but a small thing unto you, that the God of Israel hath separated you from the congregation of Israel, to bring you near to himself to do the service of the tabernacle of the Lord, and to stand before the congregation to minister unto them? And he hath brought thee near to him, and all thy brethren the sons of Levi with thee: and seek ye the priesthood also?—Numbers 16: 8-11.

What was the result of this submission of the case to the God who had said that none but those chosen should touch the holy things, lest they die? What was his decision? The record presents an appalling reply to these questions. The earth opened and engulfed the three men and all their households, fire from heaven descended and consumed the two hundred and fifty princes, and thus was the claim of the priests' sole right to minister in the holy offices vindicated; but the terribleness of God's denunciation does not end there, for we read that on the morrow the congregation murmured against Moses and Aaron and charged them with this fearful slaughter. Instantly the plague began its ravages among them, and before Aaron could make an atonement for them, fourteen thousand seven hundred had perished. The book says God was "provoked." And it is well that we remember what provoked him. If this was one of the

things that occurred for "ensamples," and was written "for our admonition," will it not be well for us to "take heed" lest we fall, though we think we stand?

In the following chapter we read that God caused the rod of Aaron alone to bud and blossom and yield almonds, and then commanded that it be preserved as a token against the "rebels" who "murmured" against him and his doings. We see from this that Paul, when he wrote the words containing the warning we have presented, had his mind upon this terrible event, for he said: "Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer."—1 Corinthians 10:10.

Let the reader now turn to the sixth chapter of the First Book of Samuel. In it will be found as striking an evidence as the other.

The ark of God had been taken by the Philistines; but a plague followed everywhere they took it, and their god, Dagon, was cast down and destroyed when they placed the ark in the same room. They resolved, therefore, to return the ark, and send offerings in atonement. Securing two milch kine, they tied them to a new cart, upon which they placed the ark and their offerings, and turned them loose upon the road, deciding that if the cattle went by way of Beth-shemesh, it would signify to them that the God of Israel had afflicted them; otherwise it would prove that a mere chance had happened to them. The cattle went by the straight way to Beth-shemesh, and stopped at the field of Joshua, where wheat harvest was in progress. The Israelites

rejoiced over the ark's return, and the Levites lifted it unto a stone, then hewed the cart into firewood, slew the cattle, and offered a burnt offering in expression of gratitude to God. Perhaps it was their curiosity that led the people to look into the ark to see if everything was as safe as when the Philistines captured it. Whatever was the prompting cause, it is certain they committed that grave folly, and, as a consequence, "fifty thousand and three score and ten men" were slain. God had not forgotten his word, and another "ensample" must occur, which has been written for our admonition.

After this terrible visitation, the ark of God was sent to Kirjath-jearim, and placed in the house of Abinadab, under the care of Eleazar, who was ordained to that charge. There it remained twenty years, until David, the king, came with thirty thousand chosen men of Israel to take it up to Jerusalem. In the sixth chapter of the Second Book of Samuel the account is given of his journey. Placing it upon a new cart, to which oxen were attached, they appointed Uzzah and Ahio to drive the oxen. All went well, amid music from harps, timbrels, psalteries, cornets, and cymbals, until they reached Nachon's threshing-floor, when the oxen stumbled (see also 1 Chronicles 13: 9, 10), and Uzzah, under a sudden impulse, put forth his hand to steady the ark, which was being shaken. It was a fatal mistake, and no sooner had his unconsecrated hand touched the ark than the shaft of death smote him in the presence of the people.

The anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there for his error; and there he died by the ark of God.—Verse 7.

One more ensample added to the list, by which God admonishes those “upon whom the ends of the world are come.”

Still another event we offer in point: It is mentioned in 2 Chronicles 26:1-23. A young man, Uzziah by name, when but sixteen years of age, was made king, and reigned fifty-two years. Divine favor attended nearly all his efforts, for he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord until the latter part of his reign. To read the account of his prosperity is like reading anew the record of Solomon's greatness; but:

When he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction: for he transgressed against the Lord his God, and went into the temple of the Lord to burn incense upon the altar of incense.—2 Chronicles 26:16.

Here was an attempt on the part of a king, who for nearly fifty years had been living in favor with God, to perform a service which none but the priesthood had authority to observe. What a pity that great men should blunder so egregiously! but God could not wink at so grave an offense:

And Azariah the priest went in after him, and with him fourscore priests of the Lord, that were valiant men: and they withstood Uzziah the king, and said unto him, It appertaineth not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incense unto the Lord, but to the priests the sons of Aaron, that are consecrated to burn incense: go out of the sanctuary; for thou hast trespassed; neither shall it be for thine honor from the Lord God. Then Uzziah was wroth, and had a censer in his hand to burn incense: and while he was

wroth with the priests, the leprosy even rose up in his forehead before the priests in the house of the Lord, from beside the incense altar. And Azariah the chief priest, and all the priests, looked upon him, and, behold, he was leprous in his forehead, and they thrust him out from thence; yea, himself hasted also to go out, because the Lord had smitten him. And Uzziah the king was a leper unto the day of his death, and dwelt in a several house, being a leper; for he was cut off from the house of the Lord.—2 Chronicles 26: 17-21.

How sad an ending to so grand a life! A life that was lifted into prominence by the abundant blessing of God, goes out under the divine curse. What an "ensample" to "him that thinketh he standeth," but who essays to minister in holy offices without being appointed of God, "as was Aaron"!

The case of Saul, the king, was similar. God raised him up from obscurity to the highest pinnacle of earthly glory; but he attempted to perform the functions of a priest, contrary to God's order, and the kingdom was rent from him and given to David. (See 1 Samuel 13: 8-14.) Saul's light and life soon went out in dishonor, and the record of his course is before us as one of the "ensamples" referred to by the apostle, which stand as an admonition to all who will read.

What is the lesson we learn from all these occurrences? Do they not speak in thunder tones of warning against the assumption of sacred offices without a call thereto from heaven? "Understandest thou what thou readest?" Surely the Lord has no less regard for the sacredness of the ministry under the gospel than for that under Moses. Who are we, then, that we should disre-

gard the counsel of inspiration and the example of Christ, and dare to assume the sacerdotal garb to minister in the name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, without having heard a word from God, notifying us through a living prophet on earth, that we have been chosen for such station and work? Oh, ye deniers of present revelation, rise and answer: What better claim on the office of priest have you than had Korah, Dathan, Abiram, the two hundred and fifty princes, the Beth-shemites, Uzzah, Uzziah, or Saul? Show your credentials, and let them be examined in the light of these words:

And no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my son, to-day have I begotten thee. As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.—Hebrews 5: 4-6.

Do we hear some one ask why these judgments do not follow men now if their work is equally censurable? Let us remind the inquirer that under the law of Moses the penalty was physical death, and that immediately, for nearly all offenses of grave character; but under "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus," a different death—a spiritual death—final separation from God—is the penalty, and as for all other offenses, the judgment is not visited here, but

He hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the world.—Acts 17: 31.

It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.—Hebrews 9: 27.

And oh, terrible thought! Jesus has said:

Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew [sent—authorized] you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.—Matthew 7: 22, 23.

It is not iniquity to cast devils out of men, nor to do all the wonderful works of good that lie in our power. It is no sin to foretell what we discern to be inevitable; but it is a sin—a grave crime—to do these things in the name of Christ, if he did not appoint us to the work. It is the use of the divine name or authority that will be condemned; “for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain” (or without authority). Christ can not be understood in the above as meaning that he did not know of the existence of such men on earth; but that he did not recognize them as his representatives. Another translation renders it, “Ye never knew me,” implying that they acted without hearing from God in the matter.

Judgment will surely come upon all in due time, and its decisions will be everlasting and irrevocable. The wise man wrote once:

Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.—Ecclesiastes 8: 11.

We live in a day when the wisdom of the teacher comes from the seminaries of the world, and when men, as a consequence, are wise above what is written by inspiration; and because God is merciful in withholding judgment, they persist in ignoring his



warnings. Only a few months ago we conversed with one of the most prominent and popular clergymen in the State, and, after presenting evidences similar to the above, he frankly acknowledged he had never read or heard of them before, though for years a preacher of the Bible. Surely his was a case of "the blind" leading "the blind," and he need not be surprised if some day he finds himself and his followers in "the ditch." Is it not of infinite importance that we ask, "Has God chosen us, or have we chosen ourselves, and is our inscription of the Godhead names upon our performances an authoritative one which will 'bind in heaven,' or is it a forgery?"

By the awful warnings of heaven, by the example of Christ, and by the counsel of inspiration, let us examine the ground we occupy, and, while we think we stand, take heed lest we fall.

## A Living Church.

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For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?—Matthew 16: 26.

The body without the spirit is dead.—James 2: 26.

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

He is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead. . . . For his body's sake which is the church.—Colossians 1: 18, 24.

In the above statement, recorded by John, we have a brief but comprehensive announcement of the object of Christ's mission to this world (it was made by Jesus himself, and is the most reliable information to be had upon the subject): to give life to the people more abundantly than it was then possessed by them. No time will be taken here to prove that spiritual or divine—eternal life—was referred to, for all will admit this without it. Hence we ask, What is life? Paul says: "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace."—Romans 8: 6.

James says, as shown in one of our leading texts, that "the body without the spirit is dead." Hence we have the thought as expressed in the tenth verse of the above chapter, that "the spirit is life." In

John 6:63 Jesus is shown to have said that his words were spirit and life. These statements all agree as to intention, and tell us that death is separation and life is union. The going out of the spirit or its separation from the physical body is death. So, in the spiritual sense, the separation of the Spirit from the body—the church—is death to the church. The life of the church depends upon its union with the Spirit. The carnal mind has no union with Christ, because “it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.”

In seeking to give life to the world, then, Jesus must eliminate the carnal mind and substitute the spiritual mind in us—he must fit us to have union with the Spirit; hence he introduced “the law of the spirit of life”—the gospel—to emancipate us from all things carnal. He came as “God manifest in the flesh” with this intent. With the hand of his humanity he embraces the man, and with the hand of his divinity he retains his hold upon God, and his purpose is to bring these two hands together—to cover the distance of human carnality and effect a union that makes the Spirit operative within us and gives us life divine.

That a degree of this divinity is already resident within us seems apparent from what we read in John 1:9; for, speaking of Christ, he says that he was “the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.” He says also in verse 4 that “in him was life; and the life was the light of men.” Hence we conclude that none are without some remote degree of that “life”—“light” from

birth. Against this idea the "total depravity" doctrine of some popular churches must cry out in vain. There is no scriptural warrant for the old idea that "man is by nature," or from birth, "totally depraved." It is true they have the words of the Psalmist, "I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me."—Psalm 51:5. But he was merely pleading that fact, as in extenuation, when confessing his grievous life-sins to God; and while it might have been true in his case, that would not make it necessarily true in any other case. Lust and adultery are born in some as a transmitted taint, and frequently are the product of illicit relations, but that does not make the offspring of the God-ordained marriage relation a "totally depraved" product. There is nothing in the language to make it applicable to any other but the Psalmist himself. The very catechisms that have taught this total depravity on one page have also taught on another that man is made in "the image of God." If this latter statement is employed by us to prove that God is a personality—Jesus being the "express image" of his Father's person (Hebrews 1:3), and the race was started in the image of God (see Genesis 1:27), our objectors call us blasphemers, or materialists, or worse things. They insist that man was not made in the external or physical image, but in the moral image of God. If this be true, who are the blasphemers? If we are made in the moral image of God, and we are created "totally depraved," are we any worse than God?

Let the advocates of such a doctrine answer, if there are any remaining.

Notwithstanding all this, we believe in total depravity as a possibility. It may be manifest late in or at the close of a life wholly given over to lust and crime and vice of every kind. A man may, by such a course, finally obliterate the last trace of this light or life from his character; but no man was ever born totally depraved. It would be the mission of an idiot to write as the apostle did of the danger of waxing "worse and worse in iniquity" to a people who were "totally depraved" to begin with.

The mission of Christ was that the sons of men might have this life "more abundantly"; hence the gospel was made operative with the Spirit as its accompaniment. Now, the question for us to answer is, "Do we want it?" If we do not, we can consistently dismiss Christ from our theorizings and practices; but if we do want it, then consistency holds us to an observance of all things made essential by Christ for its acquirement—obedience to every detail. Hence the inquiry is pertinent, What did Christ do and enjoin in the pursuit of his mission to give life to man?

In pursuing this thought, we quickly run up against a church which he brought into existence, and we conclude that it was one of the essentials in the work of his mission. From Ephesians 2:22 we learn that that church was created to be a "habitation of God, through the Spirit." This would evi-

dently give life to the body—the church. But how was that Spirit's presence—life—to be manifested?

By examining a human body we decide whether there is a spirit or life in it by its ability to feel, hear, see, speak; by the respiration, the circulation of the blood, etc. If, upon careful examination, we find no pulse, no sensitiveness to noise or contact, no indication of heart-action, no reaction of the pupils of the eye to light—if the eye is glazed and the limbs are rigid, we pronounce the body dead. Why? Because the spirit is absent? But how do we know that? Because it is not doing its work; and though by chemical or other processes we may preserve that body to exhibit our wisdom and skill for a time, yet we can never make it fill the mission nor perform the work intended for it at its creation. These “signs” or indications for which we searched were not life, it is true, but they were the “manifestations” of life—of the spirit. Their presence would have proven the spirit to be resident in the body; their absence proved it to be dead. Man's mission is to possess and enjoy and transmit life, under the conditions legally ordained for his physical estate; but although that legal ordination remains—the law of physical conditions remains intact, the procreation design is unchanged; yet this man, created under that law and design, and intended to operate within its provisions, can not transmit life, because he does not possess it—he is dead! only fit for burial out of our sight. It was intended as a tabernacle for the Spirit, but the spirit is gone.

What of the body of Christ—the church—the habitation of the Spirit? By what “signs” or manifestations can we determine the presence or absence of that Spirit—whether it be living or dead? Read the entire twelfth chapter of 1 Corinthians, and learn. Note from the twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth verses that the saints comprise the body, or church.

Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

From verses 7 to 11 learn what are the “manifestations” of the Spirit—of life, by the presence or absence of which we can determine whether the church be alive or dead. Let us read:

But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues; but all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.

These correspond with the “signs” promised of Jesus in Mark 16: 17, 18; and an acquaintance with these things empowers us to protect ourselves against deceivers and organizations which, without warrant, claim to be the church of Christ. If these “signs” or manifestations are present, they indicate the presence of the Spirit—they prove life, that



the soul is resident in the body. If they are not present, it is because the Spirit is not there, and the thing is dead. It may be embellished with popular or modern features, and be very attractive to the eye; it may allure and retain its members by thousands; it may delight the eye and gratify the carnal appetite; but one thing it can not do—it can not transmit spiritual life, and he who unites himself with it by ceremony or enrollment is simply tied to a corpse. There is no salvation there.

God's ways are alike in the physical and spiritual realms. When creating the physical body, he made it of the material at hand—the dust of the earth. It was endowed with eyes, ears, hands, feet, and all the internal and external organs which constitute man, yet was incapable of sight, hearing, thought, feeling, motion, taste, or smell, until God breathed into it "the breath of life." (Genesis 2:7.) Then it saw, heard, spoke, and moved. It was adapted to its environment. It was ready to fill its mission, under the law already existing, as a procreator, that the earth might be multiplied and replenished.

When Jesus came, another type of creation—a spiritual body—was to be produced. Paul says:

That was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural, and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven.—1 Corinthians 15:45-47.

Here he is speaking of Adam and Christ. In creating this spiritual body—the church—Jesus observed the lines pursued by his Father in the physical creation. He said:

The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.—John 5:19.

Hence he took of the material available—the humble Galileeans, and made of them organs and parts of the body; they became the eyes, ears, hands, feet, etc. (see 1 Corinthians 12:14-27), of the spiritual organization, intended for an “habitation of God through the Spirit.” But after all of this, they were as the inert Adamic body at the first, for Jesus told them to tarry at Jerusalem until they received the Spirit. (See Acts 1:4, 5.) Now trace the parallel further: He came to those thus chosen, and ordained, and “breathed on them,” saying, “Receive ye the Holy Ghost.” He then told them that this Holy Ghost was to enable them to remit sins unto the obedient and their work thus done would hold good in heaven, or those sins be remitted. (See John 20:22, 23.) This was another way of telling them they should become spiritual procreators or transmitters of eternal life through the gospel they were to administer. Did they receive this Spirit after tarrying, as commanded? Read Acts 2:1-33, giving especial attention to the thirty-third verse, and you have the answer. Yes! Just as God breathed into Adam the breath of life, and Adam became a living soul and a channel of physical life to others, so Jesus “breathed” upon the organism called his church, or spiritual body, and on the day of Pentecost the Spirit, the soul of the church, descended from heaven and entered the earthly habitation prepared,

and the church became a living soul; the eyes, ears, hands, feet—the apostles, prophets, etc., saw, heard, and moved with spiritual insight under this baptism of life. It was to be the channel of the God-life to the world—the spiritual transmitter of eternal good. Peter and the eleven stood up and promised this Holy Ghost unto all who would obey the message they were authorized to publish. The entire history from that day proves, as Paul wrote to the Corinthians and the Galatians, that they were “ministers of the Spirit.” (2 Corinthians 3:6; Galatians 3:5.) A new dispensation had dawned upon the world. The law of Moses, which could not give life, was waxen old and vanished away, and the church—the new creation—stood upon it as upon a footstool. The glory of the “Sun of Righteousness” clothed this beautiful creation of God, and the twelve stars shone in the apostolic crown upon her head. (See Revelation 12:1.) Thus she appears as the Lamb’s wife.

The material for this new creation was chosen out of the world (see John 15:16-21), and was told not to “conform” to the world again, but to be “transformed” into the image of her Lord. (Romans 12:2.) Upon condition of her continuance in all things commanded of God, Jesus promised he would be with her to the end of the world. (See Matthew 28:19, 20.) His presence or residence within her through the Spirit was to be witnessed by the “signs” and manifestations before referred to; and history tells us that as far down through the years as she was true to the trust reposed, that Spirit did

abide and those signs were manifested. But there came a time when she forgot her allegiance to her husband; when the persecuting dragon sought her destruction and especially of the man child which had been formed within her—the offspring of her union with her lawful husband, the soul, the life, the kingdom or priesthood that had been begotten and developed within her. When this occurred, she accepted the overtures or help of the world (see verse 16); she gained the world, but was no longer allowed to be the custodian of the priesthood—the man child. God took that to himself—the God-life left her—the soul that was given her on Pentecost was taken back to God, and she was no longer the “habitation of God through the Spirit”; she was but a “body without the spirit”—dead. She was thenceforth incapable of transmitting life—she could not minister the Spirit, for it had left her.

When the human body dies, disintegration occurs, and the gases, etc., of which it was composed revert back to their own sphere and mingle with the mass till the resurrection time. So with the church, when the Soul had gone. She quickly disintegrated—went into the wilderness till the time for her resurrection or restoration; she went back, disorganized, into the world from which she had been “chosen out” by Jesus.

In conclusion, let us add that we have no scriptural warrant for saying that the first text that appears at the head of this discourse was applied to other than individuals; but we have a something within us that broadens its significance and appli-

cation, and tells us that just as James and Paul used the body of a man to illustrate the body or Church of Christ, even so may we believe that Jesus authorized a double application of his words along the same line, and we may quote him as meaning, "What is the church profited if it gain the whole world and lose its own soul? or what shall it give in exchange for its soul?"

Christendom presents the picture of a soulless church, if we are to judge Catholicism and Protestantism in the light of the foregoing tests, and our attachment to their institutions will leave us still barren of the life Christ came to supply so abundantly. The little story of the restoration of the gospel covenant and priesthood and gifts, as told by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, may be denounced as a lie, and its promoters may be published as deceivers; but if they are, God still lives and his word is true, and there is not another institution which claims to exhibit an exact duplicate of the apostolic organization, doctrine, and experience. Who, then, have the saving processes within their borders? The wisest and ablest of the church promoters of to-day are counseling and conferring together at intervals; they are revising their doctrines and changing their methods, and indulging in experiments quite numerous, in hope of finally effecting a union or a basis or a condition which will be efficient in bringing back to the church the soul or life which nearly all confess has been lost. "Oh for a return of the Pentecostal power and glory—the crowning and dis-

tinguishing characteristic of the ancient church!" is a cry not infrequently heard to-day. Do not these efforts and these appeals sound very much like the words recorded above, as reported from the lips of Jesus, "What shall a man give in exchange for his "soul"? only substituting the word *church* for *man*. The soul lost is confessed; how to regain it? or "what shall we give" to that end? is the question.

Thank God, there are a "few" who know that the church soul has been restored. The restitution day has dawned, and the presence of "the Spirit" in "the body" is being manifested by unmistakable signs, and man, made alive by that quickening energy, is able to communicate with God and Christ, the head of the body, as did Enoch and Noah, Abraham and Moses, Peter and Paul, and all the ancient family of God.

## Apostasy of the Ancient Christian Church.

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The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left.—Isaiah 24: 5, 6.

That there has been a terrible apostasy from the gospel and church of the New Testament is everywhere manifest. Hundreds of churches with their conflicting doctrines bear witness of this, and the absence of nearly all the grander and more distinctive spiritual characteristics by which direct communion with God was demonstrated is unanswerable evidence. Then it was “one body, and one Spirit, . . . one hope . . . one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all.” (Ephesians 4: 4-6.) What is it now? Multiplied and multiplying faiths, with gods and spirits and baptisms and hopes to fit. The ancient light and life of direct revelation—the Pentecostal glory—only a thing of history.

The boast of “reformation” by Protestants, and the chaos or bedlam of creeds hatched thereunder, together with the picture of spiritual desolation (as compared with the ancient church) which their



institutions exhibit, all tell that they themselves recognized an apostasy under Romanism, and that they tried, but miserably failed, to regain the lost inheritance by efforts at reform. Romanism, as it has been and now is, resembles the New Testament church and faith no more than a gorilla resembles an angel.

Yet, in the face of these facts, there are to be found many who boldly assert that the church and gospel of Christ has always been on earth since Pentecost. Such people are either blind to the evidences of estrangement and alienation and dearth and death which abound in their present environment, or have never read intelligently the story of the Good Book as to what characterized the organization and doctrine and experience of the church of Christ, and the repeated prophecies of its decline and apostasy.

In the text we have selected it is stated that a state of defilement and desolation is to abound, and finally a destruction by fire is to occur as a penalty for apostasy—for having “transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant.”

What covenant is this? Some of our Adventist friends tell us it is the Mosiac covenant, but surely they are mistaken. You may search into the details of agreement or penalty attaching to that covenant, and not a line can be found anywhere to indicate that a failure to abide would entail any such a calamity as the burning of the earth and its inhabitants. The Lord “sware in his wrath that they

should not enter into his rest," because of their rebellion, and they did not. "Their carcasses fell in the wilderness," and under their law the curse followed closely upon the heels of the transgression, as a rule; yet no such penalty was ever threatened or visited as is here declared. Moreover, the burning here spoken of is to come as a closing of the earth program in its present condition. Read the entire chapter, and especially the second verse, and see that an entirely new order is to be established, when priest and people, rich and poor, servant and master, maid and mistress, will all be on a level.

The gospel covenant was evidently referred to in our text, as the following points of identity will show: First, Paul in his letter to the Hebrews (see chapter 13, verse 20) refers to the blood of Jesus Christ as being that of "the everlasting covenant." Next, the penalty threatened is the same, as the following reveals:

And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.— 2 Thessalonians 1: 7, 8.

This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance; that ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Savior: knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God

the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: but the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burnt up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness. Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.—2 Peter 3:1-13.

This “flaming fire” visitation is to occur as a penalty for refusal to “obey . . . the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Peter says that his object in writing his epistles was to stir up their minds by way of remembrance of the things written before by the prophets (our text is one of them) and the commandments of the apostles. Then, in doing this, he tells of the destruction by fire that is to befall the wicked, and almost quotes the words of Christ as to his coming as “a thief in the night.” In the sixteenth verse of this same chapter he says that Paul also had written in his epistles of these things, and we have shown that

Paul said this penalty was to occur because the people rejected the "gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ." The gospel and no other covenant has these identification marks. These apostles had no other covenant to publish than the gospel; for that, and that alone, had they been sent to preach.

Having found the covenant referred to in the text, let us note that the prophecy is clear in stating that it would be broken, the ordinance changed, and the laws transgressed. Let us examine that covenant briefly, and note its character, chief ordinance, and confirmatory signs:

And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; in my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.—Mark 16: 15-18.

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.—Matthew 28: 19, 20.

That this was a spiritual covenant is clear. Its obligations and ordinance and confirmations all attest this. Baptism was to be the ordinance by which the acceptance of it was to be openly confessed by the people, and the signs promised were to be granted of God in confirmation, or as tokens of his approval. These belonged to this life, and were to continue to the end of the world, upon the

condition of observance of all things commanded. If this was the program of agreement or covenant, then it follows that when the party of the second part failed to honor the conditions, the party of the first part would be released from all obligation to furnish the "signs"—the tokens of acceptance, and those things would cease, because the covenant had been made void or inoperative by transgression, disobedience, or some unwarranted procedure. The absence of these spiritual blessings would indicate God's withdrawal or refusal to recognize further transactions, and the church estate would become barren—the inhabitants of the earth would become "desolate," and the way be prepared for the final penalty. Our text predicts all this as a condition to come subsequent to the day of its writing; and history and present conditions reveal an accurate fulfillment. The "faith once delivered to the saints" has been abandoned, its laws transgressed, as our other sermons point out; its ordinance of baptism has been changed until, instead of its being observed as commanded "for the washing away of sins" (Acts 22: 16; 2: 38), for entrance into the kingdom of God (see John 3: 5), it is made subject to the wish or will of the populace without any specific object except to dodge conscience. Instead of its being performed by immersion or in likeness of a burial (see Mark 1: 10; Acts 8: 38, 39; Colossians 2: 12; Romans 6: 3, 4), it is performed in any way the candidate may desire—by aspersion or effusion, if immersion is not preferred; and instead of the right to administer the ordinance being confined

to ministers called of God, as was Aaron (see Hebrews 5:4), it is being attempted by men who do not even believe that God does or will call men to-day as of old. Surely this is a change from the old order. "They have changed the ordinance." Hence "the inhabitants of the earth are desolate"; they are without the promised evidences of confirmation—the signs which were to follow the believer.

We are not left to depend upon Isaiah's testimony as to this terrible apostasy. The apostles foretold its approach in vivid and unmistakable language, as the following will prove:

Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.—Acts 20:28-30.

That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition.—2 Thessalonians 2:2, 3.

This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.—2 Timothy 3:1-5.

For the time will come when they will not endure sound



doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.—2 Timothy 4: 3, 4.

But there were false prophets also among the peor even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.—2 Peter 2: 1-3.

This apostasy began even in the apostles' day, for in his letter to the Galatians he expressed his astonishment that they had so soon removed from their gospel integrity (see chapter 1, verses 6 and 7), and in his letter to the Thessalonians he declared that the "mystery of iniquity doth already work." (2 Thessalonians 2: 7.)

Did space permit, we might fittingly introduce here the testimony of the several reformers as to the fulfillment of these remarkable prophecies, and show that the words of the prophets referring to the spiritual estate of the world are vindicated:

Behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people.—Isaiah 60: 2.

Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land; not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord: and they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it.—Amos 8: 11, 12.

Where is there a person to be found within the circles of Christendom to-day who does not know



that all this has come to pass? The almost universal admission of popular churches is that God has not spoken to man directly for nearly two thousand years. Is not this an admission of desolation? A church without communion with its confessed head! Not a word from heaven for nineteen centuries, and yet men pretending to have authority to be agents for God and Christ! What a travesty on reason! What a blasphemy, if the New Testament is what it purports to be!—a revelation of the will, way, and truth of the unchangeable God, and his Son, who is “the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.”

Mosheim, the historian, in his writing on the first century, says:

The Christian church was scarcely formed when, in different places, there started up several pretended reformers, who, not satisfied with the simplicity of that religion that was taught by the apostles, meditated changes of doctrine and worship.—Verse 1, chapter 5, part 2.

Then follows in the succeeding verses a mention of the Gnostics, Nicolaitans, and others who figured in the ignoble work of corrupting the pure faith. Each century brought forth additional philosophies and interwove them with the remnants of the old faith until, at the close of the fourth century, he says, “there remained no more than a shadow of the ancient government of the church.” (Verse 2, chapter 2, part 1.) And so it continued, step by step, till the culmination of later centuries, when men were startled by the horrors of the situation, and the tocsin of “Reformation” was sounded.

In its homily on “The perils of idolatry,” the

church of England says that "laity and clergy, learned and unlearned, men and women, and children of all ages, sects, and degrees, of whole Christendom, have been at once buried in the most abominable idolatry (a most dreadful thing to think), and that for the space of eight hundred years or more."

Wesley, in his ninety-fourth sermon, says that the real cause why the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost were no longer to be found in the Christian church, was because the Christians had turned heathens again and had "only a dead form left." He also writes elaborately in his notes on the New Testament regarding the meaning and fulfillment of such passages as we have here presented. He also offers the following regarding the similarity of conditions in the third century to those under the Reformation:

Cyprian, bishop of Carthage in the third century, gives an account of his time, which in reading one would be apt to imagine was concerning the present century, so totally void of true religion that the Christians of Africa were exactly like the Christians of England to-day. The converts practiced all kinds of abominations exactly as they did before conversion, in no way differing in their tempers and in their lives. . . . A Christian nation, a Christian city (according to the ancient pattern), was no longer to be found. Has the case altered since the Reformation? How little are any of those reformed Christians better than the heathen! Have they more (I will not say communion with God—although there is no Christianity without it), but have they more justice, mercy, and truth than the inhabitants of China and Hindustan? I doubt whether you ever knew a Christian in your life; I believe that you never did, and perhaps you never will; for you will not find them in the great and gay

world; and none are Christians but they that walk as Christ walked; though they are called Christians, yet they are as far from it as hell is from heaven.

Others, including Alexander Campbell, wrote almost as strongly, and fully as pointedly regarding the conditions of Christendom under the Reformation. To them apostasy was written everywhere, and although they earnestly tried in their turn to reform, they never restored nor were instrumental in restoring the ancient church and doctrine. God had reserved it for others at another time to perform that work. Our text leaves the inference, justifiable, that a restoration day would come, in that it announces that though the earth would be destroyed by fire after its long day of spiritual desolation, a "few men" would be "left."

The gospel covenant is the only one that saves: hence, if it was broken, and the world's destruction by fire is the penalty, it follows that at some period prior to the time of destruction that covenant must be renewed, otherwise there would be no deliverance even for a "few." No covenant can be entered into without communication between the parties thereto; hence there is warrant in our text for the belief that God, as the first party, would be heard from again, renewing the covenant with man, and giving opportunity for escape from the threatened doom. We leave the clearer evidences of this fact to be employed in another discourse, and content ourselves with having herein proved that an apostasy was predicted by God's messengers, and has occurred before our eyes.

## Restoration of the Gospel.

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I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come.—Revelation 14: 6, 7.

The book of Revelation, from which this text is selected, opens up with a message to the seven churches, in which each one in turn is advised, admonished, or rebuked, and a picture is drawn of their condition, which tells that some had "fallen from their first love," had imbibed false doctrines, become immoral, idolatrous, lukewarm, dead. Exceptions are noted and commended. With these items, however, we have nothing to do in this discourse, except to present them as evidence that the great apostasy, of which we have before spoken, had already begun, and as an introduction to what follows.

In the twelfth chapter the church is represented as a woman, with her apostolic crown of twelve stars, the moon under her feet, and with the sun as her clothing. She gives birth to a child, which is taken from her to God, and she is compelled to flee

into the wilderness, where she remains for twelve hundred and sixty days (years, according to another translation, which is evidently correct). This flight, whenever occurring, left the world without the church of Christ. The man child born of the woman while in her condition of fidelity as the "Lamb's wife" to her lawful husband—"the Lamb," must represent the offspring of the holy union between Christ and his church—the heirship or right to represent him—the authority or power to rule in his name. This was taken to God, as we have seen, before the disintegration of the church, or its flight into the wilderness, so that whatever it implied, as the Christ development within the church, it too was lost to the world. Hence no church of Christ and no administrative right to "rule" or order the affairs of his government remained.

Quite a period elapsed (evidently stretching out through the 1260 years), in which powers, represented as the "serpent," the "dragon," "the beast," and "another beast," had their day and did their work in destroying the saints and bringing the world into bondage; and finally a new picture appeared upon the panoramic canvas, as the Spirit caused it to pass before the vision of the apostle. That picture represented the rifting of the cloud that for those twelve hundred and sixty years had overcast the world. It was to introduce the beginning of the end of the reign of ignorance, intolerance, and priestcraft. It was the beginning of the "marvelous work and a wonder" which God, through

Isaiah (see chapter 29, verse 14), said he would proceed to do when his set time had come, when the people's hearts were removed far from him, and their fear was being "taught by the precepts of men" instead, as formerly, by the revelations of God. (See verse 13.) It was the inauguration of that grand and eventful movement which was to be known as "the dispensation of the fullness of times." (Ephesians 1:10.) It was the announcement of the "eleventh hour"—one hour before the final judgment of the world. It was the "sign" of the second coming of Christ. It was the unmistakable proof that God is unchangeable and impartial, and that having introduced all other dispensations by angel messengers and a proclamation of good tidings by revelation, he would not vary therefrom in opening up what was to be the final dispensation. It was the intimation that the "time of the Gentiles" was fulfilled.

That glorious tableau which John there gazed upon, is what our text directs attention to as a subject for this discourse. An angel, commissioned of God to fly to earth with the "everlasting gospel" to preach to all peoples dwelling thereupon, and to announce the nearness of the hour of judgment.

In this revelation itself is an unmistakable intimation of the world's spiritual desolation, as no such commission would ever be given an angel if the gospel essential to human redemption were at that time among the people.

God had said that he would put forth his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his

people (Isaiah 11:11), and the time had come. It was his hand—his appointment—his angel—that John saw. It was the call—the final call—unto all men to gather out of the Babylon of religious “isms” created in what was called human “wisdom,” and to rally around the divine standard, and enjoy a restoration of the former or ancient glory, and to escape the approaching calamity of the world.

The vision has had its fulfillment. The church was on earth with the twelve apostles at its head, the Mosaic economy under its feet, the gospel (sun) glory enmantling and permeating it. The man child (authority to rule and administer) was taken away from that church, and that church did go back into the wilderness from which it had been taken. It fell, as our discourse on the “Apostasy” has shown. A long period since the last vestige of that church had place on earth has elapsed and the twelve hundred and sixty years have ended. The angel with the “everlasting gospel to preach” has filled his mission, and there is a church, organized as of old, with apostles, prophets, etc., on earth to-day, in consequence, which preaches by authority of the “man child” recommitted—by authority of God conveyed through that angel; the old Jerusalem gospel, which has been and is being confirmed by the signs promised in the first apostolic commission. (See Mark 16:15-18.) Multiplied thousands of persons can testify as to the truthfulness of these assertions, and many, many thousands of miraculous ministrations divine have placed seal upon the covenant renewed between God and man.



When the disciples of old heard the Master tell of the destruction of the Temple at Jerusalem and of his departure and return, they asked him: "When shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?"—Matthew 24: 3.

His answer told of nations and kingdoms in commotion; of wars and rumors of wars; of persecution of the saints, and martyrdom; of false brethren and betrayers amongst themselves; of false prophets and deceivers; of the waning love of many because of the prevalence of iniquity; and of the great need of patient endurance to the end. Then came the crowning sign in the words:

And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.—Matthew 24: 14.

Note the language, "this gospel of the kingdom," being preached after the long lapse of years in which the above conditions among nations and saints are to figure, is to be a sign that the end is near and Jesus is coming again. Paul said (see Galatians 1: 8) that even an angel from heaven would be accursed if he preached any other gospel than he had preached. He had preached only "this" gospel—this "everlasting gospel" of the kingdom. John wrote substantially that both God and Christ were in the doctrine he preached, and warned the saints against any other, and further said that we would be partakers of the evil deeds of the guilty one if we should welcome any as God's ministers who should bring any other than "this doctrine." (2

John 9-11.) "This" doctrine of John was the same as "this" gospel of Jesus, for he received it of Jesus. Evidently God or Jesus inspired Paul and John to write thus, hence it is certain that they would never send an angel with any other gospel. And if they did, it could not fill the mission of a "sign" of the second coming of Jesus, as above indicated. Note further:

Now learn a parable of the fig-tree: When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors.—Matthew 24: 32, 33.

How significant this is as an illustration! The preaching of "this" gospel is to be a sign of the end, just as the appearing of the leaves on the fig-tree was to be a sign of the approach of summer. If the leaves never fell off the fig-tree from year to year, their presence would not indicate the approach of summer more than winter; but if, after falling off, and an interval when the tree was barren of foliage, they should again appear, then they serve as a sign.

If, from the day when Jesus uttered the word given above, there should be no cessation of gospel preaching throughout the world's life—no interval of desolation or barrenness, no absence of the gospel—how could the preaching of "this" gospel be a sign to the world of its approaching end? Jesus knew of the terrible apostasy to come, and told them of it in the same conversation. Deceivers were to abound, and men were to arise everywhere teaching conflicting faiths, and crying, "Lo, here is

Christ, or, there!" but none of these were to offer the old doctrine which had pealed from the Savior's and his disciples' lips over the hills and vales of Judea. But when the set time had come—the chosen time—God was to send his angel with—not a new message, but the "everlasting gospel"—"this" gospel of the kingdom, and by its appearance and proclamation notice was to be served on the world that the end was near.

The curse put upon Jerusalem had its limitation, "until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." (Luke 21:24.) The Jews had abused their opportunity and rejected the message of life; hence the apostles turned to the Gentiles. (See Acts 13:46.) The Lord commanded them to do so. (See verse 47.) The Gentiles were to have their day of opportunity, and not till their "times were fulfilled" was the curse upon the Jew to be removed.

In Matthew 20:16 we are told that the "last shall be first and the first last." The "eleventh-hour" laborers were the last called, but come first to judgment and reward. The ninth hour call in Christ's day came by way of the Jews. The "eleventh hour" is to come by way of the Gentiles, and when their day is ended—their cup is full—the Jew is to come again into prominence and honor; his land is to be released from its curse, and all the glory of their former inheritance is to be restored.

This "eleventh hour" is identical with the time of the appearance of the angel of our text—just before the end, or the judgment; hence it is the call to the marriage supper of the Lamb. (See Matthew

22:8, 9; Revelation 19:9.) It is the ensign of Isaiah 18:3; 11:12. It is the renewal of the covenant, formerly broken, by which the "few" will be saved in the day of burning. (See Isaiah 24:6.)

Such, briefly presented, is our story as we have been authorized to tell it to all men, and to which our testimony as to its truth is added.

There are many scriptural evidences bearing upon this subject which we withhold here, intending to use them in another discourse, where they will be equally applicable. Before concluding, we may, with propriety, call attention to the fact that this "everlasting gospel" carries with it all the marks in authority, history, church organization, doctrine, law of initiation, and rules for government of those accepting it, spiritual endowment and manifestation of gifts that characterized its existence and operation when it was upon earth in the New Testament days; and with its introduction by the angel who delivered it to Joseph Smith in 1827, came the authority to repeat the promise of Jesus Christ recorded in John 7:17: "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God or whether I [we] speak of myself [ourselves]."

Thus it can be easily identified and tested. It asks no surrender of virtue or principle of good, but seeks to give men and women a better introduction to Jesus and his Father than is in the power of human creeds to do. It brings the Holy Spirit, with all the power and promise that God endowed its mission with, to your door. It points you to the

record of that Spirit's work found in the sacred book, and tells you that it waits upon your obedience to make your character its workshop and to endow you with similar good—even the best that God has got. It unravels the mysteries, solves the problems, and dispels the doubt-begetting shades that, without it as a key, hang around the book of God. It puts the knowledge of its divinity and truth beneath your feet and makes you feel your soul-footing to be as firm as the throne of Jehovah. It puts you in touch with the patriarchs and prophets, the apostles and holy men of old, and includes you in the love and fellowship of "the faith once delivered to the saints." It puts you in communion with heaven, and enrolls your name with the sanctified. It not only tells you that the resurrection from the dead is a truth, but puts the certifying evidence of that fact within your heart, and makes you a willing witness of what you thus know. It brings the fountain of life within your easy reach, and bids you freely drink and live for ever. It lifts you from the estate of self and sin by your coöperation, and from the mystifying fog and bewildering smoke of sectism, skepticism, and fear, and enables you to walk on the clear highway of holiness as sons and daughters of God, invested with an abiding testimony of his fatherhood and your eternal safety as children. It is the everlasting channel through which flows all the treasures of his grace to bless and crown the estate of man. Its mission extends from the fall of Adam to the final consummation

of the God purpose, and under its banner the hosts of earth's redeemed will march together to be welcomed at the gates of the eternal city by him whose blood has sealed it to their eternal exaltation as the saints of God.

## Antiquity of Christianity.

### THE GOSPEL BEFORE THE LAW OF MOSES.

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Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?—John 3: 10.

Earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.—Jude 3.

Did the gospel precede the law of Moses? Popular opinion says, No. My sermon heading says, Yes. What does the Bible say? Let God be true, whatever becomes of our opinions. In this discourse the subject will be dealt with directly and pointedly, though briefly.

In the several verses preceding our first text, the doctrine of the "kingdom of God," the necessity of being "born again," and the fact of "the water and the Spirit" being essential elements in that birth and unto admission into that kingdom, are clearly set forth. Jesus himself was the teacher, and when Nicodemus, the hearer, inquired how such things could be, the rejoinder of the Savior was made in the words of our text: "Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?"

"These things" referred to were distinctly gospel doctrines, and yet Jesus expressed surprise, seemingly, that this "master of Israel"—this man who



was supposed to be versed in the law and history of his people—should be ignorant regarding them. This is incomprehensible, except under the idea that the gospel had existed with Israel before the Savior's day in the flesh, and its record had been accessible to those, at least, who were teachers, or "masters."

Let us examine the record for further evidence and more direct proof of what we have assumed.

In John 4:38 Jesus is represented as saying to his disciples: "I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labor: other men labored and ye are entered into their labors." From the verses preceding we learn that it was gospel labor, bringing "eternal life" as its reward, that was referred to, and that the "sowers" and the "reapers" are to rejoice together some day. Now, the question is here pertinent, "If these disciples whom Jesus here sent out were to be reapers of other men's gospel sowing, who were the sowers and when did they labor?" Let us try to locate a few of them at least.

First, let us note in Galatians 1:8, 9, as we proceed, that no other gospel than that which Paul preached can be accepted, for all others are placed under a ban or curse. By this we will be better able to understand Paul when he, in other places, refers to the gospel. We might, without deviation, here interpret Genesis 3:15 to mean that Christ, as the "seed" of the "woman," would yet "bruise" the "head" of the "serpent," the Devil, and thus claim that the gospel was indirectly referred to at the very morn of creation. We might also, with profit, read

Hebrews 11: 5, 6, and note that Enoch, the seventh from Adam, by faith, pleased God, and by reference to Paul's various letters learn that his use of the word *faith* was as a saving or gospel principle; but we will not rest with inferences, for there are plenty of positive and unmistakable texts at hand.

From 2 Peter 2: 5 we learn that Noah was a "preacher of righteousness," and from Romans 1: 16, 17 we learn that "righteousness" is "revealed" in the gospel. Hence we conclude that Noah preached what was "revealed" to him in the gospel, or was a preacher of the gospel. Add to this evidence the fact gleaned from 1 Peter 3: 13-20—namely, that Jesus, subsequent to his death in the flesh, went and preached to the "spirits in prison," who were once disobedient in the days of Noah. This is strongly corroborative, for they could not be "disobedient" to God unless God had asked them to obey something, and if God sent Noah to preach righteousness, then that preaching must have enjoined obedience to something—evidently the gospel. Romans 10: 15 asks, "How shall they preach, except they be sent?" and this, with Galatians 1: 8, 9, clinches the argumentative rivet, and holds our faith to the fact that Noah preached Christ and his gospel.

Next, we introduce Abraham. In Galatians 3: 8 we read:

And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.

What gospel? Evidently the gospel of Christ, for

all others were barred, as above shown; but read further, to make ourselves sure:

Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law [of Moses, evidently], being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.—Galatians 3: 13.

But what was the design of this? Read further:

That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ: that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.—Galatians 3: 14.

Does this not identify it as Christ's gospel? Read again:

Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, can not disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.—Galatians 3: 16, 17.

Is not this conclusive? This covenant—this gospel—was confirmed in Christ unto Abraham four hundred and thirty years before the law of Moses was given. Thus we see why Christ endured the curse, as above stated: "That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ: that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith."

But you ask: "Why was the law of Moses ever given, then? Let the same apostle answer: "It was added because of transgression." (Verse 19.) Added to what? Because of transgression of what? Evidently the covenant—the gospel which preceded it. It was a law of carnal commandments given to

a carnal people who would not live by faith. It was the penitentiary created for them because they proved themselves law-breakers and unworthy of gospel liberty.

Read carefully Galatians 4: 21-31 and 5: 1, and get the meaning of that remarkable "allegory," and you will agree with me, I think, that if Abraham and Sarah had believed God as fully as they ought, they would have waited on his promise till Isaac was born of Sarah, and Hagar would not have been heard of in the Scriptures, and Ishmael would never have been born. Ishmael was the offspring of Abraham's unbelief.

Thus in the application, according to the allegory, where Isaac answers to the gospel—the child or covenant of promise—and Hagar answers to Mount Sinai, it is made clear that if the ancients had proved faithful under the gospel covenant, we would never have heard of Sinai, and its offspring (the law of Moses) would never have been born. It was the offspring of unbelief—"added because of transgression," till the seed—Christ—should come—then, like Hagar and Ishmael, to be cast out and never named with the true covenant, the gospel.

Let me now introduce Moses as one under the gospel. Of him it is written in Hebrews 11: 25, 26:

Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt.

Thus you see, not only did he know Christ in his day, but it was a reproach to follow him; yet Moses

preferred it to life in an Egyptian court, hence he followed Christ.

Next read Hebrews 3: 16-19 and 4: 1, 2, and you will find a confirmation of the foregoing affirmations—viz, that the Hebrews had their wilderness experience and suffered their loss of promised good because of unbelief and disobedience, and that the gospel was preached to them is clear from the last verse referred to, for there it is written:

For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

If anything further is necessary to render our conclusion absolutely certain, it is surely found in 1 Corinthians 10: 1-5. Let us read it and ponder is carefully:

Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea: and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual rock that followed them: and that rock was Christ. But with many of them God was not pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness.

Surely this settles the case; for if Christ was the rock from which they drank, that which they drank must have been the "water of life"—the gospel. And our position is maintained, that the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ preceded that of the law of Moses.

As a fitting conclusion, read the first sixteen verses of Matthew 20, and find in that remarkable parable of the "householder," and his work of hiring

laborers to work in his vineyard, a splendid epitome of all that has been set forth in this discourse. The "early in the morning," the third, sixth, ninth, and eleventh hours all referring to the different periods, from the world's creation to its call to judgment, when God sent forth his ministry to preach the gospel—the sowers and the reapers, with the intention that at the close of the eleventh hour all shall be called up and rewarded—each receiving his "penny," whether it be Adam or Enoch, Noah or Abraham, Moses or Paul, or any of those whose lot and privilege it shall have been to hear and obey the last or eleventh-hour call to go and preach the "everlasting gospel," and "contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." Thus the "sowers" (of former days) and the "reapers" (of later dispensations) shall rejoice together.

## The Eleventh Hour.

## THE LAST DISPENSATION PRECEDING THE JUDGMENT.

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For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire laborers into his vineyard. And when he had agreed with the laborers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard. And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, and said unto them; Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way. Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise. And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle? They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive. So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the laborers, and give them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first. And when they came that were hired about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny. But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny. And when they had received it, they murmured against the good man of the house, saying, These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day. But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny?



Take that thine is, and go thy way: I will give unto this last, even as unto thee. Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good? So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen.—Matthew 20:1-16.

In the sermon on "Gospel antiquity" will be found all the introduction necessary to the subject included in this, which will be found to be somewhat of an elaboration or supplemental argument.

For twenty-three years of my life, five of which were partially devoted to preaching a popular faith, the text here employed was a distasteful morsel to me. The interpretation, placed upon it by those supposed to be skilled in such work seemed in some way to blur the ideal God-picture in my mind. It was simply monstrous, if I may express my feeling strongly.

On many occasions, during protracted meetings, it was employed in my hearing as the "biggest gun for the final broadside" in charging the enemy's ranks and seeking to capture the dazed and trembling ones whom Satan had held as his own.

It was asserted that the "householder" represented God; the "vineyard" represented the world; the "laborers" represented the sinners or ungodly ones of earth; the early-morning, third-, sixth-, ninth-, and eleventh-hour calls represented the several times from childhood till death when the Spirit of God strove with men individually, in an effort to persuade them to become righteous or give their hearts to Christ; and the "penny" represented the complete salvation and eternal glory which came alike to the man who, whether in the infancy (early

morn) of his life or at the last moment (eleventh hour) of his existence, after a long career of crime or rebellion, would become converted.

Instances were related of the Spirit's pleading with the child through the teachings of Sunday-school. Later under the pleadings of parents, as they tearfully bade good-bye to the departing son or daughter, and exacted a promise that he or she would become a Christian. Still later when the home was invaded by death, in the presence of which, as dear ones departed, promises were made to meet them in heaven. Yet again, when threatened with calamity or disaster, the sinner was constrained to make promises of reform upon the condition of God relieving or delivering him from present danger; and finally, now in the meeting-house under the persuasiveness of the preacher's exhortation, the text was being fulfilled, and should that appeal be slighted, it might prove the eleventh-hour opportunity—the last chance to escape hell. Then followed a graphic description of hell, and the preacher would sometimes seem to outdo Milton in the portrayal. Shipwrecks, disasters on sea and land, terror-inspiring recitals of calamities which had befallen scores of unfortunate beings who had missed their day of grace, and all other things within the range of human imagination were related in seeking to impress the unsaved ones with a sense of the awful risk assumed by further procrastination.

These verses were supposed to furnish warrant

for such conceptions of God and his purpose and for such appeals to the ungodly.

But let me here mildly enter the protest of my later education and judgment against such a misrepresentation of God and abuse of his word. There is absolutely no warrant for such an interpretation, for the reasons:

1. The representation of the parable relates to God's methods within his church—his vineyard.

2. It refers to the selection of ministers, the "sowers" and "reapers" (as shown in the preceding discourse), whose business, when thus called of God, is to go and preach the gospel to sinners.

3. It refers to different times or generations or dispensations in the history or age of the world, from Adam down till the judgment day, when the call from God—the Householder—will come from heaven, as in all cases when a new dispensation has been introduced, as with Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, or Jesus and the apostles.

4. It does not intimate that a call came twice to the same person, but is clear in its statement that at each time when he came he "found others," whom he hired.

5. Such an interpretation as we are here repudiating would place the text in conflict with all other scriptures bearing on the same subject of rewards and punishments, in that it would give to the man who had abused a lifetime of privilege and had steeped himself in crime, but who, in the closing moment of his life, when bereft of power to make war on virtue any longer, a reward as great as the

holiest of saints or martyrs for the truth. It would be unjust. Read Matthew 16: 27, Romans 2: 6, 1 Corinthians 3: 8, 2 Corinthians 5: 10, 1 Peter 1: 17, Revelation 2: 23; 22: 12, and many other texts bearing on the subject, and you will find that every man is to be rewarded according to his works, his life, his service to God and humanity. It is character that is to decide the right to place and estate of reward hereafter, and to this end, as one of the foregoing texts clearly sets forth, books are to be opened in the judgment, and the entries there are to furnish the basis of decision for all. In Matthew 10: 42 we are informed that even the giving of a cup of cold water to a needy one or disciple is kept in remembrance, and will in no wise lose its reward. The degrees of knowledge or ignorance of individuals as to the law of God will figure in the count, and will help determine whether the "stripes" shall be "few" or "many." (See Luke 12: 47, 48.)

For these and other reasons we reject the popular interpretation of our earlier days, and welcome the one which agrees with all other scriptures upon the subject.

A man of excellent moral standing in his community, full of good deeds, by which bread went to the hungry and home and comfort to the widows and orphans of his region, but who refused to unite with any of the churches about him, because their doctrines were, to his mind, unscriptural to quite an extent, was assassinated in his home at midnight

by one who was found to have been a lifelong criminal.

At the funeral of the murdered man his good deeds and general excellence were alluded to in quite glowing terms of commendation when the preacher viewed them from the purely human standpoint; but when he assumed to estimate them from what he called the divine standpoint, and in the light of the fact that the man had not become a Christian after the popular method of making Christians, he said these good deeds would but act as a millstone around his neck to sink him deeper into the hell which his neglect to join the church had earned for him. Think of it, readers!

The assassin was tried, convicted, and condemned to die. He employed attorneys and sought to secure a reprieve, and meanwhile cursed the ministers who visited his cell to try and effect his conversion. He drove them from his presence. At last the word came that all efforts for a reprieve had failed, and he must die. Then a sudden change came over him, and he sent for the clergyman, and in a few hours was found kneeling in prayer, and two days later he declared on the scaffold that he would not change places with the queen upon her throne: he had given his heart to Jesus, and was going straight from the gallows to the dwelling-place of God, to wear a crown of glory and dwell with the angels of light in the realm of infinite delight. The minister who officiated uttered a hearty "Amen!" and finally preached this criminal (who was too vile to be trusted with life here any longer) up to the realms

celestial, to be the companion of Jesus and the redeemed. He had been converted in the "eleventh hour."

Is it any wonder that I said that the popular interpretation of my text was distasteful to me? It was that kind of preaching, which was the natural outgrowth of it, that made it so to me. Is it any wonder that I, with others, when we heard of these preachers and their sayings, said openly, if hell was to be made up of such persons as that murdered man, and heaven was to be occupied with such persons as that assassin, the kindest favor God could show us when we died would be to send us to hell, where we would at least have good company to enjoy?

When approached once with such a representation of God as that, I asked the party to kindly draw me an accurate picture of the Devil next, and I would compare the two. He did not even try. He had simply put the wrong name under his picture, and had never yet obtained a true conception of God. And I do not hesitate to assert that such teaching as that—such mutilation of scripture—is a desecration of the pulpit and a strong factor in the infidel-making processes of to-day.

I repeat that character alone will count in the judgment, and character is not formed in an hour or a day. It combines motive, effort, trial, patience, endurance, and Christlike experiences to develop the virtue that commends men and women to God. It must be our preference to be and to do good and our determination to reach the goal at any cost to self. A man can not pick up or drop Christianity

in a moment; he may perhaps do that with religion. Christianity means Christ manifestation in character—the God-likeness.

Let us now learn, if we can, how those early-morning, third-, sixth-, and ninth-hour dispensations were ushered in, and then judge how we may expect the “eleventh-hour” dispensation to have its inauguration.

It is hardly necessary for me to pile up scripture in an attempt to prove what you will admit at once—viz, that Noah, Abraham, Moses, and John the Baptist each had their call direct from God, as also was the case, notably, with Jesus. No Bible believer will dispute that angels figured in the announcements and inauguration each time. In no case was a man called out and appointed to work except by the voice of God and the appearance of angels. In Abraham’s case, the record shows that angels were almost as familiar as human beings in his counsels. The old patriarch could reason with and appeal to heavenly personages as freely as his soul desired, and he was led by their instruction. No less was this the case with Moses. Begin with the “burning bush” and end with his call up to Mount Nebo to die, and follow the dispensation till the end of the prophetic line as given, and you have an almost unbroken history of angels, direct revelation, and miraculous display. The only interruptions known were the result of human transgression or rebellion.

The inauguration of the dispensation in which John the Baptist and Christ figured had all its



characteristics in divine interpositions. Angels announced to Zacharias, to Elizabeth, to Mary, to John, to Joseph, to the shepherds, and to Jesus and his chosen ministry, and the wonderful history thus began ends its record in that wonderful panorama which John beheld on Patmos. Never a dispensation without a prophet and leader at the head. Never a prophet and leader without a revelation from God and angels to minister. Four thousand years covered by sacred history, and all its details characterized by these features! God throughout them all is declared to be unchangeable, and the final or "eleventh-hour" dispensation yet to be introduced, or subsequently to the days of Bible history, must be no exception. It is to commence just in time to prepare the world for judgment, and those who labor in that dispensation—the last called to labor—are to be called first to reward, and then follows all those of former centuries to rejoice together with them—the last to be first and the first last.

With this panorama of a world's life and God's operations thereon before us, and the assurance of his unchangeability added, in what manner may we look for the introduction of the final or eleventh-hour dispensation? If it be without direct revelation from God, or without angel ministrations or miracles, without a prophet and leader to inaugurate it as the direct agent of God, how, oh tell me how, can we identify it as the work of the God of Abraham, Noah, Enoch, Moses, John the Baptist, Jesus, or the dispensations of the past? If all these

characteristics are wanting, where shall I find the unchangeable God in it, and by what marks shall I know him? All the marks of identity furnished by him for four thousand years are gone, and by some new, unknown way I am to find him out—what is that way? Some one tell me, and give me your authority for what you tell.

If the Latter Day Saints of the Reorganized Church, whom I am permitted to represent, are all, including myself, mistaken in our claim that we have been called, and are by divine authority officiating under the eleventh-hour régime, who has the truth and authority to administer the gospel, and by what ancient landmarks can their claims be proved?

Not only do we conclude by reasoning in this way that the final dispensation will be ushered in as all the former ones have been, but we go to the good book and read that John foresaw that such would be the case. In Revelation 14: 6, 7 it is stated that he "saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come!"

This explains itself, and locates the time of that angel's coming just in advance of the hour of judgment—the eleventh hour. It designates his message as the "everlasting gospel," and thus identifies it with the "faith once delivered," and which all the ancient "sowers" and "reapers"

preached; for, as Paul declared, even an "angel from heaven" was not permitted to preach any other gospel than that which he preached. (See Galatians 1: 8, 9.)

This wonderful story earned for the ancient saints the title of "peculiar people," the "sect everywhere spoken against"; and we, being slated with them, must share their experience of proscription as well as of glorious hope. If we bore the brand of the world, the world would welcome and love us. If we bear the brand divine, as attested historically, doctrinally, organically, and experimentally in the light of God's guide-book, we must not complain if but few shall heed our restoration proclamation, for it is written that but "few shall find" the narrow way.

It is enough that we ourselves "know of the doctrine" that it is "of God," and that we faithfully live and proclaim it.

## Does Death End All?

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If a man die, shall he live again.—Job 14: 14.

He that is our God is the God of salvation; and unto God the Lord belong the issues from death.—Psalm 68: 20.

As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.—1 Corinthians 15: 49.

Whence came I, and whither do I tend?

How absolutely dependent we are for answers to these questions! Without the Bible the atmosphere about us and through which we peer would be hazy indeed. With it as a key, we venture forth till, as it promises, we find assurance and enjoy the restfulness of hope, having obtained the Spirit which certifies to the truth of the story it tells.

There is nothing remarkable, however, in the necessity that compels us to turn our eyes upward, when our appeals in every other direction have been barren of satisfactory results. It is quite reasonable to conclude that intelligence should come from the source of life itself, and that we should obtain it when we enter the channels of its current.

By his own ingenuity man has accomplished a great deal in this world. He has delved into the very bowels of the earth, and told the age of the world from the strata of the rock. He has climbed

to the skies and measured the distances of the stars, and given us a great deal of information as to conditions that exist there and the effects that are felt by us here. He has taken from the bowels of the earth material of which he has constructed the iron horse, and has charged its veins with steam instead of blood, and made it his servant to dash through mountains and over chasms that he has already bridged in his wisdom, and has thus proved the wondrous ability located within himself. He has stretched forth his hand and harnessed the lightning and made it his servant, so that he is enabled to sit to-day upon one side of the broad Atlantic and by its help converse with his fellows on the other side, and, placing a belt around the earth, he has the privilege to-day of sending this current around the entire circuit as a medium for the communication of intelligence. After achieving these things and a number of others it may not be necessary to refer to here, he has undertaken to answer the question suggested by me at the outset; but instantly he has made the effort, he has found himself powerless. Between him and the other shore there hangs a veil of mystery so high that his wisdom has never been able to scale it, so deep that his skill has never been able to delve beneath, so dense that his power can not penetrate it; and because this discovery has been made by him, haughty, boastful man has backed from this wondrous veil, and, after gazing upon it for a time, has decided that there is nothing beyond it; that death is the end of conscious existence; and on the

strength of this conclusion, has moved forward, directing his thought and his effort against a number of comforting statements to the contrary that are found within this book, announcing that because he has not succeeded in penetrating, in scaling, in circumventing what we have referred to, there can be nothing beyond from whence can come knowledge or information, or unto which human life is tending. Yet when he reaches this conclusion, he has but demonstrated the truth of what is contained in this word, that no man by wisdom can find out God; that God has reserved unto himself the right to communicate the information regarding our origin, destiny, and his own whereabouts.

We are told that when an immense chasm was to be bridged on a certain occasion, an arrow was shot across it unto which was appended a thread, and at the end of which was appended a cord, at the end of which was appended a rope, at the end of which was appended a cable, and thus in the line of development and increase they moved until we are permitted to go to-day from one side to the other and learn and enjoy. If it be confessed that beyond death we can not by the human eye see, we can not comprehend, it is but reasonable to suppose that there shall be shot from the other side the arrow that shall contain the thread, utilizing which we may gain the stronger evidence, until the line of communication shall be established as shall be determined in the wisdom of him from whom the power of our being originated.

Like others, I have reasoned on this line in the

years past, and wondered where I could find a foundation upon which my hope might safely rest. I longed to know that there was a source, a location of wisdom somewhere whence the appointments were made that introduced the strange providences of this life that so sadly interfered with my best calculations. Paul, I think, told the truth when he said, "We walk by faith, and not by sight"; and he also gave a comforting statement in connection with it when he declared that faith was the "assurance of things hoped for," carrying with it the thought that the human breast hoped for something, and that hope was not vain.

I know there are men who oppose this position, but I also notice that one who was considered the champion of infidelity in this nation stood a few years ago by the side of a grave of a near relative, and when asked to deliver a funeral oration, made this painful admission—I say "painful" in view of the fact that his course of life up to his death was such as to convey the impression that he was directing his shafts of thought and criticism against the very foundation upon which the human hope of life to come was resting. The admission as he stood by the open grave was about like this: "I confess that I know not whether this article that we now call death is a cessation of human consciousness, the end of real life, or whether it be the gateway unto life in earnest." Yet the effort of his life seems to have been, (we may mistake his motive, however,) to destroy confidence in the only source



of information regarding this important matter that has ever been vouchsafed to the human race.

We are told that by our confidence in this book we are made slaves; that we are giving away the liberty that belongs to us as men, and there is nothing beyond this life towards which we may rightly aspire; that we should make the best of conditions as they now confront us, because death ends all. I ask, If this be true—grant for the argument's sake that it is—what opportunity has the man who so thinks to utilize to better advantage the good in this life than have I? If he will confine himself within the precincts of that which is noble, honorable, and true, no privilege as a man is granted him wider, higher, deeper, grander than that which is vouchsafed to me as a believer in this blessed book. What is there within his right or power to do of good that I may not do? What is there within his privilege that is denied me to make a name that shall go down to posterity in honor and renown because of the real merit that is associated with it, because of blessing those around me to the extent of my ability and shedding an influence that was tending to sanctify human character everywhere? Where is there a portion of territory within the province of virtue into which he may enter where the bars are put up by my religion against me? When my life terminates, and the casket that contains my mortal remains is placed alongside the casket that contains his, and you may be called to look upon the face of the dead, I ask you the question, If his life-thought was the truer

one and my religion was vain, what has my religion done for me to rob me of the bliss of eternal extinction that his thought and his philosophy brings to him?

If total extinction of consciousness is the fact that death introduces, am I not, though a believer in Christ and a disbeliever in that thought, as well prepared for that condition when death meets me as is the other? And if it shall be found at last to be a fact that he has made a mistake, and I have reasoned correctly and safely, then the superior advantage of the religion of Jesus Christ serves me in a grander sense and introduces me into the field formerly unoccupied by either of us, and perhaps unappreciated even by myself to any reasonable degree; yet because of the assurance of its existence, because of the faith born in me by which I walked and lived, I have developed the Christ character, and he has failed; I enter into the realm of life where I am acquainted, because my character is like the characters that shall there be presented to me; and when some angel of God shall step forward and take me by the hand and present me to the Son of God himself, I shall find that when my hand strikes his, two congenial spirits meet, the one current of life emanating from him as a portion of immortality to me formerly has developed until I feel at home in his presence, because I am like him.

But what of the man who has denied this possibility while he lived? If my life has been employed with a view to propagating, developing,

and encouraging this thought in humanity, and it was a right one, and his life has been employed to discourage this, and consequently to take away the influence of moral restrictions that this Christ and this Bible impose, where shall his awakening be? The Psalmist said, and said wisely, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." But what shall be said of the awakening of the man who has not a resemblance to the Christ-likeness within himself? I simply make the statement that if there is not anything of a spiritual communion at the present day in character with that that we have been testifying of and hoping for, still the man who trusts in God and the woman who worships God and Christ have at least two chances to one against the unbeliever. All the advantage of eternal nothingness and total extinction of human consciousness is theirs as fully after death—if that is not a paradoxical statement—as though they had ignored Christ and religion all their lives. But if death is but the gateway to the beyond, instantly it swings upon its hinges and the effulgence of everlasting bliss bursts in upon the soul, it finds one ready to catch its resplendent glory, and fling back a reflection that contributes its measure to the support and comfort of the race, because of the exact likeness it is found to be in with the conditions that are there revealed.

Ah! It is better to hope, it is better to live by faith, than to try to destroy by either innuendo or other expression of doubt the foundation upon

which millions of souls are resting to-day for their only hope.

I look abroad in this world to-day, and notice the cattle as they graze in the open field; the fishes as they dart in the water; the birds on gladsome wing; the serpent as it moves along the roadside: I think of everything that lives or in which there is the slightest manifestation of life; and I place man alongside all of these, and when I turn to the man who has been criticising our faith in God and trying to destroy the foundations thereof, I say, "Is there anything in us as men and women that reflects anything superior when compared?" "Ah, yes!" he tells me; "man is the greatest exhibition of creative genius that the world contains. He stands out as the very zenith towards which creative genius aspired, and there it reached its climax." He tells me that man is possessed of an intellect that the beasts of the field possess not; that while instinct controls them, there is high intelligence here, and that man has something that enables him to move where the others never think to move. I turn to this man and ask him if there is not something strangely paradoxical in this announcement of his when placed alongside the effort he makes to destroy human hope in God and in Christ when he says that death ends all for me. I call his attention to the fact that if there is no life beyond the cold grave, then man has revealed what he has denied as a fact when he has claimed Nature alone to be his God; for he is the one single exception in the creative work, and instead of towering up into

those conditions of being or existence that prove that he is to be praised and admired above all others, he stands in that one condition as a unique figure to be pitied above all else; because the beast can never have an instinct move it to more than it finds ample gratification for in the grass which he eats, and the birds find in the air and in the trees all that their instinct leads them to cry out for and desire; and so with everything from the smallest to the largest revealments of creation outside of the human. But, pitiable man, deplorable is your condition! Born never to be satisfied in this life, and yet have no place outside of it where you can satiate the longings of the spirit you possess and that develops through the intelligence with which you are endowed and that you as an individual can not suppress if you want to! It lives and asserts itself, and bears upon you, and wears your life out, and shortens your days when the hope that you have within you is blasted by the thought that there is nothing beyond this life in which that desire can be gratified.

You may find an exception; you may find a man who finds in this life all he lusts for, and individuals who realize a gratification here for what are the prominent emotions within themselves; but if you will take race representatives and let them speak, you will never hear them say that they find ample satisfaction in this life for the longings of that strange something within them that aspires and pleads, yet never to inherit, if this opposing philosophy be true. It is to be deplored in that the

very distinction that separates me from all the rest of creation is revealed the element that aspires, longs, and pleads for a something that is for ever and ever denied it, if there is no truth in the religion of Jesus Christ. Pity me as a man, and congratulate the serpent, if this theory be correct. I would rather be something else, and find satisfaction for all I craved within the sphere in which I was compelled to move, than be thrust into conditions without choice of my own, to beg, crave, and aspire after that which the limitations associated with my creation make impossible for me ever to enjoy. Pity me, I say, as a man, and praise the beast of the field, if that be true!

Is science true in saying that Nature furnishes supplies for all her demands? Step with me into the solitude of the chamber where death has entered and torn from my embrace the wife of my years, the associate of my joys, or some dear one, be it mother, or father, or child, as the case may be, who has made life here not only tolerable, but enjoyable, and without whose companionship life will be a bitter thing for ever afterwards. When death, pressing in upon me, sought to tear that dear one from my heart, I protested as a man; I held up my hands and insisted that it should not be; I labored and toiled; but, regardless of all, it pressed its claims, and tore from my embrace the one I loved. That is not a condition that came to me by my desire. You say it was Nature. I labored against it, but the odds were against me.

I step into the room where the casket is found



containing the remains of my loved one, and I look upon the face. What is the first natural impulse of this heart of mine? I have not to feel out into other hearts and gain by accumulating a little from here and there that which develops this feeling within my soul; I have not to labor in order to bring that desire within me; but the first natural impulse rising within my heart is, Oh, that somewhere this heart that is now made so bitter by the separation shall again be made joyous by a reunion, and when these lips shall again press those that are silent now in death! Oh, that we shall meet again! Is that a natural feeling? If it is, and infidelity be true, where is the supply for this demand? Nothing beyond the grave! This wondrous framework, these eyes, these ears, this brain, this heart, and those corresponding members in the dear one that is taken—all born to be food for worms at last! Oh! let me tell you that the grandeur of the Christ religion introduces itself to the human heart in this connection, and says this human probation is but the period of preparation for conditions of life beyond that tower in the greatness of their majesty, dominion, and glory, and possibility, infinitely beyond the barren conceptions of this mundane sphere. I tell you that I would rather embrace the gospel of Jesus Christ and abide its conditions because of the reasonableness of the suggestions that are furnished in it, because of the safe basis it assures me my soul may rest upon, even if I never had a direct communication of the Spirit bearing witness of the wondrous life beyond.



The book of Genesis account of creation is denounced as unworthy of belief. There is too much miracle about it for the intelligence of this age to accept. But what do they substitute for it? I ask, as before, How did I get here? He will take me back along the lines of history, as he reads it in rock, and lava, and inanimate creation, and when he has reached the outer limit, I suppose he is going to give me the explanation. My spirit longs for a something upon which it may more safely rest, if it is possible to make the discovery of it. And he says, "Come with me." "Where do you propose leading me?" I ask. "On a long journey, two hundred thousand years back; miles and miles of journeying are before you, and your feet may weary, your brain may grow dizzy as you try to scale the heights, as you try to wade through the waters, and you may have difficulty." I say to the man, "Wait; here are a number of people who have been believing in and depending upon my word; let me take my family, these men with me, all the members of my church with me." "Oh!" he says, "that will be folly." "And why?" "Because there is not one out of a hundred of them that can ever traverse the distance we are to travel, that can ever endure the processes in investigation and reach the end that we are aiming at." "Ah! then," said I; "sir, upon what shall their intellects be nourished?" "You come back and give them your word for it." Exactly. Is there any credulity about that? How much credulity is there in this, to ask me as a representative of thousands of intelligent men and women

on the earth to start on a journey of millions of miles and going back through hundreds and thousands of years because he wants me to abandon the credulity that believes simply the word of somebody else, as found in the Bible? and yet he asks me to come back and ask my associates to accept my testimony regarding conclusions I have been enabled to reach as a man! They must take my word for it all. How consistent these objections are!

But I follow him through one form of life and one phase of creative revealment and another, and another, which is diminishing and diminishing in the grandeur of its expression, until he gets me down to the most infinitesimal form that it is possible to find or conceive of. When he gets me there, I ask him, "Sir, hasn't that thing got life?" "Well, yes, it has life." "Mr. Tyndall, where did it get its life?" Mr. Tyndall says, "To be honest with you, I believe with Professor here and Professor there, that somewhere about here there occurred what we call spontaneous generation; but I agree with other writers that the evidences are wanting. We are here with a chasm before us, and we bridge it by conjecture." Thank you, Mr. Tyndall.

Suppose the Bible did that for me at the start? Is a bridge over the same chasm made by such material as you now use any less reliable because furnished in the Bible? You and your kind tell me that the Bible account is merely conjecture; yet here I am on the same side of the chasm, and you tell me you can only bridge by conjecture. I am thousands of miles away from home, and after you

have made my brain dizzy in climbing, and delving, and pursuing, I am told that the chasm between the living and the not living is bridged by conjecture. Isn't it better for me to go back and tell my congregation that the little bridge of the Bible is as safe as yours, to say the least? for you have only reached that painful, humiliating conclusion that it is conjecture, after all. The fact is, that when a man takes me back that far and still keeps me on the same side of the difficulty, he does not help my condition. By reducing or diminishing the forms of life till he reaches the little *moneron* at the bed of the ocean he brings me no relief. It has life, and when I press the thought, "How can you 'conjecture' that the thing that is now alive ever came from that which is not alive?" I am told that some force or power brought a piece of inert matter in contact with another piece of inert matter. But if the two pieces are inert, their contact will not communicate a life that neither piece possesses; and if both are inert, what is the power that brought them together and gave them life?

What is the difference between that and what the Christian calls God? Will some of you tell me? Is it any more difficult to believe that God created man from the inert material that was subject to his hand and creative will, than to believe that he has created an oyster or any other form of life from the same? Begin with the little sample he asks me to respect and end with man, and remember the law which compels like to produce like; then follow, and note that, according to his theory, like fails to produce

like in hosts of instances. If, as I am told, this is caused by the interference of a power external to itself, then begin with the protoplasm and start on the long journey of evolution till man is developed, and these external influences occur millions of times in all probability. If a miracle be something that interferes with or deflects the influence of operative law, producing something superior to the material employed or affected, then by rejecting the Bible account of creation and accepting the infidel theory, I discard one miracle and adopt millions of miracles instead. Let me here say that I am not prepared to do this. It is as easy for me to believe that God made man from the dust of the earth as to believe that he, under some highly attenuated name, created an oyster and made it grow through millions of variations unaccountable in natural law, till it developed functional organs of intellect, and as a result became possessed of passions, emotions, longings, and expectations that never can be satisfied in this life, yet has nowhere else to go for hope to find fruition.

It is my solemn belief that there is a just God and a life to come, and that it was his wisdom that we should "bear the image of the earthy" that in fulfillment of the promise and in the completeness of his wondrous design, as declared at the outset, we shall some day "bear the image of the heavenly." This is my hope, and it is strengthened when I reason in the line I have been referring to. The Bible and reason tell me I am destined for conditions differing from those that are now existing here, and

a fitness for which is to be developed by my association here. I look upon this clay framework, and I ask, "Why am I tabernacled thus?" The answer comes back, "Simply that you may be adapted to the conditions which environ you in this life." That is all; and the wisdom of that strange provision is revealed in the fact that I can better serve in this life under conditions that are earthy and human through the instrumentality of a channel ordained thus than I could if I were not thus linked together with these forms of association; and just as assuredly as that comes to me as an evidence of wisdom, it also argues that somewhere in the line of future development this spirit, with its framework, changed or influenced under more purely spiritual conditions, shall arise to conditions of being that shall enable me to realize to the fullest possible degree every hope, every anticipation born legitimately within me here when abiding by the rule of life ordained in this sacred word.

I stood some few years ago by a casket that contained the mortal remains of one that seemed to me the very life of my family—the brightest one, in a mental way, of all the flock. I looked upon its still and waxen form; I felt that there was something strange associated with its removal. It had been born that I might cherish and admire, and I wondered what there was of wisdom associated with such a providence as took it away; and as the months went by that feeling grew, until six months later it was more distressing to me than it was at the time when I first looked upon the face of the

dead. But my gospel hope supplied the needed solace, and I wait to meet that sweet cherub again where no invasion of death need be dreaded. She needed better care than I could give her, perhaps, and the bud was transplanted to where its opening petals would be kissed by the zephyrs of paradise and its blooming would be immortal; where the perfume gathered from its celestial environment would be preserved to make more sweet my welcome some day to that sphere of bliss and peace. Then together we shall live again, and learn the mysteries of divine providence.

## Resurrection of the Dead.

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They taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead.—Acts 4: 2.

There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.—Acts 24: 15.

Paul, in his Hebrew letter (chapter 6, verse 2) names the resurrection of the dead as one of the principles of the doctrine of Christ. For this hope he was called in question. (See Acts 23: 6.)

The indisputable fact that Jesus rose from the dead meets all arguments as to its possibility, and furnished the apostle (see 1 Corinthians 15) a splendid basis for his reasoning upon the subject.

The hope of the resurrection had been the joy of Israel throughout all his history and generations. It was the theme of prophets, and the constant picture before the eyes of seers, and forms a large part of the testimony left us by them, constituting the warp through which the woof of their faith details was interwoven. Without it the Christian faith, with the trials it invites upon its faithful advocates and adherents, would be but a cheerless thing, or, as Paul puts it, "If in this life only we have hope, we are of all men most miserable." (1 Corinthians 15: 19.) With this hope the bitterest experiences



of this vestibule estate are made tolerable, believing as we do that "our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." (2 Corinthians 4: 17.)

To keep the spirits of the burdened and persecuted patriarchs and prophets and apostles buoyant with hope under their trials, the knowledge of the resurrection was kept alive within them by repeated visions and revelations from God, of which they bore frequent witness to Israel.

Here are a few of the items of testimony—we gather them from the Scriptures:

Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were printed in a book! that they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever! For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.—Job 19: 23-27.

God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me.—Psalm 49: 15.

Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out her dead.—Isaiah 26: 19, 20.

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. Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith 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. And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves.—Ezekiel 37: 11-13.

I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes.—Hosea 13: 14.

And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.—Daniel 12: 2.

Now that the dead are raised, even Moses showed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him.—Luke 20: 37, 38.

Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.—John 5: 28, 29.

And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise up at the last day.—John 6: 39, 40.

For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.—1 Corinthians 15: 21, 22.

It is clear from these scriptures that the resurrection of all men will be brought about; but while this remains a settled fact, and that, independent of our own action or conduct, we shall come forth from the dead or grave, there is another question which has not yet been touched, and that is, How, or with title to what estate, shall we rise? That rests with ourselves, as we shall see.

Following the announcement, "in Christ shall all be made alive," are to be found the words,

“but every man in his own order.” (1 Corinthians 15:23.) This introduces the thought of greatest moment to us, because it is left with us to elect or decide the “order.” Two resurrections are yet future: one for the “dead in Christ”; the other, more than a thousand years later, for those who die out of Christ. In evidence of this, we offer the following:

But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 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. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then 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 Thessalonians 4:13-17.

This provides for a resurrection of the disciples of Christ only—those who “died in Christ,” or “sleep in Jesus.” They are to rise at the next coming of Christ, and following their resurrection the righteous who are alive at that time are to be caught up with them to meet the Lord as he descends. Nothing is here said, however, about those who died out of Christ. What is to be their fate? Let us see:

And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more,

till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshiped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.—Revelation 20: 1-6.

Here we have further evidence as to who shall come forth in the first resurrection, or, as Paul puts it, at the coming of Jesus Christ. We have also the statement that they are to live and reign with Christ a thousand years, while the rest of the dead—those out of Christ—are not to come forth till the end of that period. Those who are called forth at this first resurrection are beyond the danger of “the second death,” and are guaranteed the right to reign with Christ a thousand years, and are pronounced blessed. This privilege they earned for themselves by discipleship to Christ on earth, they having endured suffering and persecution, and some of them even martyrdom, for their faith, refusing to bow at any other shrine or altar than that provided within the gospel of their Lord.

Still we have not learned of the coming forth of the “rest of the dead,” or those out of Christ; but, continuing to read from the same chapter, begin-

ning with the seventh verse, we find information desired. Here it is:

And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. And the Devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever. And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heavens fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the book, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.—Revelation 20: 7-13.

After the long waiting—one thousand years—and an additional season while Satan is making his final effort to get the nations together to battle against the saints who have been reigning with Christ upon the earth, the remainder of the dead are to rise and come to judgment, each to receive according as the “books,” when opened, shall show their conduct to have been—the degree of good or evil they have exhibited when on earth.

If reference is had to Matthew 16: 27, Romans 2: 6, Revelation 22: 12, it will be seen that they all bear out this fact of judgment being according to

works. We take it for granted, therefore, that "the books" contain a record of the lives of all, and each item of good or evil will be exposed, and each will receive according to the showing there made. It requires no great stretch of imagination to picture a variety of characters standing before the bar at that day. From the best grades of the neglectful or indifferent down to the lowest grades of the vicious and the cruelly wicked and criminal. Justice can never throw them together to share equal punishment, hence conditions must exist or be provided where each will find what his moral condition—his character-exhibit—calls for. The best among them, with many good deeds to their credit, have lost the first resurrection and its privileges of glory and honor by failing to honor God by obedience to Christ when he or his ministers were among them on earth, yet they deserve a much better estate than the lower class referred to, who have only lived to injure society and destroy virtue. Has provision been made for this variety of beings? Let us read:

There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead.—1 Corinthians 15: 41, 42.

Surely this is ample, and meets the strongest and loudest exactions of justice. The man who missed, by his indifference, the first resurrection, "the glory of the sun," may secure that lesser estate of honor typified by "the glory of the moon." Others of less honor or degrees of rectitude may fail of both of these, yet receive an estate typified by the glory of



a brilliant star, and so on down the line till there is scarcely a trace of even virtuous intention discernible, which will be met with an assignment to a condition where its affinities of character are found—him “that is filthy, let him be filthy still.”

Do I hear that old, timeworn objection to this, based upon the parable of the sheep and goats, from which so many think they can gather support for the idea of there being but two places hereafter—one of ineffable glory and the other of indescribable torture through endless years? If some one has that in mind, let us go together to Matthew, and inquire of him what he really has to say regarding Jesus' relation of that parable. The twenty-fifth chapter contains his answer. Let us read from the thirty-first to the forty-fifth verses, inclusive:

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: and before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? when saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the king shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least



of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.

Now, does this relation warrant the objection that there are but two classes and two places? Let us get at it in detail and see.

First, let us ask, Who are the "brethren" referred to in the forty-first verse?

Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee. But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.—Matthew 12: 47-50.

This seems to convey the idea that Jesus recognized his obedient followers only as his brethren—those who did the will of his Father. If this be true, be it remembered that these must have risen from their graves in the first resurrection and began their reign with Christ a thousand years before the time referred to in this parable, for at this time all nations are to be gathered—not the saints or those who died in Christ. (See verse 32.) Let us remember that when Jesus sent his disciples

out to represent him, he said unto them: He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.—Matthew 10: 40.

Coming back to our parable, let us note that the assembled nations are separated as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats, those representing the sheep Jesus bids to "the kingdom prepared for" *them* "from the foundation of the world." Stop here long enough to notice that the place to be inhabited by the "brethren" or disciples of Christ was not prepared from the foundation of the world, for Jesus said, at least four thousand years after the foundation of the world, to his disciples:

Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were, not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.—John 14: 1-3.

It is fair to presume that the Savior is still busy preparing the place in the mansions of the Father's house for his saints, and that when that work is finished, he will come again, as he said, and receive them to himself.

The Savior's words to those on his right are significant: "The kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Next, let us ask, Why are they to receive this kingdom? Is it a reward for their faithful discipleship—their obedience to Christ and his gospel? Not at all! It is for the good works of kindness which they had done to the disciples of Christ when they were among them on earth. They express surprise at the announcement

that they had ever fed and clothed and nursed and visited Jesus on earth. If they had been acquainted with Christ before that in the capacity of disciples, they would never have expressed surprise nor asked, When did we see you and do what you say? for they would have understood what we have already shown, that he that received a disciple of Christ received Christ. But this had to be explained to them, and Jesus does it by pointing to his "brethren," who had entered their estate of reward a thousand years before, and virtually asking the "sheep" if they do not remember having ministered unto this, that, or the other one of those "brethren" at some time. When they recognize those "brethren" and acknowledge that they did, he will answer: Well, as I told them when I sent them out among you, what you did to them you did to me, and I now reward you for it; for I meant all I said when I declared that not even a cup of cold water given to one of my disciples should in any wise lose its reward. (See Matthew 10: 42.)

Those on his left evidently had had similar opportunities to extend hospitality to the brethren, but they refused, and perhaps mistreated and persecuted them instead, and it was the same as if done in person to Jesus and God; hence the verdict to depart from them into punishment. The evidence upon which those on either side will be judged, as here shown, will doubtless be gathered from the "books" which are to be opened, in which the entries of human conduct have been faithfully made.

Thus we conclude that this parable tells of the

final judgment referred to in Revelation 20:12, 13, more than a thousand years subsequent to the time of the resurrection of the "dead in Christ," and is in agreement with John 14:2 as to there being "many mansions"; also with 1 Corinthians 15:41, 42, in which the fact of different glories in the resurrection is announced. Besides the reference made to three classes at least—viz, the "brethren," the "sheep," and the "goats"—we see no warrant in the language of the parable for concluding that all of the "sheep" will occupy the same place in the "kingdom prepared for" them, nor all of the "goats" will receive the same degree of punishment in the places of their confinement. It is enough that we explain away that which some look upon as a seeming inharmony. Our discovery of beauty of the resurrection doctrine, as herein advocated, makes us love God more than before it was so taught to us. Wisdom, justice, foreknowledge, and love stand out in such beauteous colors as to attract the soul, and the mind and heart can never fail to admire and rejoice. All praise and gratitude be for ever ascribed to our God and to his blessed and "only begotten Son" for these conditions and the gracious revelation of them to man.

## Eternal Judgment.

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He shall judge the world in righteousness, he shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness.—Psalm 9: 8.

He shall judge the people righteously.—Psalm 96: 10.

Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?—Genesis 18: 25.

Doth God pervert judgment? or doth the Almighty pervert justice?—Job 8: 3.

Connected with the gospel economy, there is no theme more grave, yet sublime, than that of "eternal judgment." Present life conditions distress the mind and burden the spirit. The "wicked flourish like a green bay-tree," while oftentimes the righteous are compelled to abide in straits of poverty and oppression. The lines of distinction by which society is classified are such as to often extol vice and decry virtue. The privileges of place and distinction are attainable only at the sacrifice of manhood and honor in very many instances. Nobility is determined from false standards and courage is passed by, while cowardice parades under its name. Truth is made a doormat for the feet of fools, while folly and heresy float as the banner watchwords of recognized leaders.

From these scenes of daily contact the gospel-taught mind turns to scan a picture of the future

which inspired fingers have painted for its relief. How striking the contrast! Birth, wealth, station, caste, and caliber are to be ignored, and it shall be:

As with the people, so with the priest; as with the servant, so with his master; as with the maid, so with her mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the lender, so with the borrower; as with the taker of usury, so with the giver of usury to him.—Isaiah 24:2.

Character alone will discriminate, and that will be determined by the record of deeds and the motives that impelled them. The rich man who gave liberally is not to be honored for the mere act of giving; for, "Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, . . . and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." —1 Corinthians 13:3. Motive is an index of character, and God, who is to be the judge, can read the motive as clearly as we can the act.

Many a man who has been accounted insolvent here will be found to have large "treasures in heaven," while others who figured as money kings below will be found paupers on the bounty of God and Christ. The classification of society will be upon an entirely different basis, and righteousness will give distinction and honor, while its absence will relegate men to reverse conditions. Judgment without fear or favor will be rendered in equity, and all will be constrained to confess its righteousness.

The opportunities of present life, be they many or few, will then proclaim the use or abuse they have been subjected to; the ability possessed by us to embrace and improve them will be noted, and we must content ourselves with the results of the show-

ing made. The record will be an accurate one, and its impeachment will be an impossibility. Our characters will bear witness, either in excellence of abounding virtue or in spiritual barrenness, in vindication of the record. Both will agree. The record will reveal causes, and the character show effects. This unity of testimony will proclaim the justness of the divine verdict which will then be rendered.

Under this eternal adjustment the holy will secure association with the holy, and they will delight themselves together in the activities that bring perpetual satisfaction; while the vile and ignoble will receive consignment together, where the influence of their presence can not extend beyond the limits of their own abode. Every man will then abide under the conditions invited by his own former decision and action, and whatever those conditions may be, whether pleasant or painful, there can be no escape from them within the time-limits decreed of God. One thing is certain, however, and that is, that no man will suffer for sins he did not commit. He will not be consigned with murderers if he committed no murder, nor with adulterers, if he is free from guilt of that crime. The popular notion that all who miss the "great salvation" must congregate together in the regions of dark despair is a cruel and unwarranted dogma. Think of the moral and immoral—the man who has stood for the protection of female virtue, and the debauchee; the honorable man and the knave; the man of strict veracity and the liar; the man of cleanly inclina-



tions and the reveler in filth; the sober man and the sot; the man of refined speech and the foul-mouthed rake—all commingling together by the decree of a being who claims justice as one of the chief attributes of his character! The institution that defends such conception is the assassin of love. The more such a theory is pressed upon our belief, the less respect can we have for its author, and with waning respect love has poor anchorage.

There is not a community on earth but would raise its voice in condemnation of such procedure on the part of an earthly judge, and yet the society that would execrate an earthly occupant of the bench for so doing makes such procedure a part of its representation of the Judge of all the earth. O consistency, how homeless thou art among human creeds! No wonder infidels are being multiplied!

Contrast with this picture the representation God and Christ have made of themselves, and which we have every warrant for believing, and "eternal judgment" stands out clear and beautiful in the resplendent luster of justice and consistency, those essentials of divinity. Who can ever object to announcements like these:

For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.—Matthew 16: 27.

Who will render to every man according to his deeds.—Romans 2: 6.

And every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labor.—1 Corinthians 3: 8.

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body,

according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.—2 Corinthians 5: 10.

Who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work.—1 Peter 1: 17.

I will give unto every one of you according to your works.—Revelation 2: 23.

And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.—Revelation 20: 12, 13.

And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.—Matthew 10: 42.

And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.—Luke 12: 47, 48.

Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.—Revelation 22: 12.

Surely no admirer of justice can complain or revolt at these or the assurances they give.

Let man conceive of anything more divine, by way of provision for classes in judgment, than this:

There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead.—1 Corinthians 15: 41, 42.

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

made alive. But every man in his own order.—1 Corinthians 15: 22, 23.

Instinctively the honest heart breaks forth in praise and thanksgiving at such an assurance as this. Truly it is the provision of an all-wise, loving, and just One, and, after consulting all the nobler qualities of our being, we feel our bosoms swell with holy pride as our knees bend at the shrine of cheerful devotion, while our lips frame the words, "Our Father which art in heaven." It is human love begotten by the revelation of divine attributes. It is our acknowledgment and tribute to the divine proclamation: "The Judge of all the earth will do right." "The Lord shall judge the world in righteousness."

## Probation After Death.

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Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.—Matthew 16: 18.

The subject of this discourse is one of the most interesting and comforting of which we know anything, and we only wish our ability was such as to present it in anything like its beauty, or as its importance deserves. We can only here bring out a few points in its support and leave it.

When preaching the exclusive New Testament faith, we are often asked as to what will become of those who died without hearing it. The popular idea that only two places exist hereafter—the heaven of the “sheep” and the hell or everlasting fire estate of the “goats”—gives rise to this question; for, considering the “hell” spoken of to be a place of literal burning, and that those once entering it can never escape, the idea of God’s partiality is made to appear, in that but few have had opportunity to learn the way of life and escape hell.

Without preliminary, we shall proceed to introduce scriptures which to us seem self-explanatory, and will avoid all unnecessary comment, hoping to thus give most of the space to God’s word, and not ours. First, we wish to show that hell is not necessarily a place of literal burning:

The sorrows of hell compassed me about; the snares of death prevented me; in my distress I called upon the Lord, and cried to my God: and he did hear my voice out of his temple, and my cry did enter into his ears.—2 Samuel 22: 6, 7.

The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow.—Psalm 116: 3.

For great is thy mercy toward me: and thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell.—Psalm 86: 13.

And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.—James 3: 6.

Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell.—Proverbs 23: 14.

The way of life is above to the wise, that he may depart from hell beneath.—Proverbs 15: 24.

In each of these hell is represented as a condition of mind or character, and the Psalmist in one place declares that he had already been delivered from the "lowest hell." James says the tongue is a "fire" and is "set on fire of hell," whereby he can not mean literal fire, as we all must admit. In all of these other instances the idea of deliverance from hell is carried. Next we consider hell as a place:

And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.—Luke 16: 23, 24.

The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that have forgot God.—Psalm 9: 17.

In this case of "torments" of hell and in the midst of the "flame," it was quite possible to carry on a

conversation with another who was "afar off," with a "great gulf" between them. (Verse 26.) It will be well to observe that these are all figures of speech, as was "Abraham's bosom," and are not to be taken as literal. In the imagination of careless readers, this rich man is pictured as a very bad or vicious man, and Lazarus as a very good one; and we heard a preacher once tell his audience about Lazarus having been driven from the rich man's door, and the dogs having been set upon him. Not a word appears in the recital to that effect; rather the contrary, for it would seem that Lazarus was laid at that gate because he was permitted to feed upon the remnants from the rich man's table there, and the dogs simply licked his sores. In all this we see nothing but a representation of two conditions of estate in this life, and the Savior wished to show that we ought not to judge from these alone, for in the future many of them would be reversed, the rich man becoming a beggar and the poor man coming into good estate. There is nothing in poverty or sores or dog-licks to entitle a man to future glory, and there is nothing in being rich, faring sumptuously, and being well clothed to make a man deserving of eternal roasting in a literal fire. It is simply the use or abuse of our estate that makes character, and only character will count hereafter. We have no right to distort or read into the text what is not there, and there is nothing there that shows criminality nor ought to justify such a punishment as enthusiasts make that hell to mean.

Hell may, therefore, be a place or condition, and is

one of distress, varying in degree. Thousands of people may be in one place here, but they do not all fare alike nor feel alike, necessarily.

Here is another testimony:

And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice.—Jonah 2: 2.

Note from the context of this that Jonah was in the belly of a fish, and it is here called hell. Read the following verses, and, in the sixth, find that he was there for ever, and you will learn that any place where God's punishment is being endured is hell, and any period of time may mean for ever. With Jonah it was but three days. If for ever can mean only three days in one case in Scripture, "for ever and ever" may be limited to six days, if necessary. The word does not mean without cessation or ending in all cases. In Isaiah 32: 14, 15, evil was decreed against Palestine for ever, yet the next verse limits it until the Spirit of God should come. We read of the "everlasting" hills, and yet every mountain and hill is to be leveled if the Word is fulfilled. The words *hell*, *pit*, *prison*, and *nether parts of the earth* are used synonymously in the Scriptures quite frequently, as may be seen from the following:

For they are all delivered unto death, to the nether parts of the earth, in the midst of the children of men, with them that go down to the pit.—Ezekiel 31: 14.

I made the nations to shake at the sound of his fall, when I cast him down to hell with them that descend into the pit: and all the trees of Eden, the choice and best of Lebanon, all that drink water, shall be comforted in the nether parts of



the earth. They also went down into hell with him unto them that be slain with the sword; and they that were his arm, that dwelt under his shadow in the midst of the heathen.—Ezekiel 31: 16, 17.

Son of man, wail for the multitude of Egypt, and cast them down, even her, and the daughters of the famous nations, unto the nether parts of the earth, with them that go down into the pit. . . . The strong among the mighty shall speak to him out of the midst of hell with them that help him: they are gone down, they lie uncircumcised, slain by the sword. Asshur is there and all her company: his graves are about him: all of them slain, fallen by the sword: whose graves are set in the sides of the pit, and her company is round about her grave; all of them slain, fallen by the sword, which caused terror in the land of the living. There is Elam and all her multitude round about her grave; all of them slain, fallen by the sword, which are gone down uncircumcised into the nether parts of the earth, which caused their terror in the land. . . . And they shall not lie with the mighty that are fallen of the uncircumcised, which are gone down to hell with their weapons of war: and they have laid their swords under their heads, but their iniquities shall be upon their bones, though they were the terror of the mighty in the land of the living. Yea, thou shalt be broken in the midst of the uncircumcised, and shalt lie with them that are slain with the sword. There is Edom, her kings, and all her princes, which with their might are laid by them that were slain by the sword: they shall lie with the uncircumcised, and with them that go down to the pit.—Ezekiel 32: 18-29.

Place and condition of punishment are here indicated and in very plain terms. We leave this without further comment at present, and proceed to show that deliverance from hell is possible.

In verse 21 of the foregoing it is said that "the strong among the mighty" will speak out of the midst of hell. Later we shall see the object of this.

Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.—Matthew 5: 25, 26.

Here the word *prison* is employed and as a place of punishment, from whence those cast in shall not escape till they have paid the uttermost farthing. This has no meaning if deliverance is impossible when the debt is paid.

Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.—Matthew 12: 31, 32.

This leaves the inference that both in this world and the world to come all sins but the one named may be forgiven. This means an extended probation beyond this life; but some one may raise the point here, that this text declares, substantially, that the punishment of these blasphemers against the Holy Ghost will never end—from their hell there will be no escape. It does not say that. It simply says they shall not be forgiven. If a man pays the uttermost “farthing” either in cash or its equivalent in punishment, he can not be said to be forgiven. God says of certain ones, “Though they dig unto hell, thence shall my hand take them.” (Amos 9: 2.)

From Revelation 20: 13 we learn that death and hell are finally to deliver up the dead which are in

them, and all are to appear for judgment. In the next verse we are told that hell itself will then be disposed of, for it is to be cast into the lake of fire. Its purpose will then have been served, and it will be no longer continued. It is simply a place of incarceration for the spirits of the ungodly between death and the resurrection, and after the resurrection it can serve no purpose and will be disposed of as above.

During its continuance, however, it is to be visited by Christ, and the gospel is to be preached to its inmates. In supporting this statement, we will arrange our evidence under three heads, as follows: 1. Christ's mission to hell, the pit, or prison-house predicted. 2. Christ accepted the work. 3. He went to hell and preached the gospel. We have already directed attention to the fact that the "strong among the mighty" was to speak out of the midst of hell. (Ezekiel 32: 21.) We now proceed to furnish evidence that such a mission was prophesied for Christ. Note carefully every sentence, please:

And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth. And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited.—Isaiah 24: 21, 22.

I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house.—Isaiah 42: 6, 7.

And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my

servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth. Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the Lord that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee. Thus saith the Lord, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages: that thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Show yourselves. They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places.—Isaiah 49: 6-9.

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn.—Isaiah 61: 1, 2.

As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water. Turn you to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope: even to-day do I declare that I will render double unto thee.—Zechariah 9: 11, 12.

Here is proof that the mission of Christ in raising up the tribes of Jacob and restoring the preserved of Israel was to be a "light thing" compared with his mission to the Gentiles and to the prison-house and in giving liberty to the captives and redemption to the ends of the earth. The blood of his covenant was to secure release for the "prisoners of hope," who were held in "the pit wherein is no

water.” This latter statement makes one instinctively identify that pit with the hell from which the “rich man” cried for Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water to touch and cool his parched tongue. Such was the mission predicted. Did Jesus so understand and accept it? Let us read and learn:

And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.—Luke 4: 16-21.

All will identify this scripture with Isaiah 61: 1, 2, given above, and note that Jesus applied it to himself, and declared it was being fulfilled in their day. It will not do for people to say that this deliverance to the captives, opening of the prison-house, and saying to the prisoners, “Go forth,” was merely liberating men from the serfdom of sin—a spiritual deliverance—for this passage is quoted from Isaiah, and we have shown from several parts of his prophecy that there was a place into which the haughty and great and disobedient of earth were to be gathered as prisoners—the pit—and there they were to be visited after many days. This could not

be on earth, for they were to be gathered from the earth into said pit; it was a place where no water was to be found. But listen again to Jesus:

Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.—John 5: 25.

This makes clear the question of who were in the prison-house—those who had not yet heard, but must hear his voice. Jesus was talking about those actually dead, whose spirits were in the prison, and whose bodies were in the grave, as may be seen by reference to verses twenty-eight and twenty-nine. Thus it is clear that he understood, accepted, and proclaimed his mission to the dead—the prison-house. This brings us to the final proposition: Did he go there? Again we go to the good book for evidence:

Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.—Acts 2: 27.

His soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.—Acts 2: 31.

These refer to Christ, as the context clearly shows, and from them we learn that he was to go and did go to hell; but did not remain sufficiently long to allow him [his body] to see corruption.

Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)—Ephesians 4: 8-10.

Here we have his descent into the lower—"nether parts of the earth" announced, and for the reason



stated, "that he might fill all things"; that he might fulfill all the scriptures relating to his mission; and that when finally ascending he might "lead captivity captive," having first freed the captives. Again we read:

For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: by which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah.—1 Peter 3: 18-20.

Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead. For, for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.—1 Peter 4: 5, 6.

How plain this is! Jesus is to be judge of the "quick" (living) and "the dead," and for this cause (that he may be able to justly judge the dead) was the gospel preached to them as well as to the living. He could not judge them by a gospel they had not heard, and hence he went and preached it to them, for it is the word of Christ—the gospel that is to be the basis of his final judgment, as is shown in the following:

God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.—Romans 2: 16. The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.—John 12: 48.

How could they hear that gospel without a preacher (see Romans 10: 14), and how could they answer to an opportunity which had never been given them? Herein is revealed the love and justice of our Master, who himself took that message to



them. Up to that time the "gates of hell" had been closed against all forces of God, but Jesus had said that they should not prevail against his church—its mission and power would penetrate that dark region. He himself pioneered the work of forcing the "gates of hell" and extending his dominion over hell and death, and after coming forth a conqueror over both, he appeared before John on the Isle of Patmos, and said:

I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for ever more, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.—Revelation 1: 18.

Those keys were wrenched by him from "him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil." (Hebrews 2: 14.) The "gates of hell" could not prevail; they were compelled to yield, and Jesus took the keys into his own hand, that henceforth the gospel might be made accessible to the inhabitants of both earth and hell, and both have equal privilege to hear and obey.

Let us now reason a little upon a few other points which relate hereto. Paul says that God "hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." (Acts 17: 26.)

Hence, we all occupy on earth under the pre-arrangement of God as to time and locality. The Chinamen, the South Sea Islanders, the British, the Americans, those of the patriarchal, prophetic, or gospel age—two thousand years ago or now. God is responsible for the times and bounds of habitation

of all men upon the face of the whole earth. He knew where and when gospel privileges would abound, and where and when they would not. This is point No. 1. Next, let us note that he ordained but one means of salvation, as per the following testimony:

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.—John 14: 6.

Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.—Acts 4: 12.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he can not enter into the kingdom of God.—John 3: 5.

For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach, except they be sent?—Romans 10: 13-15.

Only within the gospel of Christ can salvation be found, according to this, and it must be proclaimed by a God-sent preacher. This makes point No. 2. Next we proceed to show that the Scriptures plainly teach that all shall hear that gospel; to-wit:

And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.—John 12: 32.

For therefore we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, specially of those that believe.—1 Timothy 4: 10.

But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.—Hebrews 2: 9.

For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.—1 Corinthians 15: 22.

Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.—1 Timothy 2: 6.

Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.—Psalm 2: 8.

Lengthy comment on this is needless. Jesus was to be the Savior of all men—a ransom for all, to be testified of in due time.

With these three points fixed before us, let us reason in the light they cast upon the situation we are discussing. It is well known that not one third of earth's inhabitants have even heard of such a person as Jesus, or of his gospel. With this fact before us, and the arrangement that salvation only comes by that gospel, how are the scriptures which declare that all shall be reached thereby to be fulfilled if there is no chance for hearing after death? How shall the millions who passed away without hearing it be saved by it? Remember that the bounds and times of our earthly habitation were determined beforetime by God. Hence the heathen is not to blame for not having heard the message. The Hindoo is free from condemnation until he hears, for Jesus said: "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light."—John 3: 19.

Millions of these have been swept by death from earth's stage without hearing, yet all are to hear! Where and when if not after death? Does it not look from the above combination of scriptures as if it was a part of the prearrangement that all should

not hear in this life? Does not justice demand that such as failed here shall have opportunity hereafter? Surely it does, and that we may know that God is just, he has taken pains to inform us of his plans through Jesus Christ.

Jesus, by asking, is to have "the heathen for thine [his] inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy [his] possession." (Psalm 2: 8.)

The Lord has sworn:

As I live, . . . every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.—Romans 14: 11.

God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.—Philippians 2: 9-11.

This is to be the glorious outcome of the mission of Jesus Christ. Hence our text is true. The "gates of hell" can not "prevail" against the onward march and extending dominion of the church of Christ. Its conquests are to be gained on earth and in hell, hence Jesus led on in the grand movement as the "Captain of our salvation." He forced the gates of hell and entered and "preached deliverance to the captives." He returned and took his body from the tomb, and rose triumphant. He appeared thereafter to many on earth, and later to John in vision upon Patmos, to whom he declared himself to be the possessor of the keys of death and hell. He went where those keys were, and seized them from the enemy's hand. Hence he it is that "openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth."

He told the truth, after gaining such a conquest, when he said: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." He began the gospel work on earth, and inaugurated the order for its continuance. He then pushed his work into hell, and doubtless provided there for continued work. He then ascended on high, and led "captivity captive." "All hail the power of Jesus' name!" Glorious King! Blessed truth! Holy church!

## The Book of Mormon.

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Truth shall spring out of the earth.—Psalm 85:11.

And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.—John 10:16.

Has this strange book any place among us by divine right? Is it what it purports to be? Does it aid in the establishment of the Christian faith? Will the Bible help us to answer these questions? Let us look deep into it and see. First, let us hear the claim made for the book by itself and its advocates:

Joseph Smith gave it to the world in printed form in the year 1830. He said he had translated it by the inspiration of God from inscriptions on plates which he found, by the direction of an angel, in a hill in Western New York. He further said that the angel had recited several passages from Isaiah and other places in the Bible in his hearing, and told him that they referred to this book; that it contained the history of a people God once had upon this continent, and that when it came forth, the church of Christ would be organized again on earth with its ancient gifts, doctrine, and organization; that in a little while Palestine would, after its cen-

turies of barrenness, become fruitful, the Jews would come into prominence and remembrance before God in fulfillment of the old prophecies concerning them, and they would begin to gather back to their own land, which would be built up, and the way would be prepared thus for the second advent of Jesus to this earth; that this was the age in which the "dispensation of the fullness of times" was to be introduced; and that he, Joseph, if faithful, would be chosen to lead out and minister as a servant of God in this wonderful work.

The advice of Paul is that we "prove all things; hold fast that which is good." (1 Thessalonians 5: 21.) Let us test these claims of Joseph Smith for the Book of Mormon by the Bible. If it proves to be "good," let us "hold fast" to it; if not, let us reject it.

To get an intelligent idea of the matters involved in this study, we must go back and consider causes leading up to them. Hence, we will turn the Bible pages back to the First Book of Kings, twelfth chapter. Here we learn that because of the refusal of Rehoboam, the king, to make lighter the burdens which his father had imposed upon the people, they revolted, and all of them, except the tribe of Judah, made Jeroboam king over Israel. Rehoboam reigned over Judah only, with Jerusalem as his abode; while Jeroboam reigned over all the other tribes, with Shechem in Mount Ephraim as his headquarters. That was the first great division of the tribes.

About seven hundred and twenty years before



Christ, Shalmanezar, king of Assyria, came and besieged the city of Samaria, and took Israel captive to Assyria. (See 2 Kings 17: 5, 6; 18: 10-12; also, if you are curious, read 2 Esdras 13: 40, 41.)

About six hundred years before Christ, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came up against Jerusalem and destroyed it, and took the children of Judah captive to Babylon. (See 2 Kings 25: 1-11.)

After about seventy years of this captivity in Babylon, Cyrus, king of Persia, made proclamation that the Jews should return, which they did, and rebuilt their city and temple. (See Ezra, first chapter, and Nehemiah, seventh chapter.) They remained there until about the year 70 of the Christian Era, when, in fulfillment of Christ's prediction (see Luke 21: 24), they were again besieged, overthrown, and scattered by the army under Titus, the Roman general. They were then dispersed among all nations.

The Israelites who were taken by Shalmanezar to Assyria, with the exception of possibly a few who got mixed with Judah, never returned, nor is their whereabouts known to this day. From that time the distinction was kept up between the two, and we read of them as the "outcasts of Israel" and the "dispersed of Judah" (Isaiah 11: 12), because the former were lost to the knowledge of the people, and the latter were dispersed among the nations.

From this condition God has often said he would regather them. We will not give space here to the quotations, but simply refer you to Isaiah 1: 24-26; 60: 15; Jeremiah 30: 18-24; 31: 7-14; 33: 6, 7;

23: 6-8; Ezekiel 20: 33-42; 28: 25, 26; Amos 9: 9-15, and many other places.

In this great gathering work Ephraim is to be the first-born:

Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the coasts of the earth, and with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that travaileth with child together: a great company shall return thither. They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them: I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble: for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my first-born.—Jeremiah 31: 8, 9.

In the accomplishment of the work God will set up an "ensign," or "sign," or standard:

And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.—Isaiah 11: 12.

Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people: and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders.—Isaiah 49: 22.

And I will set a sign among them, and I will send those that escape of them unto the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, to Tubal, and Javan, to the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles.—Isaiah 66: 19.

God is to make a new heaven and a new earth (see Isaiah 66: 22) as a climax to this gathering. This was the hope of the gospel of Christ (see 2 Peter 3: 13), and as the gathering of Israel is to be unto Christ, we conclude that this "standard," or "ensign," or "sign" will be the gospel of Christ:

The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.—Genesis 49: 10.

That in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him.—Ephesians 1: 10.

By the preaching of this gospel Jesus sought to gather them in his day, but they would not:

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not.—Matthew 23: 37.

He also said that the preaching of "this gospel" would be a sign of his coming and of the end of the world. The gospel is the only message which is to be sent out in the last days to invite a gathering to the marriage supper. These messengers evidently will be the "ensign" bearers. How closely their commission agrees with that of those referred to by Jeremiah! Here they are, side by side:

And the Lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.—Luke 14: 23.

Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks.—Jeremiah 16: 16.

To appreciate the force and beauty of these comparisons, you must read the context in each case; both are bearing on the final gathering to Christ; hence it is fair to conclude that they are identical. "The highways and hedges," said Jesus; "moun-

tain" and "hill" and "holes in the rocks," said God through Jeremiah. The same errand, the same gathering center, and the same work of ferreting the people out, show that the eyes of Jeremiah and the eyes of Christ were upon the same work and the same "ensign" or "standard" bearers.

But let us search out more about them and their ensign:

Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, For Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions: then take another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel his companions: and join them one to another into one stick; and they shall become one in thine hand. And when the children of thy people shall speak unto thee, saying, Wilt thou not show us what thou meanest by these? say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel his fellows, and will put them with him, even with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they shall be one in mine hand. And the sticks whereon thou writest shall be in thine hand before their eyes.—Ezekiel 37: 16-20.

This is to be followed by a gathering together of the hosts of Israel and their establishment as a united people upon their ancient land, never again to be scattered. (See the following verses.) The "sticks" here spoken of, which by their being united in the last days are to become a sign and a harbinger of the final gathering, are simply records. The stick of Judah is the history of Judah and of God's dealings with him. It is the Bible. The "stick of Ephraim," afterwards called the "stick of Joseph," is the record or history of Ephraim or Joseph.

It is to be found in the "hand" or possession or land of Ephraim, and is to be taken with the tribes it tells of and placed into the same hands which hold the stick of Judah, and they are to become one—one in testimony, purpose, operation, and in fact. The testimony of these two records or sticks must agree, or they could not be united and effective in influencing the gathering of Israel that is to follow. The stick of Judah contains a history of Judah and the law of God—the gospel of Christ. Will the "stick" or record of Ephraim or Joseph contain his law?

Because Ephraim hath made many altars to sin, altars shall be unto him to sin. I have written to him the great things of my law, but they were counted as a strange thing.—Hosea 8: 11, 12.

This indicates that Ephraim had been supplied with the law of God, and this would imply further, that he was separated far from his brethren of Judah at the time, otherwise a separate writing would have been unnecessary.

But where or in what direction shall we turn to search for Ephraim's "hand" or land? Where has he located himself? Perhaps the "stick of Judah" will give us a few hints. Let us see.

They shall walk after the Lord: he shall roar like a lion: when he shall roar, then the children shall tremble from the west.—Hosea 11: 10.

This refers to Ephraim, as the preceding verse shows, and it directs our eyes *westward* from Palestine in our search for him. That is one point gained, and a good one. Now for another:

And he blessed Joseph, and said, God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me

all my life long unto this day, the Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads; and let my name be named on them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth. And when Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand upon the head of Ephraim, it displeased him: and he held up his father's hand, to remove it from Ephraim's head unto Manasseh's head. And Joseph said unto his father, Not so, my father: for this is the first-born; put thy right hand upon his head. And his father refused, and said, I know it, my son, I know it: he also shall become a people, and he also shall be great: but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become a multitude of nations. And he blessed them that day, saying, In thee shall Israel bless, saying, God make thee as Ephraim, and as Manasseh: and he set Ephraim before Manasseh.—Genesis 48: 15-20.

Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall: the archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him: but his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob; (from thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel:) even by the God of thy father, who shall help thee; and by the Almighty, who shall bless thee with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lieth under, blessings of the breasts, and of the womb: the blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills: they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren.—Genesis 49: 22-26.

And of Joseph he said, Blessed of the Lord be his land, for the precious things of heaven, for the dew, and for the deep that coucheth beneath, and for the precious fruits brought forth by the sun, and for the precious things put forth by the moon, and for the chief things of the ancient mountains, and for the precious things of the lasting hills, and for the precious things of the earth and fullness thereof,



and for the good will of him that dwelleth in the bush: let the blessing come upon the head of Joseph, and upon the top of the head of him that was separated from his brethren. His glory is like the firstling of his bullock, and his horns are like the horns of unicorns: with them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth: and they are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh.—Deuteronomy 33: 13-17.

Some remarkable things are found in these references: 1. A special blessing upon Ephraim. He was to grow into "multitude of nations" "in the midst of the earth." 2. The blessing which Jacob had secured "prevailed above" that of his progenitors, and was put upon the head of Joseph and his posterity. The blessing of Jacob's progenitors was confined to the land of Palestine for an everlasting inheritance; but this one put upon the head of Joseph and his seed was to extend "to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills." Joseph was to be a "fruitful bough," and his "branches"—offspring—were to "run over the wall" (the sea was supposed to be the wall that limited or confined them). 3. The land or possession of Joseph's seed was to be a notable one for the blessings of heaven upon it and the precious things its mountains and hills would yield, also the products of its soil; and all this was to be given to the seed of Joseph, and there he was to perform his part as a pioneer—as the "horns of unicorns," in pushing together the people to the ends of the earth.

We have already shown that Ephraim, the son of Joseph, was to be the first-born in the work of final gathering, and here we have it repeated, and here



are to be the ten thousands of Ephraim and the thousands of Manasseh. Here we have several points, and now we know that in our search for Ephraim's land we are to look, first, *westward* from Palestine; second, *over* the wall or sea; third, to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills; fourth, to a land remarkable for the wealth of its mountains, the products of its soil, and the blessings produced by sun and moon—the blessings of heaven (the things of God), and other things; but this is enough. This surely will enable the reader, who stands in imagination in Palestine and looks westward on the map, to locate the American continent as the only possible land that can meet the requirements. But we read further:

Woe to the land shadowing with wings, which is beyond the rivers of Ethiopia: that sendeth ambassadors by the sea, even in vessels of bulrushes upon the waters, saying, Go, ye swift messengers, to a nation scattered and peeled, to a people terrible from their beginning hitherto; a nation meted out and trodden down, whose land the rivers have spoiled! All ye inhabitants of the world, and dwellers on the earth, see ye, when he lifteth up an ensign on the mountains; and when he bloweth a trumpet, hear ye.—Isaiah 18: 1-3.

This describes a land just as America appears on the map—"shadowing with wings," and locates it beyond the rivers of Ethiopia, or Africa, from Palestine, and again lands us in America, and moreover it tells us that upon that land the "ensign" is to be set up, and to be carried finally to that nation "scattered and peeled"—trodden down, etc. Instinctively one identifies the dispersed of Judah and the out-

casts of Israel by this description. But let us dip again into the reservoir of information:

Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt: thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it. Thou preparedst room before it, and didst cause it to take deep root, and it filled the land. The hills were covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs thereof were like the goodly cedars. She sent out her boughs unto the sea, and her branches unto the river.—Psalm 80: 8-11.

For the fields of Heshbon languish, and the vine of Sibmah: the lords of the heathen have broken down the principal plants thereof, they are come even unto Jazer, they wandered through the wilderness: her branches are stretched out, they are gone over the sea.—Isaiah 16: 8.

O vine of Sibmah, I will weep for thee with the weeping of Jazer: thy plants are gone over the sea.—Jeremiah 48: 32.

From Numbers 32: 33, 37, 38 we learn that Heshbon and Sibmah were occupied by the seed of Joseph and Reuben; and from 1 Chronicles 5: 1 we discover that though Reuben was the first-born of Jacob, yet because he defiled his father's bed, his birthright was given to the sons of Joseph. Hence we can understand from the above whose "branches" went over the sea from Heshbon and Sibmah. The vine that God brought from Egypt, the country into which Joseph was sold, was planted in the places named, and their offspring extended over the sea—westward—to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills, where Ephraim was to grow mightily, and to whom the law of God was written, which, in the last days, was to be taken and put with the record of Judah, and become the sign or ensign upon that wonderful land, and, like the horns of a unicorn, be

effective in gathering the people according to the oft-repeated promise of God.

But now, having found the "land," or dwelling, or possession of Ephraim, and that upon it the "ensign" is to be raised, and that it is to be in the form of two united records, containing the law of God—the gospel and the power of gathering the people to Christ—let us ask, "How is it to make its appearance?" Let the Lord tell us through his inspired servants:

Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven.—Psalm 85: 10, 11.

Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness: let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation, and let righteousness spring up together; I the Lord have created it.—Isaiah 45: 8.

What is truth? From Psalm 119: 142, 151, and John 17: 17, we may learn that it is the law of God—the commandments of God—the word of God. These are truth, and "truth" was to "spring out of the earth"; by the truth comes salvation. Hence these texts are easy to be understood. God's law was to come forth from the earth, and in all these passages these promises are connected with the great gathering and restoration work. In Isaiah we have the following:

And thou shalt be brought down, and shalt speak out of the ground, and thy speech shall be low out of the dust, and thy voice shall be, as of one that hath a familiar spirit, out of the ground, and thy speech shall whisper out of the dust. . . . Stay yourselves, and wonder; cry ye out and cry: they are drunken, but not with wine; they stagger, but not with

strong drink. For the Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes: the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered. And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I can not; for it is sealed: and the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned. Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men: therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people, even a marvelous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid. Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord, and their works are in the dark, and they say, Who seeth us? and who knoweth us? Surely your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as the potter's clay; for shall the work say of him that made it, He made me not? or shall the thing framed say of him that framed it, He had no understanding? Is it not yet a very little while, and Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall be esteemed as a forest? And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness. The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel. For the terrible one is brought to nought, and the scorner is consumed, and all that watch for iniquity are cut off: that make a man an offender for a word, and lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate, and turn aside the just for a thing of nought. Therefore thus saith the Lord, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob, Jacob shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale. But when he seeth his children, the work of mine hands, in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One

of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel. They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding, and they that murmured shall learn doctrine.—Isaiah 29: 4, 9-24.

Read the introductory verses to this, and see that a powerful nation had been brought down and was later to speak out of the ground. How could this be except by its record thus coming forth. It was to occur at a time when the religious world was "drunken"—not with wine, but with bewildering doctrines and creeds; prophets and seers all dead, and the fear of the people taught by the precepts of men instead of by revelation from God or the word of his truth—the Bible. Those who "erred in spirit" were to come to understanding because of this speech from the dust—this book that was to come forth, and those who murmured (were dissatisfied with the bedlam of theology, so called, around them) were to learn doctrine. It was to help inaugurate the great gathering and restoration work of the last days, when Israel is to inherit her own land and never to be scattered again. It is to appear in the form of "a book," and it is to stagger the wisdom of the wise, and make the religion-framers look foolish in the face of their own Bible, which it would explain. The deaf are to hear the words of the book (that implies that it is to be preached, for "How shall they hear without a preacher?"), and the blind are to see out of obscurity. Truly "a marvelous work and a wonder" indeed; but it is associated with a test that will prove it true or false. It is to come forth at a time when Palestine was a barren waste, but in "a little while" Lebanon was to become a

fruitful field, and the fruitful field was to be esteemed as a forest.

When Joseph Smith said the angel told him this last item would be fulfilled soon after he brought forth the hidden or buried history of the inhabitants of this continent, he gave the world a splendid chance to prove his revelation false, if it was false. The world took advantage of the opportunity, and said that if rope enough were given the Book of Mormon, it would hang itself as high as Haman, for Palestine would never become fruitful again. For seventeen hundred years it had lain waste under the curse the rejection of Christ brought upon it, and that curse would always remain. But just twenty-three years from the issuance of the book the prediction was vindicated in its claim and Palestine was being watered again with the "early and latter rains" as of yore. The spell of long centuries was broken, and a seal was set upon the Book of Mormon so divinely that human skill and devilish ingenuity has never been able to disfigure or remove it. The grander seal, however, which has confirmed the book has been put within the hearts of those who have accepted it as an added testimony that Jesus is the Christ and a proof of the divinity of the Bible. To such it has performed the mission appointed it, as shown in Isaiah 29; in increasing their joy, dispelling their doubts, and establishing them in the truth of God. The Spirit's seal has been put upon it as a book and upon its work in union with the Bible, as the "sticks" in the hands of God by which he shows his ancient promise true and his



purpose to redeem Israel unchanged. Nor will its blessed work be stayed till Israel and Judah, so long separated, shall be gathered from nations known and regions unknown to us, and shall together occupy the land which Moses saw from Nebo's summit, which Joshua entered; where patriarchs dwelt and prophets wrote; where the glory of the Highest rested; and where once more, and that for ever, they shall rejoice in the abundance of peace and truth under the smile and protection of the Messiah they once rejected, but later learned to love.

We add to this lengthy discourse two quotations; the first from the stick of Judah—the Bible—and the other from the stick of Ephraim or Joseph—the Book of Mormon—and by uniting these two together show a prophecy made and fulfilled by our Lord himself:

And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.—John 10: 16.

And verily, I say unto you, that ye are they of whom I said, Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd. And they understood me not, for they supposed it had been the Gentiles.—Book of Nephi 7: 2.

These last words were addressed to the people of this continent to whom Jesus appeared after his crucifixion at Jerusalem, and whom he organized into a church and endowed with all the blessings characteristic of his gospel. The remnant of those people, who degenerated afterward, are the Indians of North America. Many other passages crowd



upon the mind as we prepare this sermon, but space is not at our command for them all. The antiquities of America have been coming to light for half a century, and numerous volumes now load the shelves of our public libraries, and from these may be gathered evidences sufficient to surfeit the student in his search for proof that the Book of Mormon is true. None of these books were written before the appearance of the Book of Mormon, and none of them have been written with any reference to it or with a view to its support, except possibly one or two small works issued by the church that accepts the book as divine. To these we have no reference. What we have presented will serve as an introduction to the subject, and will perhaps be sufficient to influence some honest seeker after truth to read the Book of Mormon and judge of its merits and claims. To those who are of opinion from reports circulated that the book teaches or in any way sanctions polygamy, or any kind of evil, we say in conclusion, all such stories are absolutely and unqualifiedly false. Not a word is found therein bearing upon the subject, except in strong denunciation of it and in warning to all those who made it their practice. Even the work of David and Solomon in that regard is declared to be an abomination in the sight of God, and hell is threatened as the coming portion of those unrepentant. Virtue is everywhere extolled and vice condemned in it. To be employed in its advocacy and defense is a work of honor and worthy of those who came from heaven to first engage in it—the angels of God.

## Wounded in the House of His Friends.

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What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ?—  
Matthew 27: 22.

When this question was asked by Pilate, the answer came promptly from the people: "Let him be crucified!" This demand was made at the instigation of their ministers—the chief priests and elders—as may be seen by reference to the twentieth verse. It was a terrible spectacle. To say nothing of the divinity of Christ's work and mission, it was a most ignoble thing to see a man who had done nothing but good consigned to a horrible death, and to hear the deafening clamor for the liberation of a thief and murderer instead. But Barabbas was the man the priests and elders told them to ask for, and they were obedient. What a terrible mistake they made! To what terrible extremes of barbarity and crime will bigotry and ignorance lead poor mortals! The truest and best Friend humanity ever had was thus given over by the ruler to the inflamed and insane caprice of a mob, and that mob vociferously demanded that he be murdered and his blood be left upon them and their children. But Jesus understood them, and told the truth as he died at their hands, when he said to his Father in prayer,

"Forgive them; for they know not what they do." Paul wrote to the Corinthians that had the people known that it was the Lord of glory, they would not have crucified him. They were deplorably ignorant and trusted to their priests to direct them. Their priests were also blind, and both plunged into the ditch.

As they demanded, the blood of their innocent victim has been upon them as a race ever since, and their subsequent scattering and distress, their reduction from the pinnacle of national greatness to the despicable straits in which, as a "hiss and a byword among all nations," they have for centuries been compelled to remain, is in evidence that they crucified a Savior—the prophet and Christ of their Scriptures.

Zechariah, the prophet, tells of a time when One shall be inquired of as to the origin of the wounds in his hands, and he will make answer, "Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends." (See Zechariah 13: 6, 7.) Christendom interprets this scripture as relating to Christ, and anticipates a day of consternation and grief and repentance for the Jews when the truth of that awful revelation shall dawn upon them, and they shall thereby identify their final Deliverer and long-prayed-for Messiah with the Jesus of Nazareth, whom they "slew and hanged upon a tree." Their professed reverence for this insulted Jesus has furnished a supposed justification to the Gentile world for building high the walls which prevent its religious intercourse with the Jew. The entire world of believers in the

New Testament stands aghast before that tragedy that reveals the God-man extended upon a cross of wood—bleeding and lacerated and torn by the will of the Jews and at the instigation of their rabbis and teachers! To them the thought of *friendship* for the Messiah being found among the murderers of Jesus is almost incomprehensible. The Jew is accounted by them to be the *enemy* of Christ because he did not discern that Christ in Jesus of Nazareth in the light of the Scriptures in which he professed to believe.

But my purpose in this discourse is to ask the world of Bible believers—New Testament admirers by profession—"What shall I do with Jesus which is called Christ?" Be it remembered that I am not referring to the flesh or body of Christ which the Jews disposed of; that is beyond our reach. We could not crown nor murder that if we would. Still, we have Christ with us in his declared and published truth, for he said, "I am the truth." The testimony of his fleshly lips was to the effect that whosoever received those whom he sent to proclaim that truth received him and the Father also. (See John 13:20.) It was not the treatment he personally received at the hands of the Jews that grieved him, so much as their rejection of the truth he came to save them by. That truth remains. It is as divine as it ever was. Jesus said (see John 6:32-63) that he was the "true bread from heaven," which must be eaten by us if we would have life; and wound up by explaining that flesh profited nothing; it was the spirit that quickened; and the "words" which he

spoke were "*spirit and life.*" It was and is the message he bore that he presents for our acceptance and obedience, and in that message God and Christ are resident as literally now as when Jesus was on earth in the flesh.

Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.—2 John 9.

From this verse it is evident that God and Christ, in the sense we have declared, are resident in the doctrine of Christ—the gospel—the truth, and by accepting that doctrine we receive Christ and God. Whatever treatment that truth receives, God and Christ receive at our hands. We may coronate it by obedience and allowing it to sanctify us in godliness; or we can pierce it with the swords of our theology; or mince and segregate it, appropriating what tickles our fancy and discarding and murdering what we do not admire. We may make our creeds, and dissect the Christ doctrine to select pieces therefrom to adorn them, and then, like the Ephesians, cry out, "Great is [our] Diana!" But remember that what we do to that truth—that doctrine—we do to Christ and God. If we accept it in its divine entirety, Christ is honored. If we mutilate it by addition, subtraction, or substitution, Jesus is thereby crucified.

In Hebrews 6:6 Paul tells of the possibility of crucifying the Son of God afresh and putting him to an open shame. This we know could not refer to any attack upon the flesh of Jesus; it must, there-

fore, relate to the Jesus Christ that is left subject to our treatment. It must be his truth.

When sending out his chosen ministers after his resurrection from the dead, Jesus said, see Matthew 28:20: "Teaching them to OBSERVE ALL THINGS whatsoever I have commanded you." Thus we see that no discretion was given them as to how much or what portion of his doctrine they should teach; they were to teach and insist upon an observance of ALL things he had commanded, and upon that condition and no other did he promise to be with them to "the end of the world."

The world is full of synagogues or chapels to-day. Upon and within these are to be found the name and the printed word of God. By these signs one is led to suppose, upon entering them, that he is among the "friends" of Jesus the Christ, and that nothing but error and evil will be immolated upon the altars there. It is reasonably supposable that in such places God and Christ, as found resident in the truth—the gospel—will be honored and extolled. There surely are no crosses there upon which to crucify any part of the Christ that has been trusted to our handling. There surely is no inclination to repeat the crime of the Jew. Such a thought is worse than repulsive. These are the places where the crime of the Jew is being decried and the lessons from his mistake are being taught. But, terrible as may be the risk of inviting popular denunciation upon me that I take in so doing, I unhesitatingly assert that Jesus is being oftener crucified than worshiped in truth in such places. There are but few of them,

indeed, where a man will be allowed to hold up Jesus, as revealed in his complete New Testament doctrine, and insist upon his being worshiped by that rule of faith and obedience. Such a man would be as quickly denounced and ejected as was Jesus and Paul by the Jews. Whatever the Jews and their leaders liked in the Christ philosophy they imbibed; what encroached upon or attempted to supplant any part of their traditions or former beliefs, they rejected. From John 8: 31-44 we learn that many of them "believed on him," but when he told them they could not be his disciples except they should "continue" in his "word," they at once were at outs with him, and he gave them their lineage, as shown in the forty-fourth verse.

I once entered a chapel upon which the name of Christ was painted, and in which a copy of the Bible was found. I was there to preach Christ to the people. Taking up the Bible that lay upon the pulpit, I read these words of Jesus:

Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe: in my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.—Mark 16: 15-18.

Later I read as follows:

Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he can not enter into the kingdom of God.—John 3: 5.

In my remarks I insisted upon a belief and observ-



ance of all that is herein declared and enjoined. I did not put it into their Bible; I simply read it, and asked them to accept Jesus as he there represented himself, as it must be the truth, or Jesus would never have so spoken. This resulted in my being denied further use of the house, and was followed by a loud denunciation from that pulpit of any church or doctrine that included such "stuff" in it. That minister had denounced the elders of the Jews for persuading the people to reject and crucify Christ, yet he deliberately, as the professed friend of Jesus, declared that there was no place for that portion of Jesus in his theology, and it would not be allowed mention in his church building. I grant you that that theological "spear" did not pierce the fleshly side of Jesus, but Jesus, as resident in the "doctrine of Christ," was stabbed to his death by it, and that man, as one of the chief elders of his church, advised the people to be loyal to their creed and do away with the nonsense I had advocated. Compare that procedure with Matthew 27: 20, and explain to me the difference, if you can. Paul writes thus:

And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?—Romans 2: 3.

Such experiences as these are not uncommon to the ministers of the faith we are contending for. In some instances they have been carried or forced out of the buildings, and in one instance the pastor advised "his people" to use violence to drive me from the town, if nothing else would do.

The agnostic on the rostrum or in the press may do injury to the cause of Christianity, but we look for nothing better there. It is avowed and open. But when we go into a so-called sanctuary to hear a so-called ambassador of Christ, we ought to be able to feel safe in believing that any word of Christ bearing upon any subject will by him be revered and cherished instead of being immolated upon the altar of a man-made creed.

In the Bible I find that faith, repentance, baptisms, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, eternal judgment, angel ministrations, miracles, healings, prophecy, the gift of tongues, interpretation of tongues, discernment of spirits, obedience, sacrifice, patience, charity, and every form of godly exercise for the praise of God and the betterment of man, enters into the obligations and experience of the covenant of which Christ was the mediator, and to which our professed faith in him pledges us. Where these are ignored, Christ is not honored; and if it occur in places or among people who profess their discipleship to him, he is being betrayed by his friends, crucified in the house of his declared followers, and the date of happening, whether nineteen hundred years ago, or to-day, whether in Palestine or America, by Jew or by Gentile, does not change the character or degree of the crime, except that the greater the light is the greater the condemnation will be.

The masses of to-day do not read the Bible for themselves, but leave its study and interpretation to their priests and ministers. They are governed

by the limitations of their creeds (or gods) made by men, and as a result the masses get no clearer a view of Jesus than did the ancient Jews. Hence Jesus is sacrificed, and Diana is extolled. The deep wounds and mutilations which the old Jerusalem gospel has suffered in the pulpits of Christendom at the hands of the self-made ministers will some day be exposed, and the men who have participated in or consented to that crucifixion work will be compelled to stand side by side with ancient Jews and their priests and view their horrible work in the light that the judgment shall turn in upon it. There is meaning in my text, "What shall I do with Jesus which is called Christ?" Let us beware, lest unconsciously we condemn the Jew for answering, "Let him be crucified!" while our own hands are imbrued with the blood of a similar slaughter.

## Christ at a Discount.

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And when they were come, they say unto him, Master, we know that thou art true, and carest for no man: for thou regardest not the person of men, but teachest the way of God in truth: Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar, or not? Shall we give, or shall we not give? But he, knowing their hypocrisy, said unto them, Why tempt ye me? bring me a penny, that I may see it. And they brought it. And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? And they said unto him, Cæsar's. And Jesus answering said unto them, Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's. And they marveled at him.—Mark 12: 14-17.

Where no doubt exists as to the genuineness of a coin, it is supposed to command its face value anywhere within the realm from whose mint it was authoritatively issued. Outside of that realm it may be subjected to discount at the will of those to whom it is presented.

While seeking the privileges, rights, or immunities of any government, we are expected to hold ourselves subject to its laws and exactions. When we become unwilling to abide a nation's conditions of citizenship or residence, we should at once relinquish all claims upon its benefits and go to a nation where we can and will be loyal to the requirements.

This is equally true in matters spiritual, relating

to the government of God, and no man who is unwilling to submit to all of the divine requirements should seek or expect to enjoy the rights of citizenship in the kingdom of God, or to hold title to any of the immunities guaranteed to faithful citizens only.

The parties who figure in my chosen text were aware of this fact, so far as it bore upon their temporal estate, but were deplorably ignorant regarding their obligations to God, or else they were rank hypocrites. They were Pharisees and Herodians, and they professed great reverence for things divine. Their question seemed innocent enough, but was intended to entrap the Savior into an utterance that would be considered treasonable, or against Cæsar. But, reading their motive, Jesus baffled them, and at the same time taught a most important lesson—one that is as pertinent to our necessities now as to theirs then.

To have repudiated their obligations to pay tribute to Cæsar would have given them cause to have driven him out or to destroy him. This they sought to accomplish, but Jesus adroitly turned the advantage of their intention to his own purpose, and placed them face to face with the logic of their own design.

“Bring me a penny,” said he. Then, after securing their assertion that it bore the image and superscription of Cæsar, he said to them: “Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” Those who were under the dominion of Cæsar and hoped for the benefits accruing thereunder were held to all obligations imposed

by Cæsar. So also those who desired the benefits provided of God for citizens in his kingdom must meet all the divine exactions. These Pharisees had prefaced their inquiry by the voluntary statement, "Master, we know that thou art true: for thou regardest not the person of men, but teachest the way of God in truth." Hence, by their own confession, they were held to an observance of whatever he taught, for if he was "true" and taught "the way of God in truth," he had not misrepresented human obligation in any sense, and they could not dodge a single detail of his gospel message.

He had not come to interfere with their governmental procedure but to inculcate the principles of righteousness, so as to give them title to immunities and privileges divine—to put them in touch with the angels and with God, and to secure them against the machinations of the subtle power that had enslaved their spirits and had kept them blind to the good that had been placed at their doors. They had confessed that "the image and superscription" upon the coin he offered was divine, for he had told them he came from God, and his message was one of life from God, and they said he was "true," and that he taught "the way of God in truth." They had said that they knew it was so. Hence they were obligated to render as full compliance with what they confessed as being true in his teaching as they were to pay tribute unto Cæsar.

Why then did they not do it when thus confronted with unanswerable evidence and argument? If you can find an answer to this, you may find it

useful as an excuse for human conduct to-day. To illustrate, I appeal to the Scriptures, and read:

Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. And this will we do, if God permit.—Hebrews 6: 1-3.

Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he can not enter into the kingdom of God.—John 3: 5.

Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe: in my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.—Mark 15: 16-18.

No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues; but all these worketh that one and self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will. For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one



Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? and if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body. And the eye can not say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: and those members of the body which we think to be less honorable, upon these we bestow more abundant honor; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness. For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honor to that part which lacked: that there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. —1 Corinthians 12: 3-28.

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in weight to deceive; but speaking the truth

in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.—Ephesians 4: 11-16.

I might go on multiplying, but these will suffice from the tongue and pen of Jesus the Christ and Paul, a duly called and ordained apostle. Whose image and superscription do these scriptures bear? Is there any question as to their divinity? If not, then, recognizing the God-image or the Christ-superscription thereon, let me ask if they will bring their face value in popular religious circles to-day? How much are they worth in popular churches? How many persons will confess by mouth and by obedience that the six principles, including water baptism for remission of sins and the laying on of hands of divinely called ministers for the gift of the Holy Ghost, for the blessing of our children, for the healing of the sick and the ordaining of ministers, together with the signs mentioned and the officers named—viz, apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers, etc., are essentials to the existence of Christ's church on earth, to the work of the ministry, the perfecting of the saints, and for the salvation of the race to-day? If a show of hands or enrollment of names could be secured in all the chapels, cathedrals, synagogues, and places of public worship, would there be a majority of the professed citizens under the Christ government who would take this divine coin at par?

When in Toronto some years ago, I put down one

of our American silver dollars in payment for some goods purchased, and was told that ten cents more was required, though I had only bought an hundred cents' worth; but our coin was not worth its face value there at that time. I was not surprised, for that city belonged to a government foreign to ours, or the one that had issued the coin. If, however, I had met with such an experience on this side of the line, I would have been surprised; but such a thing was not likely.

If I take the sayings of Jesus and the prophets, or the writings of Paul and other apostles, to a spiritualist camp, or an agnostics' club, or the councils of deists or materialists, and parade them, with a dissertation on their divinity and the obligations they impose upon the race, I need not be surprised if those people begin a work of dissection and discrimination. It will not astonish me if they, without admitting the absolute divinity of anything I have, shall nevertheless say: "This I indorse, but that I condemn"; "These words please me, and I will observe what they enjoin; but that other expression I have no use for," etc. These people do not pretend to be the friends in particular of the "only begotten Son of God." They do not claim to be citizens in the kingdom of Christ. They are "aliens and foreigners," and this coin has but limited value to them. But when I go where the steeples tower skyward; where the name of Jesus is emblazoned on the door pillars; where an altar is erected under the inscription, "Unto God and his Son Jesus"—I ought to feel justified in expecting that every scrip-

tural requirement will be met with unqualified compliance, and that every provision in church economy or holy promise as to faith, practice, church organization, doctrine, or endowment shall meet with an indorsement that knows of no mental reservation. But is it so? In a former discourse I stated that many of our ministers, including myself, had been excluded from houses of worship, and had been denounced as deceivers and liars, because we had simply told them that these scriptures were as the coin issued from the God-mints and bore the divine image and superscription, and hence must be accepted without discount. I do not know what you think about it; but I left those neighborhoods under the impression that the people were under a foreign government, hence reserved the right or license to put their own value upon the divine currency or coin. I felt it no honor to continue any longer where my Master was at so heavy a discount. With me it is "Jesus at par or no Jesus at all." My confession that Jesus was indeed the Christ holds me under the authority that was vested in him as such, and as he "came not to do his own will, but the will of the Father who sent him," so, as I wish all the immunities and benefits of citizenship in his kingdom, I propose to let his will rule supremely in the government of my life and conduct, without the indulgence on my part of any mental reservations, or the exhibition of any inclination to pick what suits my carnal fancy or my creed's affinity, to the exclusion of even "a jot or a tittle" from the entirety of the holy formula.

## The Kingdom of God.

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Seek ye first the kingdom of God.—Matthew 6: 33.

It is a little strange, to say the least, that so many people, when talking about any earthly kingdom or government, will associate with it the thought of a monarch, officers, laws, and territory; but just as soon as the kingdom of God is named, their minds lose sight of nearly all these characteristics, and the imagination figures out a mere principle or moral sentiment existing in human character. Why this should be so we do not know, but it is a fact nevertheless.

There are text-books from which we learn the essentials to an earthly government, and according to those text-books we form our conclusions. If, after having read that a certain kingdom consisted of such elements as we have named above, we should find a statement to the effect that that kingdom was established in the hearts of its subjects, we would not conclude that all the characteristics of the government were located in those hearts. A very different idea from this would be gathered. We would be likely to interpret the statement as meaning that the national spirit was resident within its patriotic subjects.

If we should read further that certain aliens had become citizens of that government, we would not satisfy our minds with the thought that they had merely become converted in their feelings to a disposition favoring said government. We would know that they had foresworn all allegiance to their former national obligations, and had obeyed the law of initiation into the government of their later choice. Why do we divorce ourselves from this thought when we read of aliens having become citizens of the kingdom of God?

The Bible is our acknowledged text-book on all matters relating to the government of God. In it we find all the characteristics of the kingdom set forth. We read of God as the Supreme Ruler and Christ as the Prince of Life (see Acts 3: 15; 5: 31); next of offices designated by them to be filled by men of their choosing, whose duty it is to execute the divine will—administer the law. (See 1 Corinthians 12: 28; Ephesians 4: 11; Luke 6: 12-16; 9: 1-6.) We then learn of the law of adoption, by which men and women become citizens; and of the governmental law, by which characters are developed in adopted citizens. (See Hebrews 6: 1, 2; John 3: 5; Acts 8: 17; 19: 5, 6.) We further learn of the territory where this law is to be administered and where the benefits of adoption or sonship are to be enjoyed. In this presentation the officers are designated apostles, prophets, bishops, elders, pastors, teachers, deacons, etc. The law enjoins upon aliens faith in the King and Prince of Life—in their divinity and their absolute right to



rule. It demands a renunciation of all allegiance to self and sin, and a consecration of life and service to the divine Sovereign—this it calls repentance—a ceasing to do evil and a consecration to righteousness. It requires submission to a sacred rite, by which those prepared by faith and repentance shall be separated from their former sin; by which the old alien account is balanced, and the candidate enters into a new relationship with the Sovereign—he becomes an adopted son, and Jesus henceforth is to stand as his advocate with the Father. This rite is called baptism, and consists in an immersion of the candidate in water by one of the officers authorized to administer in the name of the King.

Next follows a sacred ceremony, by which the certificate of adoption is guaranteed to the new citizen. The divine testimony of approval and acceptance is furnished by the King. The Holy Ghost is sent down into our hearts, by which we are constrained to cry in truth, “Abba, Father!” This holy ceremony is the “laying on of hands,” and we are assured that the blessed Spirit thus communicated is to transform us into the image of Christ, and is to change our vile bodies and bring them forth from the decay incident to mortality and present them at last—glorified bodies—fashioned like unto the divine. It is the power of the resurrection.

We learn further from this text-book that this earth was created for man, and, though sin-cursed at present, will undergo a cleansing process and stand purified at last—the perpetual habitation of



sanctified citizens of the 'government of God. Blessed hope. (See Matthew 5:5; 6:10; Psalm 37:9, 11, 22, 29, 34; Revelation 5:10.)

Who, in the face of these divinely asserted truths, can imagine that all there is to the kingdom is a moral sentiment within human hearts? It is true that in Luke 17:21 Jesus is represented as saying, "The kingdom of God is within you"; but no sane reader would conclude that by this Jesus meant that his government was in the hearts of those to whom he was then speaking, for they were the scribes and Pharisees, whom he elsewhere called whited sepulchers, hypocrites, etc. Evidently the marginal reading is correct: "The kingdom of God is among you," for such was the case. The Lord had chosen his officers and given the law to them, and they were then among the people, though unrecognized.

Again we have the admonition of the apostle in Romans 14:17, in which he declares that the kingdom of God is "righteousness, and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." We have only to read the context, however, in order to find that he was advising them not to judge men's citizenship by what they ate or drank, for the kingdom of God did not consist in such things. In other words, the abstaining from or partaking of certain meats were not the marks by which they were to identify citizens of the kingdom of God, but by "righteousness, and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost."

The kingdom of God was preached by Christ and his chosen ministers (see Matthew 3:2; 4:17; 10:7), and men were advised to enter it. There is

no such thing intimated as the kingdom entering into them. They were to be translated from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son. The law of adoption was preached, and everywhere the people were told that if they did not obey, they could not enter it. (See John 3:5; Luke 16:16, and many other passages.) Let us be consistent, and heed the advice to "seek first the kingdom of God"; let us enter it when we find it, and let us honor the King by observing his law, and thus allow that law to have its legitimate effect in our complete transformation into the image of Jesus the Christ. Let us beware of spiritual governments or organizations which carry the name of the King, but do not teach his laws nor hold office by his authority to represent him, for "no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that called of God, as was Aaron." (Hebrews 5:4.)

## Who May Enter the Kingdom?

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Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.—Matthew 7: 21.

These are the words of Jesus, and we can not afford to think that they were idly spoken. From this statement we are led to understand that some who would cry, "Lord, Lord," might enter into his kingdom, but "not every one." A question might fairly arise here, Why not all enter, if any should be permitted?

The cry of "Lord, Lord," coming from any source should indicate confidence in the divinity and authority of the one addressed. Where this is not the case, the cry is insincere, and is unworthy of respectful notice. Where the cry is sincere, the crier is supposed to be in an attitude to honor whatever advice or command shall come in response to his or her appeal. If, after receiving the counsel sought, the crier shall fail or refuse to "observe" it in all the strictness of its details, he or she is open to the charge of infidelity, and is without claim on the grace of the one addressed as "Lord."

It is truly written in Romans 10: 13 that "who-soever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be

saved," but note what follows this announcement, and see how it agrees with what the Savior has said:

How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent?

Everybody knows that people can call on the name of the Lord without reverence, or the first impulse of a devotional spirit; but the "call" above referred to is one that is made with a desire for salvation, hence must be reckoned as sincere and consistent. The apostle, therefore, inquired, in all reason, how such a call could be made successfully, unless the ones calling had first heard the preacher and believed what the preacher had said. He also, with equal reason, asks how the preacher could preach except he had been sent. Of course the apostle knew that almost any talker could preach, so far as simply delivering an address was concerned; but he evidently meant that no man could preach and administer the gospel of Christ authoritatively except he had been sent of God. He well knew, and wanted all others to know, that the doors to the kingdom of God could not be opened by any except those to whom the "keys of the kingdom" had been committed. He meant to convey just the same idea as when he wrote to the Hebrews that "no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." (Hebrews 5: 4.)

What have we, then, as a conclusion from this announcement?

1. That none but those sent of God can preach the gospel (the power of God unto salvation) effectively.

2. That no person can "call" upon the Lord in a way to secure salvation unless they hear and believe the testimony of those whom Christ has sent.

3. That the "call" that secures salvation must be made in accordance with the preaching which has been heard and believed.

Who will attempt to contradict these conclusions? Surely no one will. Then we proceed. If "not every one" that calls shall enter the kingdom, but only those who "do the will" of Christ's "Father in heaven," let us ask, What is the "will" referred to? Jesus said, "I came not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me." It may, therefore, be decided that whatever Jesus did and said was the "will" of the Father. God, from heaven, spake approvingly of the course pursued by Jesus. "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," he once declared, and on another occasion repeated this announcement, with the command in addition, "hear him." (See Matthew 3:17; Luke 9:35.) From this we are satisfied that the Father in heaven was well pleased with the illustration of his "will" which was furnished the world in the conduct of Jesus, and we are placed under obligation to accept that illustration and observe its details by the command to hear him. This agrees with the direct counsel of Jesus: "Learn of me."

Hence, to respect these two commands is to do as Jesus did, and he or she who cries, "Lord, Lord," without doing the "will" of God—observing the

method, order, and spirit of him who was God's model "doer," must cry for ever outside the doors of the kingdom. They can not enter.

Again, if our "call upon the name of the Lord," to be effective, must be made in harmony with the preaching of those whom God has "sent," let us discover, if possible, what those preachers said, and then let us call upon Christ accordingly.

Let us see: John the Baptist was a man "sent" from God, and he taught men to repent and be baptized for the remission of sins (for salvation), and told them that Christ would supplement his water baptism with a baptism of the Holy Ghost. (See Luke 3: 3-8.)

Peter and the rest of the eleven taught the same things. (See Acts 2:14-40.) They were among those whom Jesus "sent." (See John 20:21.) Ananias, whom Jesus "sent" to Saul, taught the same thing. (See Acts ninth and twenty-second chapters.) From these same chapters we learn that Paul was "sent," and from many places in the Scriptures we learn that he taught the same things. (See Hebrews 6:1, 2.) In Mark 16:14-18, Matthew 28:19, 20, and other places, we have a copy of the certificate of authority upon which most of these preachers operated, and in John 3:5, we have the emphatic announcement of the "Author of salvation" himself: "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he can not enter into the kingdom of God."

We profess to believe these certified truths of the Bible. How then can we "call on the name of the

Lord" successfully, except by "doing the will" of the Father, as observed by Christ and taught by him and all those whom he has "sent"?

Unfortunately, our traditions have led us to fix up ways of salvation for ourselves, and we have been made to believe that "every one" that saith, "Lord, Lord," could be saved by working such an appeal into their religious exercises. Congregations, synods, conferences, and the like have given to selected men a fancied authority to lead people up to the entrance of the kingdom, forgetful of the fact that no man can open those doors unless the "keys of the kingdom" (the priesthood or authority of God) have been conferred upon him. They have forgotten that human agreements and votes of councils can never convey divine authority—that must come direct from heaven, and be certified to by revelation. Thousands have opened their eyes to the fact that an appeal to Christ is necessary for help to enter the kingdom, but have ignored the equally important fact that "not every one" that saith, "Lord, Lord," shall enter.

The ancient command, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me," holds good as a principle in connection with all the relations between heaven and earth. Millions of people to-day would scorn to bow their fleshly knees before a stone or wooden image, considering that such an act would be idolatry. Yet among those millions how many have received systems of religion which have been manufactured at some theological mills of human invention and operation, and have made those systems



their worshipping shrines, while the testimony of Jesus and his ministry, as recorded in the New Testament, is a perpetual outcry against them! Idolatry indeed: rendering homage where God is never to be found. Elevating a human creation to the place ordained of God for his gospel. Decrying the ordinances of God and at the same time professing confidence in and love for God. It is a sad mistake. True love for God always acknowledges his infinite wisdom and honors his appointments, no matter how simple and unimportant to the human mind they may appear. It stems the tide of human opposition, and makes the pleasure of God its perpetual and paramount aim. It takes the divine counsel as a settlement of all questions to which it relates, and holds no mental reservations.

## Many Ways, or One?

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What must I do to be saved?—Acts 16: 30.

Among all the questions engaging human thought, none are more vital than this. Who can furnish the answer?

A complete circuit of churches is formed around us, and at the asking of this last question, representative men of all these churches hold up their hands. This we take as a signal that they are ready to accommodate us with the desired information, or to answer the first question, "What must I do to be saved?" Hence we accept the intimation and approach the one nearest to us.

After assuring us that our question is too important to be speculated upon, and that inspiration alone can be relied on for settlement of the matter, this church representative opens a copy of King James' translation of the Bible, and reads from John 3: 14-16 and 8: 24; and then, turning to Acts 16: 31, reaches the climax of his assurance by reading the words, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." We are then exhorted by him to accept God's word in settlement and believe, for faith is the only requisite unto salvation, and when once we believe, we are saved beyond the possibility of falling from grace—eternally saved.

Leaving him, we are met by the representative of church No. 2, in the circuit referred to, who mildly counsels us not to risk too much on the instruction given by our first adviser; for, though a good man, he is just a little astray in religious theory. This arouses our curiosity, and we ask in sincerity for this man's answer to the question we have asked. To this he responds by opening a copy of the same edition of the Bible as did the first man. Turning to Luke 15: 7, Mark 6: 12, and Acts 17: 30, as well as to several other passages of like import, he carefully reads and strongly emphasizes the word *repent* as he proceeds. Then turning to Luke 13: 3-5, he employs it to prove that without repentance we must all perish. He tells us that faith is good, but is insufficient to save without repentance. He adds that the latter was commanded of God and, when joined with belief, secures salvation complete, and, if right moral conduct follows, will give us inheritance with Christ for ever. Then follows some good advice, after hearing which, we retire to meditate.

As we bend our steps homeward, churchman No. 3 meets us and recognizes in us an anxious questioner. He invites us into his study and opens another copy of the same Bible as the others used, and from its pages begins to read. Acts 22: 16 is his first selection, then Matthew 28: 19 and Mark 16: 16 follow, after which he introduces Acts 2: 38, and finally, to complete his answer to our question, he reads and emphasizes part of 1 Peter 3: 21—"Baptism doth now save us." Right here our

instructor reminds us that this is God's word, given by inspiration for our guidance, that we might not be mistaken. We are told further, that while the others churches hold good people, yet the church which holds to the Bible, "and the Bible alone," and which "speaks when the Bible speaks and keeps silent where the Bible is silent," is the only safe gateway to heaven. This reminder is followed by a declaration that while the other societies observed forms or modes of baptism, some right and some wrong, they did not perform it for the right purpose—to remit sin; hence they were wrong, and only the one we are now learning about is right. Then comes the exhortation, "Be baptized, my brother, for remission of sins, and salvation is yours; for God has said so." We then part from this instructor, wondering how it is that the Bible can teach so many ways of salvation.

Hardly have we gotten away from this adviser till we are greeted by another, who informs us that the baptism of the Spirit is what is necessary, and quotes 1 Corinthians 12:13 and Acts 1:5 and 11:16 to prove his assertion, and strongly urges us to avoid all ceremony, and simply ask for the Holy Ghost. Here he uses the Savior's words, found in Luke 11:9-13, to convince us that our heavenly Father stands ready to give the Holy Spirit to those who ask. We are then dismissed by churchman No. 4, with a solemn warning to put no trust in any other baptism, nor in any ceremony whatever.

Our next instructor also has the same Bible ready to his hand, and, turning to Ephesians 2:8, 9 reads

with great solemnity the words: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." In explanation, he informs us that creation and redemption are alike, in that they are both an exercise of divine power, and an exhibition of God's grace or favor; that he who assumed the responsibility of creating the race will bear the responsibility of its salvation, and that all men will eventually be saved, regardless of what they are, or say, or do. It is God's business to save us, and we need give ourselves no anxiety over the matter except to believe in that fact. It is the gift of God, the same as was physical life. Thus ends our interview with churchman No. 5.

No. 6 can give us nothing more definite in answer to our question than the announcement made in Romans 8: 24, "We are saved by hope." To him the existence of hope within us is a faint indication of the possibility of our being among the "elect," or those predestinated to eternal life. There is nothing certain upon which we can calculate; but God will be glorified in the damnation of one as much as in the salvation of another.

We travel on thus till we have canvassed the circuit of churches, and we turn back to the point from whence we started, wondering which answer was right, and how to decide the matter. The Bible has furnished all the texts upon which the answers were seemingly based, and yet the disagreement between the church representatives is so marked that our perplexity has been increased rather than dimin-

ished. Is the infidel right in saying that the Bible is unreliable because it teaches too many ways of salvation and contradicts itself therein? Let us wait awhile and see.

At this juncture a friend who knows of our dilemma advises that we present our case to one of the Latter Day Saint ministers before abandoning hope of a satisfactory solution. Reluctantly we consent, and seeing an elder at some distance, we approach him and present the great question that has gone the round with us—"What must I do to be saved?"

Opening his little gripsack, he draws forth a well-worn copy of the same edition of the Bible as was employed by the others, and proceeds to answer from it. His first selection is Ecclesiastes 12:13, "Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man"; after which we are treated to Matthew 28:20, "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

Right here we interrupt, and remind him that we have been hearing from that Bible all day. We tell him of the special points of doctrine advocated by each of our former advisers. As we mention faith, repentance, baptism of water, baptism of the Spirit, grace and hope, and tell him that each has been set forth by as many churches, separately, and declared to be the means of salvation, yet all are at variance with each other. He listens attentively. When we are through, he points back toward the churches

we have been visiting, and tells us to look. We do so, and see Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 all pointing in our direction and shouting, "Beware of false prophets!"

The men who before warned us, each against the other, are now united in decrying the elder we are talking to. Surprised at this, we ask an explanation, and are told by the elder that it is a common experience with him, and he reminds us that when Paul preached on earth, the Pharisees and others who professed faith in the Scriptures were the ones to denounce him as a heretic (see Acts 24: 14, 15), although the doctrine he preached was taken from their own Scriptures. Paul's heresy consisted in "believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets." His accusers believed only what agreed with their traditions, and he had quoted their own book against them, which incensed them till they scourged and imprisoned him.

Comparing himself thus with Paul, our elder tells us that he believes all that the others have shown us from the Bible, and much more. His text from Matthew 28: 20 enjoins everything taught by Christ and includes all the several principles as parts of one grand system, and there can be no complete salvation without observance of all. In this sense, as was Paul, I am a heretic, he says, if measured by the church standards of to-day, for I believe and teach all things which are set forth in the Scriptures for our observance. How he can reconcile all these points upon which others seem to be divided



we do not perceive; hence he offers the following illustration:

Four men move into a certain locality, intending to engage in farming. One arrives in February, and buys raw, unfenced land; the next comes in April, and buys a farm well fenced and improved; the third buys later, after the plowing has been done on the place and the land is ready for the seed. Each of these, upon arriving, appealed to a resident farmer, who was considered authority, for advice as to how to proceed in order to make a complete success of farming in that place. In reply, the first man was told to go to fencing, the second to go to plowing, and the third to go to planting. Neither one of these considered it necessary to go again to this man. Another man arrived about the same time as the first, and got the same advice; but as soon as he had constructed a good fence around his land, he appealed again to the recognized authority, and got the same advice as the second man; and when he had acted upon the advice to plow, he went again, and the advice given to the third man was repeated to him, and he proceeded to plant grain, etc. After this he went again, and received instructions as to how to proceed with harvesting, as a result of which he safely garnered an excellent crop, and was loud in his praise of the friend who had so kindly instructed him. The other three, later, are jealous of his success, and complain because they have no similar crop, though they have obeyed the counsel given them. They compare notes among themselves, and find that each of the three received a different

answer to the same question asked, and one has done nothing but fence, the other nothing but plow, and the other nothing but plant grain.

Now, where does the trouble lie? Did the man appealed to advise wrongly in any case, or did he contradict himself in saying to one that fencing, to another that plowing, and to another that planting was essential to successful farming? Was not the trouble with themselves, in not appealing often enough for counsel, or in failing to do as the fourth man did in asking for more instruction when the last advice had been fully observed? Reason says, Yes, in such a case as this; and so it does in spiritual matters. It is worse than absurd to conclude that because belief is taught as a principle or step toward acquiring salvation, that therefore there is nothing to do but believe. So with repentance, baptism, or any other principle. Yet you may have believed in God and Christ for fifty years, and yet if you go to some religious altars and ask what you must do to be saved, and tell them of your life-long belief, you will be told to "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ" and you will be saved. Who can be serious over such work as that and yet laugh at the man who did nothing but fence, because the authority said fencing was necessary in his region to successful farming?

Paul and Silas (see Acts 16:31) told the jailer to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ to be saved, because that jailer had never yet believed that Jesus was the Christ. He had considered him an impostor until the startling occurrences of the last hour or

two had compelled him to acknowledge that the power of God must be attendant upon these ministers of Jesus. It was timely counsel. In the figure of the illustration, his fences were not yet up, and he must prepare rightly if he would reap well.

"Peter and the rest of the eleven" told the multitude to "repent" when asked the same question as the jailer asked of Paul. (See Acts 2:38.) Not a word about believing, and why? Simply because the multitude had become convinced by the preaching they had just heard, and they were "pricked in their hearts," and accepted the message as true. Hence it would have been folly to have asked them to believe. They did believe what they had heard, and were ready for the next step, and inspiration dealt wisely with their necessity and told them to repent.

Ananias, when visiting Saul at Damascus, for the first time, having been sent of God to teach him the way of life (see Acts 22:16), said to him, "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins," not even naming either belief or repentance, for the good reason that the work of believing and repenting had been produced within Saul before the arrival of Ananias, and God did not send the latter to waste words or ignore conditions.

Peter and John (see Acts 8:14-17) went from Jerusalem to Samaria as Christ's ministers, and after praying for the people there, they laid their hands upon them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost, without saying anything about belief, repentance, or baptism of water. These requirements had

already been met by them under the preaching of Philip, and they were waiting for the next principle in the divine order; and so might we proceed throughout the whole line of revealed divine procedure.

As to salvation by "grace," through faith, it is clear that only thereby can any man be saved, having no power to save himself independently of God. Hence the works he performs are not those of which he can "boast," for they are simply the works of righteousness, by which he puts himself where the grace of God can be applied to his case. They are simply his acts of obedience, so that he may be included within lines where salvation is pledged.

Salvation "by hope" has its significance revealed in the man whose desire for salvation leads him to obey the truth, as a consequence of which there comes, in addition to his desire, an expectation of salvation. Hope is the compound of these two, and where it is resident, duty has been performed, and the title of such an one is clear. While he maintains that attitude, his "hope" remains; and where there is that kind of "hope," salvation is close.

Thus has our wayside elder illustrated his point and proven his "heresy" to be of a piece with that of Paul and Peter and of our Lord and Master. We hasten to occupy ground with him, believing that a Bible-made heretic is safer than a creed-made churchman.

## No Doctrine, No Christ.

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They that murmured shall learn doctrine.—Isaiah 29: 24.

We have frequently been advised to cut loose from doctrine and devote our preaching efforts to a declaration of the love of God and an invitation to all men to come to Jesus. We have even been invited to unite with clergymen of other denominations in a protracted effort to convert sinners, with the understanding that doctrine should not be taught; but when we have expressed a determination to teach doctrine wherever laboring, the invitation has been withdrawn.

What is there about doctrine that makes it so undesirable? Do those who object to it not know that to cut loose from doctrine is to cut loose from God and Christ? Surely they have never read the following declaration of the Apostle John:

Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God-speed: for he that biddeth him God-speed is partaker of his evil deeds.—2 John 9: 11.

Four things are clearly implied in this announcement:

1. That God and Christ are to be found in the doctrine of Christ.

2. That to turn from doctrine is to turn from God and Christ.

3. That if we preach not, or "bring not," the doctrine of Christ, the people of God are commanded to shun us as those guilty of "evil deeds."

4. That if people receive us as ministers of God, when we do not bring the doctrine, they are guilty of wrong-doing in partaking of our evil deeds.

How can we preach the love of God without teaching doctrine? God's love was manifested in giving Jesus, for we read that:

God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.—John 3: 16.

If God gave Jesus that we might believe in him, there must have been something presented by him that we are required to believe. What did this "teacher sent from God" teach? Was it not doctrine? Listen to this:

My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.—John 7: 16, 17.

Here again we have four things clearly implied:

1. That God sent Jesus with a doctrine.

2. That Jesus preached that doctrine.

3. That in that doctrine the will of God was revealed.

4. That by obedience to that doctrine knowledge as to its origin was to be obtained.

It is clearly evident again that Jesus taught doc-

trine from these words: "The people were astonished at his doctrine."—Matthew 7: 28.

It is further evident that in teaching thus he was acting under his Father's instructions, for he said: "The Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak."—John 12: 49.

Hence it is certain that Jesus taught doctrine by the command of God.

In sending his ministry forth, Jesus promised that the Holy Ghost should bring to their remembrance whatsoever he had said to them, and they were to teach all things which he had commanded them. He had taught faith, repentance, baptisms, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment, and if the Holy Ghost should make good Christ's promise to the ministry, it must bring these things to their remembrance, or, in other words, it must fill their minds with doctrine when they stood up to preach by divine authority. It is therefore not surprising that we should learn of "Peter and the rest of the eleven" standing up under the Pentecostal baptism, and in their very first sermon to all the nations then represented at Jerusalem, preaching doctrine. Hear them: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins."—Acts 2: 38.

The Holy Ghost was doing for them just what Jesus promised. It was bringing his words to their remembrance, for he had said: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved."—Mark 16: 16.



He had also said: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he can not enter into the kingdom of God."—John 3: 5. Also: "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."—Luke 13: 3.

Nor did the apostles later abandon doctrinal preaching, for we find Paul exhorting Timothy years after in the following words: "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee."—1 Timothy 4: 16.

From this it is clear:

1. That Timothy was to continue in the doctrine.
2. That he was to preach doctrine to his hearers.
3. That the salvation of both preacher and hearer depended upon continuance therein.

There need not be any doubt as to what Paul meant by the doctrine, for we have from his own pen the announcement of its principles as he himself understood and preached them. In his Hebrew letter he sets them forth as being faith, repentance, baptisms, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. (See Hebrews 6: 1, 2.) In his exhortation to Timothy he speaks of an appalling condition of affairs in the world which was yet to be manifested as a result of men becoming unwilling to endure sound doctrine and being turned unto fables. In that same connection he solemnly counsels Timothy as follows:

I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; preach the word; be instant in season,

out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.—2 Timothy 4: 1-4. (Read also the former chapter in connection.)

We have the testimony of inspiration to witness that God and Christ are unchangeable; hence we are held to the belief that if Jesus should come again on the same mission, he would teach and command as before. It follows, therefore, that if he has a ministry on earth engaged in the work upon which he entered, they will be found teachers of his doctrine; for he would not inspire nor authorize them to pursue a course at variance with his own.

In the above charge to Timothy the *word* and the *doctrine* are made to appear as part of each other, which they certainly are; hence it is well to remember that, "He whom God hath sent speaketh the words [doctrine] of God."—John 3: 34.

Thus it is by the example and counsel of those who have acted by divine authority we are warned to beware of those who decry or ignore doctrine. If the love of God was manifest in sending Christ as a doctrinal teacher, then the only way to show our appreciation of that love is by taking heed to the doctrine taught. To ignore doctrine is to ignore Christ. This we can not afford to do. We know of no true way of inviting men and women to come to Christ except by asking them to obey the doctrine of Christ; for, as already shown from the word, "He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath

both the Father and the Son.”—2 John 9. And, “He that hath the Son hath life.”—1 John 5: 12.

By reading the context from which our leading text is taken, it will be seen that one of the great blessings to be conferred in the latter days by the “marvelous work” which God is to perform is in enabling those who murmured to “learn doctrine.” From this it seems clear that the world’s departure from doctrine has been a grievous wrong, which will require God’s special interference to correct, when he will cause the wisdom of earth’s wise ones to perish and the understanding of their prudent ones to come to naught.

## When Will Christ Come?

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I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.—John 14: 2, 3.

This promise of the Savior that he would come back to earth has always been the joy of the Saints. It was their theme when sounding the first notes of restoration, and at that time it provoked loud and vehement opposition at the hands of religious teachers and the press; but now the conditions are changed, and the doctrine of a literal second advent of Christ is fast becoming popular, and all kinds of speculation is rife as to the time of his appearing. Some have undertaken to fix the day and the hour, and have ransacked and distorted the Scriptures to make a showing of support for their figuring; but, to their mortification and the injury of the faith of many of those whom they had influenced to accept their calculations, they have dismally failed.

Frequently we have been asked to locate the time—not the exact day or hour, but within a year or two, or thereabout. To each of these appeals we have made answer that we did not know the time.

It may be to our discredit to be ignorant on this

matter, but we confess frankly that we do not know. It may surprise some when we add to this that we are not particularly anxious to know, but such is the fact. From the Savior's counsel we take the thought that our interest should not be in the question of time, but in the work of preparation. The man or woman who is making it his or her chief business to be ready for Christ's coming will certainly be as near an acceptable condition as is possible, let the event occur when it may. We know of no advantage to be gained to Saints or the church from a knowledge of the time of the end. Certain it is that there is no time to waste in neglect or procrastination. It is likely that all the time that any man or woman will have will be necessary in the effort to get ready; and, if this be true, a knowledge of the advent date could neither add to nor diminish the chances of success in preparing. If love for God impels our work, we will be diligent in sanctifying ourselves, though we know that his appearing will not occur for fifty years, as much so as if we were certain that but a month would elapse before that wondrous event. If we are not moved by love, our work will be profitless.

It is not likely that God will ever give us information upon this matter that will locate the time any more accurately than does the word already in our hands. We believe this from the fact that the Savior told his disciples that it was not for them to know the times and the seasons which the Father had put in his own power.

In Mark's testimony, thirteenth chapter, will be

found as near an approach to an accurate declaration as may be hoped for, and yet the Savior concludes his announcement with the words: "But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father."

The closing verses of this chapter indicate that the world will remain without any more specific notification than was found in his words at that time.

To us it looks like presumption to press the inquiry further, although some persons claim that the Savior nowhere intimated that the information would never be given. To them he simply meant that it was not known at that time. The words of the apostle, found in 1 Thessalonians 5: 4, 5, are taken to mean that light would come later on the matter, but we can not see that meaning in the language. Here it is: "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light."

To us this means that as children of light, living according to the gospel, they would never be taken at a disadvantage; they would never be surprised at a moment when they were not ready, for they would be always ready and always watching.

In proof that no more definite intimation of the exact time will ever be given, we quote from a revelation given to the church in 1831 and found in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, section 49, paragraph 2. Referring to the reign of Christ in the heavens, he declares:

And will reign till he descends on the earth to put all enemies under his feet; which time is nigh at hand: I, the Lord God, have spoken it; but the hour and the day no man knoweth, neither the angels in heaven, nor shall they know until he comes.

This revelation will, perhaps, have no weight with those who have not recognized in our work the restoration promised of God; but to those of us who are found under its banner it is a settlement of the question.

We are content to remain ignorant of what has not been revealed on this subject. It is our business to labor and prepare. It is God's business to send his Son when his time is ripe. We have confidence, however, in the gospel as restored in these last days, and therefore we expect that Matthew 24: 14 must be fulfilled in its proclamation to the world ere the end shall come:

And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

Until this prediction shall have been fulfilled, Christ will not come. Human prophecies may fail, but Christ's never, and this prophecy is his. However slow or rapid this prediction may be in fulfilling, we will take all risks in denying or rejecting every prophecy that conflicts with it. All our faith in religion centers in Jesus Christ, and we can not afford to compromise that faith by respecting the predictions of men or women who prophesy contrary to his word. To us he is the prophet of all prophets, and we can rest contented if heeding his counsel. That counsel is to be always ready.



## Prayer.

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“Men ought always to pray, and not to faint,” said our great Exemplar; and, true to this counsel, he gave in his life a beautiful illustration of his confidence in the virtue of that sacred exercise. Under all his life’s conditions he seemed to find pleasure in pouring out his soul humbly to the Father. What is known to us as the Lord’s Prayer is a model to which reference may always be made. Terse, reverential, and comprehending in its scope the relations of the present and the future life, paying loyal tribute to the Fatherhood, the kingly character and the divinity of God, yet free withal from needless repetition of a useless parade of words or phrases, it has commanded and always will command the admiration of those who seek to become intelligently devout. Turn as oft as we may to the prayer recorded by John (see chapter 17), we can not fail to be moved to love for the self-sacrificing Jesus, as we read how he canvassed the field of his consecrated service, and before parting from the objects of his care and solicitude, committed them and his life-work to the Father. What profound anxiety, what endearing terms of address, what tender and pathetic reference to those who had left the world

to follow him; what implicit trust in the Father who had given him his trying mission! What disinterested devotion and unselfish aspiration! No higher reward than his former glory is asked in return for so faithful a service.

Turn to the prayer breathed by him in Gethsemane and note the intensity of feeling there manifested, yet witness the sublime entombment of self that the Father's will might obtain absolutely. Here is a revelation of undying devotion, before which we may well stand in reverential awe. From the beginning to the close of his splendid career he lived in the spirit of prayer, and at times spent long seasons alone in the attitude of a suppliant before God. Note the occasion of his calling the twelve apostles, how he spent the entire preceding night in prayer. The nature of his pleading or the subject that engaged his soul in the service we may only surmise from the character of the work performed by him when the following day had dawned. (See Luke 6: 12, 13.)

To his disciples he gave command that they should pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers, pray for their enemies also, watch and pray lest they should enter into temptation. One apostle tells us, "The prayer of faith shall save the sick," and elders are instructed to pray to that end. Paul exhorted Timothy to prayer and intercession for all men. The disciples prayed, and an angel liberated Peter from prison. On another occasion an earthquake shook the prison walls and opened the doors when Paul and Silas prayed therein. Cor-

nelius prayed, and an angel was sent of God to instruct him.

In sections 18 and 21 of the Book of Doctrine and Covenants commands are to be found to pray in private and in secret. In the Book of Mormon we are informed that we must pray always, and not faint; that we must not perform anything unto the Lord save in the first place we shall pray unto the Father in the name of Christ, that he will consecrate our performance unto us, that our performance may be for the welfare of our souls. (See 2 Nephi 14:3.) We also find from Ether 1:5 that God chastened the brother of Jared because he neglected to call upon him in prayer. We are commanded to pray over our land, our homes, our flocks and herds, also all that we have and do. From these and many other passages found in the three books it is clear that prayer is a part of the duty connected with our obligations as Saints, and all who have tried the service with fervent desire will bear witness that the exercise is blessed in its performance, and fruitful in strength and holiness in its results.

With the neglect of prayer has commenced the decline of many a man's spirituality. Fervent prayer and brawling, backbiting, and evil-speaking do not thrive in the same house. There would be fewer unspiritual meetings if there were more prayers offered before going to the meeting-house. There would be less irritability, impatience, and sourness of face and word in the home if the secret prayer-closet became oftener the retreat of the members of the family. Smiles, gentleness, and

meekness are the legitimate product of such retirement.

Perhaps no exercise has been more abused than this. It has been brought into disrepute at times by such rodomontade as the Pharisee indulged in the Temple, and which Jesus contrasted with the simple request of the publican. It has been sometimes accounted a valueless and uninteresting part of devotion, because some persons have misnamed their tedious and profitless speeches prayer. But prayer, as counseled and exercised by the Savior, is not of such order. We have heard people, when on their knees, demean their own characters most terribly. If a neighbor had told them after arising that they were one half as bad as they had represented themselves to God, they would have resented the charge as a gross insult. Surely such folly was not prayer. There is no humility in talking falsely to God about ourselves or any other. Prayer, to be effectual, does not need to observe the formalities that society has made popular. It is but the voicing of the soul's anxiety in the ears of our heavenly Father. The Lord has said that the song of the righteous is a prayer unto him, and shall be answered with a blessing upon their heads; and the poet Montgomery has beautifully and correctly written.

"Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,  
Uttered or unexpressed—  
The motion of a hidden fire  
That trembles in the breast.  
"Prayer is the burden of a sigh,  
The falling of a tear,

## THE OLD JERUSALEM GOSPEL

The upward glancing of an eye,  
When none but God is near.

"Prayer is the simplest form of speech  
That infant lips can try;  
Prayer the sublimest strains that reach  
The Majesty on high.

"Prayer is the Christian's vital breath,  
The Christian's native air,  
His watchword at the gates of death;  
He enters heaven with prayer.

"Prayer is the contrite sinner's voice  
Returning from his ways,  
While angels in their songs rejoice,  
And cry, 'Behold, he prays!'"

In the rush of business of the pressure or annoying care, we are too often caused to forget that the body may be anxiously provided for at the expense of the soul. That is, we may allow the one to so absorb our attention as to leave the other starved and lean for want of that nourishment that only prayer can secure. A little time spent at intervals during the day, as well as on rising and retiring, in secret prayer helps wonderfully in rounding out a healthful spiritual character and in making us "patient in tribulation." Those who have not tried it can have no genuine idea of the greatness of this truth. And withal, it is our duty, as commanded of God.

It may not always be possible for us to retire for such service at intervals during hours of business, especially if we are in the employ of others; but in the sense in which the poet has expressed it, as above, we can always "continue instant in

prayer"; and it would not be amiss if regular times were fixed in our minds at which in the midst of business care we would lift our hearts in special invocation. How the atmosphere of our social gatherings would be thrilled with the light and life of our association and devotion if we all would pray as often as we should in our shops, and homes, and fields! How our preachers would improve, and what new beauty we should discover in their discourses, if we prayed for them as often as we ought! If, instead of indulging our little proclivities to censure, complain, criticise, or express preferences, we should stop instantly we find ourselves inclined that way, and go aside and pray for that one and ourselves, how both of us would be helped and nobody hurt! Instead of mourning over our loss of spirituality and our present lethargy, let us examine and see whether or not the rust on our characters and experience has not been occasioned by neglect of prayer. Cowper told the truth when he said:

"Restraining prayer we cease to fight,  
Prayer keeps the Christian's armor bright."

If we would be solaced in sorrow, guarded in pleasure, protected in danger, strengthened in weakness, faithful in duty, proof against temptation, courageous in conflict, patient in tribulation, meek under revilement, steadfast in virtue, exemplars of goodness, the salt of the earth—Saints, indeed, we must with other duties remember to pray always, and not to faint. If we desire the labor of our hands to bring profit, our fields to be fruitful, our enterprises to be successful, and all our engagements to result in

good to ourselves and others, as well as glory to God, we should earnestly pray during all stages of our activity, and we should engage in no pursuit which can not consistently be accompanied with prayer for the direction and blessing of heaven upon it. "Pray without ceasing."



## Light and Condemnation.

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This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light.—John 3: 19.

It would seem from this statement of the Savior that the head of a man may undergo a change, while his heart remains untouched. Light may break in upon and around him and reveal better things, while his affection for old ways and practices may continue as strong as before. And herein is the condemnation, that he bars his heart against what has made an intelligent and convincing appeal for his affection.

When conversing with the blind man upon whom the power of healing had been wrought, Jesus was interrogated by those who were near by who had felt the force of his remarks. They well knew where the point in his illustration applied, and they broke forth with the words, "Are we blind also?" To this they received the reply: "If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth."—John 9: 41.

If, in reality, they had been without power to comprehend the teaching and work of the Master, they would have been guiltless; but having understood,

as they themselves witnessed by saying, "We see," they were chargeable with sin; for, "To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin."—James 4:17.

Had the gospel truth never saluted their ears, they could not be brought to judgment under its light; but now that the divinity of its power had been demonstrated before them, they were held under its obligations either to be acquitted or condemned, as their obedience or rebellion would prove them deserving.

How strange it was that men and women to whom so reasonable a revelation was made should abuse the opportunity it furnished and so cruelly mistreat the person through whom it was presented! In the picture presented one beholds the perversity of the carnal mind on the one hand and the royal justice of the Savior on the other.

If any man will do his [my Father's] will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.—John 7:17.

Nothing more reasonable than this could have been demanded, and yet they refused to yield the obedience that would have secured to them communion with God and complete assurance as to the doctrine then being sounded in their ears. The gate was swung open before them, through which they might pass into knowledge and eternal life; but they deliberately refused to divorce themselves from the traditions which had been committed to them by their fathers in the flesh, preferring to perish with their traditions, rather than acknowledge the divin-

ity of a truth which required a little humiliation at their hands. The hoary traditions must be preserved and maintained even at the sacrifice of eternal life. This was their condemnation.

The conditions which thus confronted the Savior and his ministry then are identical with those that antagonize the gospel as restored to-day. The difficulty is not in proving the identity of our faith with that set forth by Jesus and the early apostles. That is comparatively an easy task. An open Bible bears solemn witness to their oneness everywhere. But people are wedded to the traditions and customs of the past few centuries, and are not willing to confess those traditions vain. Wealth, place, prestige, and caste are all in the consideration, and to bow to the divinity of this last-day message is to jeopardize these important elements of modern existence. To confess that the wisdom of ages by which those traditions and conditions have been evolved was but foolishness in God's sight is too great a concession for human pride to make. "Great is Diana," indeed.

Men will despise baptism as a saving ordinance, under the pretense that they can not see how water can wash away sin; yet they will eat bread and wine at the sacrament table, fully believing that it is essential to their spiritual life. In what sense can the latter minister to life except it be by reason of faith in the partaker, who does it because Christ commanded it and promised life thereby? It is surely and only the virtue of obedience which voices faith in Christ that avails in this case. What, then,

of baptism? If Jesus commanded it, then faith has only one way of asserting itself in connection therewith, and that is by obedience, and therein lies the virtue, as in the case of the Lord's Supper. If there is sufficient intelligence in the statement, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you," to justify the reader in eating bread and wine at regular stated seasons, because Jesus used those emblems in representing his body and blood, how will the observer of that rite excuse his rejection of baptism as a saving ordinance, in the face of the words of Jesus to Nicodemus:

Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he can not enter into the kingdom of God.—John 3: 5.

Does not the intelligence that concedes the necessity of the first also bow to the essential force of the other? Does not the conscience that exacts an observance of the bread and wine sacrament demand submission to water baptism when the authority of Jesus is confessed?

Why is it, then, that the one is so universally observed and the other discarded, in the sense of being essential to salvation? Can any one answer this without confessing what we have charged—viz, that tradition is being assigned the place that belongs to Christ? The admission of recognized virtue in the one ordinance is a confession of power to "see," and the disobedient under such confession are those whose "sin remaineth." This is the condemnation, for the same lips that uttered the words

which refer to the bread and wine also uttered the command to be baptized. The acceptance of the one is an acknowledgment of the authority of Jesus to teach and of our duty to obey, while the disregard of the other is an announcement that we are wedded to our traditions, and have room for Christ only where he is not in conflict with them.

The man who observes the "laying on of hands" for purposes of ordination, yet ignores or denounces its use for healing the sick, blessing little children, or the gift of the Holy Ghost, is confronted with the same evidences of inconsistency as the others referred to. The very same Christ who projected and authorized the one also gave warrant for the other practices. If, then, he is the light of the world, and all these are rays flashed from him, will not each stream of life thus emanating from him carry its proportion of condemnation to those who refuse to walk in accordance therewith?

If not, what did Jesus mean when he said, "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light"? If we are justified in concluding that no condemnation will follow a rejection of the "laying on of hands" for the last three purposes named, and of baptism "for the remission of sin," then let us remember that the very same reasoning which furnishes us that justification will also support us in rejecting every other word and practice of Christ, and in making us a law unto ourselves. Let us be consistent. If we desire the benefits of a Savior's mission to this world, let us believe that there was

as much of the virtue of that mission in one of his words as in another, and let us heed the counsel to "observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you," thus absolving ourselves from all fear of condemnation here and hereafter. Our traditions will die in time; but "the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." (1 Peter 1: 25.)













