

# Mortal or Immortal? Which?

--- OR ---

AN INQUIRY INTO THE PRESENT CONSTITUTION  
AND FUTURE CONDITION OF MAN.

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"For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must  
put on immortality." 1Cor.xv,59.

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## TO THE READER

THAT the perusal of the following pages may be understandingly entered upon, we propose here to state in brief what we believe the Bible teaches concerning the subjects of which they treat. We believe, then, that the Bible teaches,

First, That man has no inherent immortal principle in his nature.

Second, That consequently no part of him remains in a separate, conscious state, in death, but that the whole man lies in unconsciousness till called to new life by the resurrection.

Third, That immortality and eternal life are proffered through Christ alone, and will be conferred upon those only who have an interest in him.

Fourth, That consequently the wicked will not exist forever in misery. But,

Fifth, That the wicked will be punished in a future state; that they will be rewarded every man according to his deeds; but that they will receive this punishment at the hands of God whose *mercy* is co-equal with his *justice*, and who will suffer them to go back to their original elements, and cease from existence, as entitled to no name nor place in all the universe of God.

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To give our reasons for this position, and show the Bible ground upon which it rests, briefly, is the object of the following pages. Of the opportuneness of this subject, we need not speak to any who are exposed to the foul embrace and

pestilential breath of Spiritualism. We believe this doctrine to be, if not the only, at least the most effectual, antidote to that unhallowed delusion. For if it be a truth that man sleeps unconsciously in death, we know that whatever intelligence comes to us, professing to be the departed spirit of a dead man, comes with a lie in its mouth, and thus proves itself to be of the synagogue of Satan.

May the good effects of this little work be commensurate with the honest purpose and pure intentions of the writer, and no more could be asked. *U.S. MORTAL OR IMMORTAL? WHICH?*

## **THE NEED OF DIVINE REVELATION**

Whatever we know of a future life must come to us by direct revelation. Sternly has the grave closed its heavy portals against all the efforts of human foresight, philosophy or science, to penetrate the dark region beyond. The human mind has felt its weakness in this respect; and the noblest of its representatives who have presumed, untaught by revelation, to inquire into man's futurity, have been obliged to confess the more than Delphic uncertainty with which alone their deepest researches have been crowned.

Says Prof. Stuart: "The light of nature can never scatter the darkness in question. This light has never yet sufficed to make the question clear to any portion of our benighted race, whether the soul is immortal. Cicero, incomparably the most able defender of the soul's immortality of which the heathen world can yet boast, very ingenuously confesses that after all the arguments which he had adduced in order to confirm the doctrine in question, it so fell out that his mind was satisfied of it only when directly employed in contemplating the arguments adduced in its favor. At all other times he fell unconsciously into a state of doubt and darkness. It is notorious, also, that Socrates, the next most able advocate, among the heathen, of the same doctrine, has adduced arguments to establish the never-ceasing existence of the soul which will not bear the test of examination."

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Who has not heard of the dying words of Socrates? "I am going out of the world, and you are to continue in it; but which of us has the better part is a secret to every one but God." It is further recorded of Cicero, that after recounting the various opinions of philosophers, he was obliged to say, "Which of these is true, God alone knows, and which is most probable is a very great question." And Seneca, on a review of this subject, says, "Immortality, however desirable, was rather promised than proved by these great men." <sup>11</sup>

"Reason cannot prove man to be immortal. We may devoutly enter the temple of nature, we may reverently tread her emerald floor, and gaze on her blue, 'star-pictured ceiling,' but to our anxious inquiry, though proposed with heart-breaking intensity, the oracle is dumb, or like those of Delphi and Dodona, mutters only an ambiguous reply that leaves us in utter bewilderment."

"I am taking a leap in the dark," said Hobbes, when about to die.

Testimonies of this nature need not be multiplied. They are abundant, and cannot be disputed. We may, therefore, at once dismiss from the pale of this

controversy the uncertain light of nature and the bewildering speculations of philosophy, and seek directly to that revelation of which we here stand so much in need. That this revelation is found in the Bible, that blessed word of the Lord to dying men, that glowing volume of inspiration, which is given as a lamp to our feet and a light to our path, we shall take for granted in this investigation. With those who deny this, it is not here our purpose to enter into controversy. If, then, there is, as logicians affirm, "an antecedent probability in favor of a divine revelation, arising from the nature

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of the Deity and the moral condition of man," just so there is a probability that in that revelation, if an uncontingent immortality is the unspeakably grand prerogative of the human race, that fact will be plainly set before us. With a passing glance, then, at the importance of the subject, since upon our views of man's nature depends, in a very great extent, our views of life, death, resurrection, Heaven, hell, and all other subjects, in short, of divine revelation, we present our inquiries, direct, at the glorious temple of the Living Oracles: What is the nature of man? Must he necessarily exist forever; so that if he fails of securing happiness at the end of his probationary state, his destiny is an eternity of incomprehensible woe? Has he in his nature a principle so tenacious of life, that the severest implements of destruction which God can wield, an eternity of his intensest, devouring fire, can make no inroads upon its immaculate vitality? To these solemn and important questions, we shall here expect answers that will not perplex us by their ambiguity, nor deceive us by their falsehood.

### **GOD ONLY HATH IMMORTALITY**

The attention of every student of the sacred page has doubtless been arrested by that prominent declaration, "God only hath immortality." 1 Tim.vi,16. The query arises, Can this be taken in its absolute sense? Is this a declaration that God is *now*. the only being in the universe who is in possession of immortality, or absolute exemption from death? Doubtless not. Our Lord declares of the angels that they die no more; Luke,xx,36; and he says of himself, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore." Rev.i,18. The meaning of the passage under consideration, must then be simply this: That God only is the great source of immortality; that he only has it

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in himself to bestow upon others. The fact that now the Father has conferred equal power in this respect upon the Son, John v,26 affects in no wise this declaration. With this interpretation, 1Tim.vi,16 is final and conclusive. This being admitted, we must also make room for the inevitable sequence, that those only are immortal upon whom God has, by a separate and distinct act, bestowed this immeasurable gift. We accept the issue here; and here we might rest, saying to all the believers in man's immortality, Show us the record that God hath bestowed upon man this, so glorious a boon, irrespective of character, and it sufficeth us.

We cannot, however, wait for their response to this appeal. We fear that to wait till they should find the record we call for, would involve too long a delay. And as we, equally with them, are in possession of the only source from which we are willing to admit that legitimate testimony can come, with them we will turn to the "opening page of a progressive revelation," and see if for ourselves we can find the prerogative of a never-ending existence in anywise inherent in the birthright of man - see if God, the only source of immortality, has unconditionally bestowed this great gift upon his earthborn creatures.

## THE IMAGE OF GOD

The first testimony of the Bible concerning man is found in Gen.i,26,27: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him," etc. A claim is here instituted for immortality by the advocates of the popular sentiment. This image of God, say they, in which man was created, cannot refer to his body, which is mortal and corruptible, but must refer to his soul of spirit, which is in this respect like God, immortal and

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incorruptible. Formally stated, their argument is this: 1. God is immortal. 1Tim.i, 17. 2. Man is created in the image of God. Gen.i,26. 3. Therefore, man is immortal. If this conclusion is correct, it will be equally so in a parallel case: Thus, 1. God is omnipresent. Prov.xv,3. 2. Man is created in the image of God. Gen.i, 26. 3. Therefore, man is omnipresent! This syllogism, by bringing the conclusion, unlike the former, within the province of our senses, betrays its own utter falsity. We might also inquire, Is not God omniscient? Yes. Is man? No. Is not God omnipotent? Yes. Is man? No. What right have we, then, to assert that the "image" has respect to immortality alone, to the exclusion of these other divine characteristics? None whatever. It is pure assumption. The argument which is drawn from this passage for immortality would clothe poor, puny, finite man, with all the attributes of the Deity; and it is unnecessary to remind the reader that an argument which proves too much, proves nothing.

But it is urged that man cannot be in the image of God in respect to bodily form, for God is without form, body or parts. A grand mistake, reader; and one that has not been without its weight in giving rise to the popular interpretation of Gen.i,26. But to place the matter in a still clearer light, we shall be pardoned a short digression of the direct inquiry,

Is God a person? If language has determinate meaning, and Inspiration knows how to use it, he certainly is. An immaterial spirit, without body or parts, cannot be seen with mortal eyes; yet Moses did behold the Lord of Israel. Ex.xxxiii,21-23. To say that God assumed a body and shape for this occasion, places the theory in a worse light still; for it is virtually charging upon God a double deception: first, by giving Moses the idea that he was a being with body and parts; and, second, showing

him something that was not himself. On another occasion, Moses, Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders, saw the God of Israel. Ex.xxiv,9-11. No man, to be sure, has seen his face, nor could they do it, and live, as he has declared. Ex.xxxiii,20. The harmony on this subject, therefore, between the Old and New Testaments, is undisturbed, skeptics to the contrary notwithstanding.

Again, Christ was bodily upon the earth. After he had risen from the dead, he bade his overjoyed disciples handle his immortal, though not then glorified, body, and satisfy themselves of the existence of flesh and bone. Luke xxiv,39; John vii, 39. Bodily he ascended into Heaven, where none can presume to deny him a local place and habitation. Acts i,9-11; Eph.i,20; Heb.viii,1. But Paul, speaking of this same Jesus, says, "Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature." Again, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God." It yet remains to be told how Christ could be in the form of God, if God has no form. Once more: "God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom, also, he made the worlds; who, being the brightness of his glory, and the *express image of his person*," etc. Heb.i,1-3. However unsatisfactory previous quotations may have been, of this testimony there can be no evasion. Here is an express declaration that God has a person, and of that person Christ is the express image.

But is not God, it may be asked in objection, omnipresent? and how can this be reconciled with the idea of his having a physical form? He is everywhere present, we answer, by his Spirit, which is his representative. Ps.cxxxix,7. Of the text

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which declares him to be himself a spirit, John iv,24, we shall speak when we come to an examination of the import of that term.

Having now shown that God is a person with body and parts, the great objection to man's being in the physical likeness of his Maker is taken out of the way. But, perhaps, an examination of a few texts in which the term image is found, may be justly expected of us at this point. First, and as being also most important, we refer to the testimony of Col.iii,9-10: "Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the *image* of Him that created him." It being our object merely to meet the objections which are raised against the idea that man was made in the bodily form of God, we need not enter into a positive exposition of this text. It will be sufficient to show that it does not avail our friends in the least in this controversy. And that it does not avail them, will be apparent to every one on consideration that that which is here renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him, is nothing which belongs to man naturally, but something which is put on, namely, the new man, in contradistinction from the old, which it was first necessary to put off. The new man is put on, of course, at conversion; and hence this text can refer, not to mankind in general, but to those only who have experienced a change of heart: showing that, previous to this event, a person is not in the image of God in the sense of this text. If, therefore,

the image here brought to view is the same as the image of Gen.i,27, it shows that by some means the race has become divested of that image; and if in this image immortality is included, this immortality is consequently lost, and must be by some means regained by all those who would ultimately possess it.

We read again in 1Cor.xv,49: "And as we

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have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." Let it be noticed that the image here is also something to be put on, not being in the natural possession of man. In this case it has its application beyond the resurrection - "we *shall* bear," etc. It cannot, therefore, refer to the image stamped upon man at his creation, unless it be admitted that that image, with all its included privileges, has been lost by the race, as remarked above - an admission fatal to the hypothesis of our opponents.

In 1Cor.xi,7, we read that man, as contrasted with the woman, is "the image and glory of God." The term image here cannot certainly be supposed to include immortality, unless we are prepared to adopt the conclusion which would follow, namely, that this is an endowment which the female does not possess.

The image is further referred to in Gen.ix,6; Jas.iii,9, in which instances we think it can have no other than its most literal and obvious meaning, as applied to the material man; and this application avoids all necessity of clothing man with these divine attributes, which we know he does not possess.

To return to Gen.i,26. The leading definition of image is, "A representation or similitude of any person or thing, formed of a material substance; as an image wrought out of stone, wood or wax." *Webster*. And there is no definition given of the word, which, when applied to a material object, like man, will allow us to refer it to any thing else but the outward shape, the physical contour. We hence conclude that Gen.i,27, simply informs us that in this respect man resembles his Maker.

## THE BREATH OF LIFE

The text just examined makes no mention of the material of which man should be composed. Information

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on this point we find in Gen.ii,7: "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." Mark well the phraseology of this text: upon a right understanding of this, much will depend. It is here declared that man, the creature, was formed of the dust of the ground; the next act of the Creator, after thus forming him, is also stated; and we are then told what man became. Here, if anywhere, we should expect to find the record of the bestowal of immortality upon man, if, indeed, it is a truth that it has been thus unconditionally bestowed upon him. But the words immortal or immortality are not found in the text; and if this glorious attribute is here brought to view as belonging to man, it must be found in the descriptive terms applied to him and to his creation - in the "breath of life" which God breathed into him, or in the "living soul" which he became. And since such a

claim is actually based upon these terms, we will proceed to an examination of them.

The breath of life which God breathed into man, stamps him immortal. Such is the claim. Well, there was nothing naturally immortal, certainly, in the dust of which Adam was composed; and whatever immortality he had, after receiving the breath of life, must have existed in that breath, *per se*. Hence, it follows that the breath of life confers immortality upon any creature to which it may be applied. Will our opponents accept the issue here? If so, we will introduce to them a class of immortal associates not very flattering to the vanity they are sometimes tempted to indulge in on the ground of their immortality; for the same expression is applied to beasts of the field and every creeping thing, as well as to man. See Gen.vii,21: "And all *flesh* died that moved upon the earth, both of *fowl* and of *cattle*, and of *beast*, and of *every creeping*

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*thing* that creepeth upon the earth, and every *man*; *all* in whose nostrils was the *breath of life*, of all that was in the dry land died." To the same purpose see also Gen.vi,17. If, then, the breath of life proves immortality for man, it does the same for beasts! and any argument which thus proves too much, must be wholly and forever abandoned.

## THE LIVING SOUL

But man, it was claimed, was put in possession of a living soul, and this must be immortal. <sup>21</sup> Says Prof. H. Mattison, "God 'breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and he became a living soul.' That this act was the infusion of a spiritual nature into the body of Adam is evident from the following considerations: The phrase 'breath of life' is rendered breath of lives by all Hebrew scholars. Not only did animal life then begin, but another and higher life, which constituted him not only a mere animal, but a 'living SOUL.' He was a body before, - he is now more than a body, a soul and body united. If he was a 'soul' before, then how could he become such by the last act of creation? And if he was not a soul before, but now became one, then the soul must have been superadded to his former material nature." <sup>32</sup>

That man became possessed of a living soul, or experienced the "infusion of a spiritual nature" into his body, the text does not affirm. The *man* formed of the dust of the ground *became*, it asserts, a living soul. Then, what was the living soul? The man, of course. The marble is taken from the quarry, and under the patient and ingenious toil of

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the sculptor, *becomes* a statue. What then is the statue? It is the marble still. So the *man*, and not a superadded and separate entity, is the living soul of our text. He was, then a "soul" before his endowment with life - a soul, though the eye had not seen, the ear heard, the nerves felt, the lungs respired, or the heart throbbed. He was still the *man*, the creature formed of the dust, a perfect organism, but cold and motionless, till he should receive the vivifying influence of the breath of life. That influence was imparted, and he sprung to life, a living soul.

But it is asked, if he was a soul before this, how could he *become* such by this act? We answer, the antithesis is not based upon the word, soul, but upon the word, living. He was a soul before, but not a *living* soul. Before he received the breath of life, he would not be incorrectly described as a *dead* soul.

Kitto in his Relig. Encyclopedia, under the term Adam, says, "And Jehovah God formed the man (Heb., the Adam) dust from the ground, and blew into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a *living animal*. Some of our readers may be surprised at our having translated *neh-phesh chaiyah* by living animal. There are good interpreters and preachers who, confiding in the common translation, living soul, have maintained that here is intimated a distinctive pre-eminence above the inferior animals, as possessed of an immaterial and immortal spirit. But, however true that distinction is, and supported by abundant argument from both philosophy and the Scriptures, we should by acting unfaithfully if we were to assume its being *contained* of *implied* in this passage."

The "abundant argument from the Scriptures" for man's immortal spirit, we shall inquire for as we advance. We only remark here that Mr. K.'s admission that nothing of the kind is implied in this

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text, is a gratifying triumph of fair and candid criticism over a now almost universal belief and education.

But the "living soul," like the "breath of life," proves too much, by being too general in its application. Like the breath of life, this, also, is applied to the irrational brute, as well as to upright man. See Rev.xvi,3: "And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea, and it became as the blood of a dead man; and every *living soul* died in the sea." What! creatures endowed with immortal souls inhabiting the sea? Verily, if a living soul is a guarantee for immortality. This is the only text, we believe, in our translation, in which the expression, living soul, is applied directly to irrational animals. But by reference to the original, we find the same original words many times applied to the lower order of animals; a fact, by art or accident, carefully kept out of sight in the translation. From the Hebrew Concordance we learn that the original for living soul is *neh-phesh ghahy*. It occurs in Gen.i,24. On this passage Clarke remarks: "*Neh-phesh chaiyah*; a general term to express all creatures endued with animal life, in any of its infinitely varied gradations, from the half-reasoning elephant down to the stupid potto, or lower still, to the polyp, which seems equally to share the vegetable and animal life." (*Commentary in loco.*) of the many prominent passages in which it occurs, we may name the following: Gen.i,21. "And God created great whales, and every (*neh-phesh chaiyah*) living creature that moveth," etc. Verse 24 has already been noticed. Again, verse 30: "To every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is *life*" (marg., a *living soul*). Gen.ix,10. "Every living creature," etc. *Neh-phesh* alone, occurs in such passages as the following: Num.vi,6. "All the days that he separateth himself

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unto the Lord, he shall come at no dead *body*" (literally, says the Concordance, *dead soul*). Also, Num.xix,13: "Whosoever touches the dead body of (lit., the dead, the *soul of* - Concordance) any man," etc.

Thus, our friends of the popular sentiment invoke to their aid the expressions, breath of life, and living soul; and thus, as we have seen, these very expressions, like an unwelcome ally, utterly overwhelm them with their own weight; for they distribute the grand attribute of immortality, which these persons would fain arrogate to themselves, among all beasts, birds, fishes and creeping things.

#### SOUL AND SPIRIT - A FALSE ISSUE.

Those from whom we differ in relation to man's nature and destiny, would no doubt gladly make the issue between us turn upon these terms. They represent us as no-soulists, as denying that man has a soul, etc., and then not unfrequently fancy themselves completely triumphant on finding the words, soul and spirit, applied to man. But is there any issue here? Do we deny that man has a soul or spirit? Not at all. Such an idea enters in nowise into our belief. We readily grant man all the properties and all the attributes which the Bible gives him. We are simply unwilling to grant him more. And hence the imputation of no-soulism to our belief is a burning disgrace upon all those who will thus condescend to expose their ignorance or their malice. Be it understood, then, that there is no issue here. We admit that man has a soul. All Bible-students, so far as we know, admit this; but all are not quite so well agreed as to the meaning of these oft-repeated expressions. Into this meaning we now propose to inquire.

The words, Soul and Spirit, occur many hundred

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times in the Old and New Testaments, the former from *neh-phesh*; the latter from *n'shah-mah*, and *roo-agh*. *Neh-phesh* is translated in the following different ways:

(1.) Soul. Gen.ii,7. (2.) Life. Gen.i,20,30. (3.) Person. Gen.xiv,21. (4.) Mind. Gen.xxiii,8. (5.) Heart. Ex.xxiii,9. (6.) Body (or dead body). Num.vi,6. (7.) Will Ps.xxvii,12. (8.) Appetite. Prov.xxiii,2. (9.) Lust. Ps.lxxviii,18. (10.) Thing. Lev.xi,10. Besides these, it is rendered by the various personal and reflexive pronouns, and by the words breath, beast, fish, creature, ghost, pleasure, desire, etc., - in all, forty-three different ways. *Neh-phesh* is never rendered spirit. One other Hebrew word, *n'dee-vah*, rendered soul, occurs only in Job xxx,16.

Of the words rendered spirit, *n'shah-mah* is rendered in five different ways, as follows: (1.) Breath. Gen.ii,7. (2.) Blast. 2Sam.xxii,16. (3.) Spirit. Job xxvi,4. (4.) Soul. Isa.lvii,16. (5.) Inspiration. Job xxxii,8. Some of the prominent renderings of *roo-agh* are as follows: (1.) Spirit. Gen.i,2. (2.) Wind. Gen.viii,1. (3.) Breath. Gen.vi,17. (4.) Smell. Ex.xxx,38. (5.) Mind. Gen.xxvi,35. (6.) Blast. Ex.xv,8. (7.) Air. Job xli,16.

Corresponding to the *neh-phesh* of the Old Testament, we have *psuche* in the New. This word is rendered, (1.) Soul. Matt.x,28. (2.) Life. Matt.ii,20, etc., in all forty times. (3.) Mind. Acts xiv,2. (4.) Heart. Eph.vi,6. (5.) Us. John x,24. (6.) You. 2Cor.xii,15.

And the Greek word *pneuma* in the New Testament, has been chosen by inspiration as the representative of the *roo-agh* of the Old. This word is from *pneo*, to blow, and is rendered, (1.) Ghost. Matt.i,18, etc. (2.) Spirit. Matt.iii,16,

etc. (3.) Wind. John iii,8. (4.) Life. Rev.xiii,15. [margin, breath]. For full citations on the five

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words now examined, the reader is especially referred to the tract entitled, "Bible Student's Assistant," published at this Office.

From the above facts we gain something of an idea of the nature of the words translated soul and spirit. We see that the popular definition is not the Bible signification. We might further show this by citing instances where the soul is represented as being in danger of the grave; as in Ps.xlix,14,15; lxxxix,48; Job xxxiii,18,20,22; Isa.xxxviii,17. Also, where it is represented as being destroyed, killed, etc., as, Gen.xvii,14; Ex.xxxi,14; Josh.x,30,32,35,37,39, etc.

Parkhurst (author of a Greek and a Hebrew Lexicon,) says: "As a noun, *neh-phesh* hath been supposed to signify the spiritual part of man, or what we commonly call his soul. I must for myself confess that I can find no passage where it hath undoubtedly this meaning. Gen.xxxv,18; 1Kings xvii,21,22; Ps.xvi, 10, seem fairest for this signification. But may not *neh-phesh*, in the three former passages, be most properly rendered *breath*, and in the last, a breathing or animal frame?"

Taylor (author of a Heb. Concordance,) says that *neh-phesh* "signifies the animal life, or that principle by which every animal, according to its kind, lives. Gen.i,20,24,30. Lev.xi,46. Which animal life, so far as we know anything of the manner of its existence, or so far as the Scriptures lead our thoughts, consists in the *breath*, Job xli,21; xxxi,39, and in the *blood*. Lev.xvii,11,14."

The mind of the reader has perhaps recurred to some passages where soul and spirit are both used in connection and applied to man, as furnishing an objection to the view we offer; as, for instance, 1Thess.v,23: "I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." A moment's consideration, however, will convince any one that

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whatever difficulty there is about this text, lies on the side of the advocates of a natural immortality; for they will quote a text that speaks of spirit, and tell us that means the immortal part of man; they will quote another that speaks of the soul, and tell us that also means man's immortal part; but in this text they are both used together, and unless there is here a useless repetition, our friends must be held to the conclusion that man has *two* distinct, immortal parts: a conclusion which they will not adopt. The words here used for soul and spirit are *psuche* and *pneuma*. The former, as we have seen, is often rendered life, such being the primary significance of the word; and it may be so rendered here. The latter may be rendered mind, the intellectual principle. Robinson, in his Gr. Lex. of the New Testament, so defines it, and under this definition quotes this very passage, calling it "a periphrasis for the whole man." Paul simply desired for those whom he addressed, that their whole beings, their bodies, with all their vital and intellectual endowments, might be preserved blameless to the coming of the Lord.

The word spirit often signifies the whole person. See Heb.i,14. Speaking of the angels, it says, "Are they not all ministering spirits?" etc. But angels are certainly persons. Ps.lxxviii,25. "And there came two angels to Sodom at even." Gen.xix,1. Lot saw them and talked with them. He requested them to wash their feet and tarry for the night. They ate, they lay down, they took hold of Lot's hand, etc. Jacob, on his return from Haran, was met by the angels of God; and he said, on beholding them, "This is God's host." Gen.xxxii,1,2. The whole history of angels shows that they are literal beings, vastly superior, of course, in their organization, to mortals composed of flesh and blood, but none the less personal on that account. Again, Jesus, of Nazareth, is a spirit: "And so it

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is written, The first man, Adam, was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quickening spirit" [*pneuma*]. But all will admit that Christ is a person. Just in this sense we believe it is that God is called a Spirit, John iv,24, a being of a spiritual nature.

The signification of the words soul and spirit, as used in the Bible, will certainly furnish our friends very little aid in their gigantic undertaking of proving man immortal. From the various meanings which they have, it is easy to explain all such expressions as "God of the spirits of all flesh," etc. And now we sincerely ask which it is of these uses that designates the angel in embryo, located somewhere in the corporeal structure of man? If it cannot be pointed out, the structure built thereon, of course, falls. Before large talk is indulged in about the intelligence, deathlessness, and other attributes of the spirit, the existence of such a separate, conscious entity must be proved.

In closing our examination of the terms soul and spirit, we wish some very important distinctions to be kept in view: To deny the affirmation that is made, that the soul or spirit is an entity, separate from the body, and capable of existing in or out of it, as an independent creature, endowed with consciousness, intelligence, responsibility, and immortality, is one thing; and to deny that man has a soul or spirit, is quite another and a different thing. And even could it be proved that the soul is an entity, capable of conscious existence separate from the body, there is, even then, nothing, absolutely nothing, done toward deciding the main question, whether this soul is destined to continue its existence through weal or woe, forever and forever.

## IMMORTAL AND IMMORTALITY

From the incessant and fluent repetition of these terms by the popular teachers of the present day,

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we should be led to conclude that they were to be found in the Sacred Writings much more frequently than they really are. Almost invariably, in popular parlance, is the adjective, immortal, coupled with this soul-entity, which people have come to consider as capable of existence independent of the body; and we hear of deathless spirit, and never-dying and immortal soul in one unceasing round. It is, indeed, the very "soul" of modern orthodoxy. It enters, as their very essence, into

orthodox sermons and prayers. It is held up as the all-prolific source of comfort and consolation to those who are mourning the loss of friends by death. It is the alpha and omega, the beginning and the end. And yet, after all, when we search for the solid facts in the case, we find not one "thus saith the Lord" to warrant this imposing display of theological flourish. We find not one stone in this great edifice bearing a heaven-ordained inscription of "immortal soul." Is not this a building on the sand? Nay, more; is it not a "pyramid built upon a needle's point?"

We here commend to the attention of the reader one stupendous fact. Its bearing upon the question he cannot fail to appreciate. It is that, although the word "soul," or rather the Greek and Hebrew from which it is translated, occurs in the Word of God *eight hundred and seventy-three times* - seven hundred and sixty-eight times in the Old Testament, and one hundred and five times in the New - it is never once denominated an *immortal* soul; and, although the words rendered "spirit" occur in both Testaments *eight hundred and twenty-seven times* - four hundred and forty-two in the Old Testament, and three hundred and eighty-five in the New, it is never once called a *deathless* spirit. Strange and unaccountable fact, if immortality *is* an inseparable attribute of the soul and spirit! Unpardonable silence, if the important fact *be* true, that the spirit can never die! Where better could the soul's high

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prerogative be made known than somewhere during the *seventeen hundred times* of the words" occurrence? Earnestly we inquire if our souls are immortal or our spirits deathless. We are told that seventeen hundred times the volume of inspiration has recorded something concerning soul and spirit on its sacred pages. Where, if not here, shall our intense anxiety be set at rest! *Seventeen hundred times* we appeal to the sacred oracle, if, when speaking of the soul and spirit, it has aught to say of a deathless nature and unending existence; and *seventeen hundred times* we are met with a significant and impressive *silence!* Let the defender of an innate immortality retire abashed and confounded before this o'erwhelming fact! For, surely, no deluded prophet of Baal ever experienced more utter neglect at the hands of him who was "no god," than the holders of this unfortunate belief here meet at the hands of a full and sufficient revelation.

A word on the use of the terms immortal and immortality, since they are here introduced. The word immortal occurs but once in the Bible, and is then used, not to describe a soul in man, but with reference to God: "Now unto the King eternal, immortal," etc. 1Tim.i,17. In six other instances, however, the original word, *aphthartos*, occurs, and is, in every instance, rendered incorruptible. Once, in Rom.i,23, it is applied to God; three times, in 1Cor.ix,25; xv,52, and 1Pet.i,4, it is applied to scenes beyond the resurrection; once, in 1Pet.i,23, to the word of God; and again in 1Pet.iii,4, to the inward adorning, the meek and quiet spirit.

Immortality is rendered from *aphtharsia* and *athanasia*. The former occurs eight times. It is twice rendered immortality, viz., Rom.ii,7, which declares that to those who "seek for glory, honor and *immortality*," God will render eternal life; and 2Tim.i,10, which declares that Christ has "brought life and

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*immortality* to light," etc. It is four times rendered incorruption, viz., in 1Cor.xv, 42,50,53,54, and twice sincerity, as in Eph.vi,24, and Titus ii,7. The other term, *athanasia*, occurs but three times, expressing, in 1Cor.xv,53,54, what this mortal must put on at the resurrection, and in 1Tim.vi,16, being used in reference to God, "who only hath immortality."

A moment's glance at these facts can but produce, in any reflecting mind, the painful conviction that these terms are sadly perverted from their legitimate use.

## IMMATERIALITY

Although we noted in the outset that the light of nature and reason is insufficient to decide the immortality of the soul, yet as there are a few points to which some may be fondly cleaving, in the belief that the doctrine can be fairly demonstrated therefrom, it may not be amiss to briefly notice them. The first is the argument drawn from immateriality. The soul, it is claimed, is immaterial, and hence immortal in its nature. Having progressed so far as we have in this investigation, this point need not detain us long. We reply, then, 1. We neither know what matter is, nor what spirit is, but only some of the qualities of each. 2. Where is the proof that the soul is immaterial? It certainly is not drawn from nature, for all nature is material; it is not drawn from reason, for reason cannot comprehend the existence of immateriality; it cannot be drawn from revelation, for that expressly declares that *man is dust*. We do not mean to be understood that the mind is material; but we do claim that all vital and mental phenomena result from material causes.

But, allowing the utmost latitude to this view, it equally proves the souls of all animals, fishes, reptiles

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and insects immaterial; for they remember, fear, imagine, compare, manifest gratitude, anger, sorrow, desire, etc. Bishop Warburton expressly says, "I think it may be strictly demonstrated that man has an immaterial soul; *but then*, the same arguments which prove *that*, prove, likewise, that the souls of all living animals are immaterial." Whoever, therefore, affirms the immortality of man from the immateriality of his soul, is bound to affirm the same, not only of the nobler animals, but also of all the lower orders of the brute creation. Here, again, believers in natural immortality are crushed beneath the weight of their own arguments. If it be said that God can, if he choose, blot from existence the immaterial soul of the beetle and the titmouse, we reply, so can he that of man; and then its immortality is at an end, and the whole argument abandoned.

## CAPACITIES OF THE SOUL

The argument here is, that as all men are capable of immortality, therefore, all are immortal. We might sternly remind the adducers of this argument that we are here asking for proof, and that inferences will not be admitted to the stand. As to the argument itself, we might brand upon its idiotic forehead, "Incompetent," and thus give a summary dismissal. But we ask, Is it not almost an infinitely small

portion of the race that has manifested those great powers on which this argument is based? And if an argument may be based on the capacities of some, may not an equal and opposite argument be based on the incapacity of others? And as there is almost every conceivable gradation of intelligence, who will tell us whereabouts in this scale this infinite endowment is first perceptible? Looking at the human race, and the races immediately below, we behold a point where they seem to blend indistinguishably

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into each other. Will an utter lack of capacity be affirmed of the higher order of animals? And descending in the scale, where shall we stop? or, which is the same thing, according to this argument, where does immortality first let go its hold? "Dr. Brown, according to his biographer, Dr. Welsh, 'believed that many of the lower animals have the sense of right and wrong; and that the metaphysical argument which proves the immortality of man, extends with equal force to the other orders of earthly existence.'" <sup>4</sup> 1 Similar views are attributed to Coleridge and Cudworth.

But on this argument we have said enough. It has already wrapt itself from sight in the heavy mantle of its own fog.

### **UNIVERSAL BELIEF AND INBORN DESIRE**

Men have universally believed in the immortality of the soul, it is claimed, and men everywhere desire it; therefore, all men have it. Strange conclusion from strange premises. As to the first part of this argument, the universal belief, that appears not to be true, in fact. On this, a glance at a quotation or two must suffice. "We find Socrates and his disciples, represented by Plato, as fully admitting in their discussions of the subject, that 'men in general were highly incredulous as to the soul's future existence.' The Epicurean school openly contended against it. Aristotle passes it by as not worth considering, and takes for granted the contrary supposition, as not needing proof." <sup>5</sup> 2 When Cicero "sets himself to prove the immortality of the soul, he represents the contrary as the prevailing opinion," there being "crowds of opponents, not the Epicureans only; but which he could not

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account for, those that were the most learned persons had that doctrine in contempt." <sup>6</sup> 1

Touching the other portion of the argument, the universal and inborn desire, those who make use of it to make it of any avail, are bound to supply and prove the suppressed premise, which is that all men have what they desire. The syllogism would then stand thus: 1. All men have what they desire. 2. All men desire immortality. Conclusion. Therefore all men are immortal. This is a fair statement of the question; but are any presumptuous enough to take the ground that all men have what they desire? Is it true, in fact? Do not our every day's observations give it the unqualified lie? Men desire riches, but all do not have it; they desire happiness here, but what an infinitely small portion of the race are really happy. To try to get over the matter by saying that these desires that men

have *may* be gratified by their taking a right course, is an abandonment of the whole argument; for thus much we readily grant concerning immortality: all men may gratify their desires here by taking a right course; immortality also is suspended upon conditions, and those only will have it in whom those conditions are found to be scrupulously complied with.

But there is another deadly flaw in this argument in another respect; for it is not immortality in the abstract that is the object of this great desire among men, but *happiness*. And the very persons who contend for immortality because men desire it, hold that a great portion of the race will be forever miserable. But this is not what men desire; and not being what they desire, it follows that all will not obtain what they desire, and hence the argument built on desire is good for nothing on their own

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showing. It simply proves universal salvation, or that men will be forever happy because all men desire it, or it proves nothing.

### **ANALOGIES OF NATURE - A DISTINCTION**

The day shuts down in darkness; but is not forever lost; the morn returns again, and the bright sun comes forth rejoicing as a strong man to run a race. Nature is bound, cold and lifeless, in the icy chains of winter; but it is not lost in absolute death. Anon the spring approaches, and at his animating voice and warm breath, the pulse of life beats again through all her works; her cold cheek kindles with the glow of fresh vitality; and she comes forth adorned with new beauty, waking new songs of praise in every grove. The chrysalis, too, that lay apparently a dead worm, motionless and dry, soon wakes up to a higher life, and comes forth gloriously arrayed, like a "living blossom of the air," sipping nectar from the choicest sweets of earth, and nestling in the bosom of its fairest flowers. And so, too, it is claimed of man, "that when the body shall drop as a withered calyx, the soul shall go forth like a winged seed." <sup>71</sup>

Let us take care that here our judgments are not led captive by the fascinations of poetry, or the rhetorical beauties of which this argument is so eminently susceptible. Among the many instances of nature, we find only a few that present the analogies here presented. The chrysalis, so often referred to, after it has spent its brief day as a living butterfly, perishes and is heard of no more forever. So with all the higher order of animals: they fall in death and make no more their appearance upon our path. The most, then, that can be drawn from this argument, is a faint foreshadowing, perhaps, of a

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future life. But here, let it be understood, there is no issue. We all agree that the race shall be called again to life. "As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive." 1Cor.xv,22. But the point at issue is, Are our souls immortal, and must this life be, to all our race, necessarily eternal? To prove that man will live again is one thing; to prove that that life will be eternal, is quite another.

## THE ANOMALIES OF THE PRESENT STATE

How often do we here see the wicked spreading himself like a green bay tree, having more than heart could wish, while the righteous grope their way along, in trouble and want. The wicked are exalted, and the good oppressed. This does not look like the arrangement of a God who is the patron of virtue and the enemy of vice. It is therefore argued that there will be another state in which all these wrongs shall be righted, virtue rewarded, and wickedness punished. Yes, we reply, there will. But, certainly, a space of time infinitely short of eternity would suffice to correct all the anomalies of this brief life, which so puzzle men here. This argument, like the former, may be a fair inference for a future state; it may portend to the ungodly a scene of retribution, but can prove nothing as to its eternity.

## POSITIVE CONSIDERATIONS

Thus far our reasoning has been rather of a negative than a positive character; showing that the reasons on which an uncontingent immortality is predicated of man, are not valid. With a few considerations, positive in their nature, we dismiss this part of the subject.

1. Adam was on probation. Life and death were set before him. "In the day that thou eatest thereof

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of thou shalt surely die," said God. The only promise of life he had in case of disobedience came from one whom it is not very flattering to the advocates of a natural immortality to call the first propounder and natural ally of their system. But had Adam been endowed with a natural immortality, it could not have been suspended on his obedience. But it was so suspended, as we learn from the first pages of revelation. It was, therefore, not absolute, but contingent. Immortal he might become by obedience to God; disobeying, he was to die. He did disobey, and was driven from the garden. "And now," said God, "lest he put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat and *live forever*;" therefore, the cherubim and flaming sword were placed to exclude forever his approach to the lifegiving tree. Quite the reverse of an uncontingent immortality is certainly brought to view here. Adam could bequeath to his posterity no higher nature than he himself possessed. The stream that, commencing in the garden of Eden, has flowed down through the lapse of six thousand years, has certainly never risen higher than the fountain head; and we may be sure we possess no superior endowments in this respect to those of Adam.

2. The second consideration under this head is, the exhortations we have in the word of God to *seek* for immortality, if we would obtain it. "Seek the Lord, and ye shall live," is his declaration to the house of Israel. Amos v,4,6. "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom.vi,23. Gift to whom? To every man, irrespective of character? By no means; but gift *through* Christ to them only who are his. Again, "To them who by patient continuance in well-doing *seek* for glory, honor, and immortality, [God will render]



eternal life." Rom.ii,7. Varying the language of the apostle a little, we may here inquire, What a man

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*hath* why doth he yet seek for? The propriety of seeking for that which we already have, is something in regard to which it yet remains that we be enlightened by the advocates of the dominant theology.

Of man, while living, we are now prepared to take leave. We have examined into his constituent parts, as brought to view in the Bible record of the creation; and though "fearfully and wonderfully made," we still find him but a unit, and that mortal. We have examined the terms applied to him in this life, which are supposed to contain the mystery, and bear the burden of immortality; but we find they will not support the popular assumption. Nor can we find in the phenomena of his creation or his life, any evidence that he bears within his bosom a quenchless spirit, an undying principle. It now only remains that we trace his condition in and beyond the grave.

### MAN IN DEATH

Finding nothing in the description of man in life, from which we can even infer a compound nature, or an unconditional immortality, we inquire if in any description of his state in death, we find anything from which we can legitimately infer that he is in possession of a separate entity, capable of existence, and which does exist, independently of the body. Overlooking the puerile assumptions of science, falsely so called, we appeal at once to the inspired word. In plain and unmistakable terms it speaks as follows: "For the living know that they shall die; but the dead *know not anything*, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also, their love, and their hatred, and their envy is now perished; neither have they any more a portion forever, in anything that is done under the sun. For there is no work, nor

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device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest." Eccl.ix, 5,6,10.

This quotation contains a clear enunciation of the doctrine which we believe. But before proceeding to adduce other positive scriptures on this point, we will examine the more prominent of those passages which we have been taught to believe furnish conclusive evidence of the soul's conscious existence after death. For it is certain that when objections are suffered to lie undisturbed in the mind, their influence, so far as it goes, however unconscious we may be of the fact, is to close it to the entrance of conviction, and shut the eyes to the bearing and importance of any amount of positive testimony that may be produced. It is for this reason that we think it best for the writer on this subject, to address himself, in the forefront of the investigation, to the work of breaking down the barriers which prejudice or education may have raised in our minds against the harmonious teaching of the word of God.

## EXAMINATION OF SCRIPTURES SUPPOSED TO TEACH MAN'S CONSCIOUSNESS IN DEATH. <sup>81</sup>

a. Gen.xxv,8. It is claimed that the deaths of the patriarchs are recorded in such a manner as to give us to understand that their existence did not cease with death. Abraham's, for instance: "Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years, and was gathered to his people." God had promised Abraham [see Gen.xv,15] that he should *go to his fathers* in peace, and be buried in a good old age. If this expression means that he should go to

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dwell in conscious intercourse with them, let us inquire concerning their locality. What evidence have we that his fathers were righteous persons? It is a very significant fact that he had to be *separated* from his kindred and his *father's house*, in order that God might make him a special subject of his providence [Gen.xii,1]; and in Josh.xxiv,2, we are told plainly that they were gross idolaters - the servants of other gods. They must have been, therefore, at the time of Abraham's death, according to popular opinion, burning in hell. And if Abraham's being gathered to them means that his soul should go to be with theirs, it follows that God gave him the not very consoling promise that he should "go to hell in peace," in a good old age. But none of "Abraham's seed" will be willing to admit for a moment that such can be the condition of their "righteous father." We answer, then, that his being gathered to his people simply means his being gathered to them in the grave, the common receptacle of all the dead. Jacob said when mourning for Joseph, whom he supposed dead, "I will go down *into the grave unto my son* mourning." Gen.xxxvii,35. And the apostle, speaking of David, says that he "*was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption.*" Acts xiii,36.

b. Gen.xxxv,18. "And it came to pass as her soul was in departing (for she died)," etc. On this passage, Luther Lee remarks: "Her body did not depart. Her brains did not depart. There was nothing which departed which could consistently be called her soul; only upon the supposition that there is in man an immaterial spirit, which leaves the body at death." In reply, the reader needs not to be reminded that *neh-phesh*, the word here used for soul, signifies something else besides brain and body. For our part, we much prefer the exposition of Parkhurst, mentioned above, that *neh-phesh*

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may here signify the breath. And such an idea is in the strictest accordance with reason and matter of fact; thus, it came to pass as her breath was departing (or, as the breath of life was leaving her), for she died, etc. Compare this with Gen.i, 20,30, margin.

c. 1Sam.xxviii,15, or, *The Witch of Endor*. In considering this singular chapter, several important points must be noticed. 1. The Lord had departed from Saul, and "answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets." Verse 6. 2. In this condition, he seeks information by means of necromancy. But necromancy (a *pretended* communication with the dead. *Webster*) God had specially denounced and forbidden as a heinous sin [Deut.xviii,9-11]; and this

very act was one of the offences for which Saul was finally destroyed. 1Chron.x, 13,14. It is therefore morally certain that the *Lord* would not answer him in this way. 3. If Samuel's immortal soul was in Heaven, as of course it was if popular theology be true, it is very improbable that it should come back to earth at the bidding of such a notorious sinner as one who had a familiar spirit. 4. If Samuel had come from Heaven, to go back, of course, at the close of the interview, he uttered an untruth when he told Saul that he should be the next day with him [verse 19]; for we cannot suppose for a moment that one whom God had utterly forsaken here, would immediately be received into Heaven. 5. Samuel is represented as saying, "Why hast thou *disquieted me* to bring *me up*?" [verse 15] not why hast thou brought me or my immortal soul down from Heaven, but why hast thou brought *me up*? showing, conclusively, that if this is to be understood as a literal transaction, Samuel came, not down from Heaven, but up from the grave by a bodily resurrection; in which case the conscious-state dogma receives no countenance from it whatever. But we should consider

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it equally improbable that the witch should be permitted to bring Samuel up bodily from the grave, as that she should be permitted to bring, at will, his immortal spirit down from Heaven. We therefore conclude that the whole thing was a deception of the Devil, a display of satanic power, an *ancient* spirit manifestation, differing from the modern only in this respect, that then to make his deception take, he had to pretend to bring up the dead; now he takes advantage of the prevailing belief of a conscious spirit-entity, and brings the immortal souls all back from Heaven.

d. 1Kings xvii,21,22. "And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah, and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived." The same claim is set up from this text as from Gen.xxxv,18, and we reply that the same exposition may be given of it. And that this is a correct exposition is shown from the account of the child's sickness and death in verse 17. His sickness was so sore, says the record, that there was no *breath* left in him. And then, as would naturally be supposed, when Elijah comes to restore him, he prays that the very thing that had left him, and thereby caused his death, might come into him again, and cause him to live; namely, the *breath of life*.

e. Ps.xc,10. "The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow; for it is soon cut off and we fly away." What flies away, and where does it fly to? it is here asked. It will be noticed that the latter clause of the verse states the reason why our strength is labor and sorrow; and it must strike any one as very singular reasoning to say that our strength is labor and sorrow, because it is soon cut off, and we *go to Heaven(?)*. We should rather conclude the idea to be, that it is soon cut off, and we go into the grave, where, according to the quotation from Ecclesiastes,

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there is no work, wisdom, knowledge, nor device. This is confirmed by Eccl.ix,3. "The heart of the sons of men is full of evil; and madness is in their heart while they live, and after that they go the dead." Had this text read, "and after that they

go away," it would have been exactly parallel to Ps.xc,10; for no essential difference can be claimed between going and flying. But here it is expressly told where we go: we go *to the grave*. What is omitted in Ps.xc,10, is here supplied.

We may also add that the Hebrew word *gooph*, rendered "fly away," signifies, according to Gesenius, "First, to cover, spec. with wings, feathers, as birds cover their young. Second, to fly, properly of birds. Third, to cover over, wrap in darkness. Fourth, to overcome with darkness, to faint, to faint away." The idea seems to be this: Though our days be fourscore years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow, for it is soon cut off, and we sink away, go to the grave, and are wrapped in the darkness of death.

f. Eccl.iii,21. "Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?" This text is made the basis of an opinion that Solomon believed that man had a spirit capable of a separate, conscious existence in death. But do our friends not perceive that the beasts also are said to have a spirit, and if it follows from that expression, that man's spirit is conscious after death, the same is also true of the beast? Do they not know, also, that the word rendered spirit in both cases is their great enemy, *roo-agh*, the very same word that is, in the text but one before, rendered *breath*: "they have all one *breath*?" Now let us examine the context. Solomon expresses a desire in verse 18, that the sons of men may see that they themselves are beasts. Not that he intended that man is in no respect superior

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to a beast; for he is, in many respects: in his organization, in his reasoning faculties, and infinitely so in his future prospects, if righteous. But he simply means, as we learn from verse 19, that in one respect - in respect to death - man possesses no superiority over the other orders of animated existence. "For," he says, "that which befalleth the sons of men, befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man [in this respect] hath no pre-eminence above a beast. All go unto one place [if, then, men go to Heaven, beasts go there with them]; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again." After having thus expressly declared that the life and condition in death, of man and beast, are exactly alike, can we suppose that he means in the very next verse to contradict all he has said before, and declare that there *is* a difference? We cannot. It is therefore but reasonable to conclude that the translation of this passage as given by John Milton, author of *Paradise Lost*, is correct; namely, "Who knoweth the spirit of man (*an sursum ascendat*) *whether* it goeth upward," etc. The Douay Bible renders the passage thus: "Who knoweth *if* the spirit of the children of Adam ascend upward, and *if* the spirit of the beasts descend downward?" To this agree the Septuagint, Vulgate, Chaldee Paraphrase and Syriac version. Such a view, that man's spirit went up and the beast's down, was doubtless prevalent in the heathen world, in the days of Solomon. After stating, therefore, the facts in the case, he inquires, Who knows that this heathen sentiment is true, that man's spirit goes up, and the beast's down? He had declared that they all went to one place. Who can contradict it?

g. Eccl.xii,7. "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." Here, it is said, is an express

declaration that the spirit does fly away to God, or that the soul lives after the body is dead. Well, as the spirit is said to be something expressly given us of God, and that, too, in connection with the body made of dust, we ask for the record of this gift, and a description of the thing given. The mind naturally reverts to Gen.ii,7, where it is recorded that the body of man was formed of dust, and the breath of life was breathed into it directly from God. Is, then, this breath of life the spirit which God has given man? We have no record of any other. But this breath of life, as we have seen, is common to all living things, and cannot, therefore, be used as a distinguishing characteristic of man. And if this breath, as drawn from the surrounding atmosphere, may be said to come from, or be given by, God, with the same propriety may it be said, when it leaves the body at death, to return unto him. This text, therefore, furnishes no assistance to the opposite of the views we hold, nor any objection to our own.

h. Matt.x,28. "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul [and after that have no more that they can do - *Luke*], but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." On the authority of this text, it is claimed that the soul is a thing endowed with life distinct from the body; that it lives on in consciousness after death; for killing the body does not and cannot kill it. So far, indeed, it looks very plausible. But we must take into consideration that the word here rendered soul is *psuche*, a word forty times rendered "life" in the New Testament. In the 39th verse of the same chapter we have an instance: "He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." Substitute the word soul here for life, and take the expression, to lose the soul, in the popular signification, and what a text we should have! "He that

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findeth his soul shall lose it in hell; and he that loseth his soul in hell in everlasting misery for my sake, shall find it!" But the word is there correctly translated life, and means just what it says: He that findeth his life, that is, seeks by a compromise of the truth and the gospel of Christ to save his life in this world, shall lose it, or be deprived of it in the world to come; but he that follows devotedly in the footsteps of his Saviour, even though he should thereby lose his life here, or be put to death by those who can kill the body, but have no more that they can do, shall find himself in the world to come in possession of a life, over which the puny arm of man has no power. So in verse 28: We are not to fear them which can kill the body, or deprive us of our brief span of life here, but cannot touch that life which is hid with Christ in God, which will be bestowed upon us when our great Life-giver shall appear. Col.iii,3,4.

On the words in Matt.xvi,25, "For what is man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul," Dr. Clarke says: "On what authority many have translated the word *psuche* in the 25th verse, *life*, and in this verse, *soul*, I know not, but am certain it means life in both places."

i. Matt.xvii,3, or, *The Transfiguration*. "And behold, there appeared unto them, Moses and Elias, talking with him." Although Moses was buried long ages before on the lonely mount of Nebo, here he is, or rather his immortal soul, it is claimed, present and conscious on the mount of transfiguration; from which the conclusion

is, that the soul does not become unconscious when the body dies. In regard to this transaction, we remark that it was a vision, as it is called in verse 9, or Moses and Elias were really and bodily present on the occasion. On either assumption, the text is easily and clearly explainable. If it was merely a vision, it is not necessary that Moses or Elias should be even immaterially

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present, and therefore it would have nothing to do with the question of consciousness in death. But if it was a real transaction, then they themselves were present, and not merely their immortal souls. Elias had been translated, and hence, could be present without involving any separation of soul and body. This Luther Lee admits when he says: "So far as Elias is concerned, we admit, there is little or no force in it, since he was translated, and did not die; but so far as Moses is concerned, the argument is conclusive." Not quite so conclusive as it is supposed; for if Moses was bodily present, it was not by virtue of any immortal soul in its independent existence, but by a *resurrection*. Dr. Clarke admits this, as his comment on this passage shows. Thus he says: "Elijah came from Heaven in the same body which he had upon earth, for he was translated, and did not see death. 2Kings ii,11. And the body of Moses was probably *raised* again as a pledge of the *resurrection*." If this is correct, it affords a good explanation of Jude 9, which must otherwise remain somewhat shrouded in mystery. This passage, however, need not detain us longer. If Moses was not there, the whole scene was a vision; if he was there, he was resurrected; and in either case, no argument can be drawn from it in favor of the conscious state of the dead, of the existence of the soul separately from the body.

j. Matt.xxii,32, or, *Christ and the Sadducees*. "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." This testimony would not be true, it is claimed, if there was not an immortal part of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, then living; for otherwise, contrary to the express declaration of Christ, God would be the God of the dead. But a careful attention to the point at issue between Christ and the Sadducees, will utterly preclude such

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a conclusion. See verse 23: "The same day came to him the Sadducees, which say *there is no resurrection*, and asked him," etc. The Sadducees professed to believe the writings of Moses, but denied the resurrection. Christ also believed the writings of Moses, but *taught* the resurrection. Here, then, was a fair issue between them. They hear him teaching the resurrection; and to object their faith to his, they refer to the law of Moses concerning marriage, and then state a familiar fact; viz., that seven brothers one after another all had one woman, and all died. Now arises a problem very difficult to their minds, no doubt. How will this matter be arranged in the resurrection, which you teach? Whose wife shall she be in the resurrection? Let it be noticed that the controversy between Christ and the Sadducees had no respect whatever to an intermediate state, nor does their query or Christ's answer have any reference to such a state. They do not inquire whose wife she is now, or which of the men's immortal souls claims her immortal soul in the spirit world; but, Whose wife *shall she be* in the resurrection (a future

event)? Christ tells them that they err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God. And then, to defend himself and condemn them out of their own mouth, he proceeds to prove - what? a conscious, intermediate state? No; but *the resurrection*, from the writings of Moses. "But as touching the resurrection from the dead," says he, [as touching the dead that they rise, says Mark; and that the dead are raised, says Luke,] "have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living."

Let us now show that this quotation did prove the resurrection, and our argument on this passage is closed. That Moses by this language did teach the resurrection of the dead, we think is easily evident.

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Thus, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were dead; but God is not the God of the dead (or those who are irrecoverably and eternally dead, as the Sadducees believed them to be), but he *is* the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. What, therefore, shall we logically and scripturally conclude from this fact? Why, simply that they shall live again, or have a resurrection from the dead. In this view of the subject, Christ reasoned well, proved the point he aimed to prove, confounded the Sadducees, and gained the applause of the Pharisees, who believed in the resurrection.

But grant for a moment that the language means what is popularly claimed for it, and what becomes of Christ's reputation as a reasoner, and a teacher of wisdom sent from God? He set out to prove the resurrection: but when he closes his argument, lo, *mirabile visu!* he has proved that all men are alive, and, therefore, there is no *need* of a resurrection! He neither meets the query of the Sadducees, nor defends himself, but quite the reverse. Believe that our Lord would reason thus, ye who can!

If any should admit that a resurrection is proved by the language, but claim from it that such resurrection takes place at death, a theory not uncommon at the present time, we reply that they thereby abandon the conscious-state theory, and affirm the existence of those who have died on another ground, viz., a resurrection. But, further, this is equally foreign from what Christ set out to prove; for he had reference to an event which was then future to the seven brethren and the woman, who had died. They asked him, saying, "In the resurrection, therefore, when they *shall rise*, whose wife *shall she be* of them," etc." And Jesus answered and said, "When they *shall rise* from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels in Heaven." Mark xii,23-25. Again,

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in Luke's account, Jesus says, "But they which *shall be* accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage." Luke xx,35. Thus we see that a future event is everywhere referred to, and if he in reality proved that an event had already taken place, which he designed to show would take place in the future, it speaks no better for his reasoning or his wisdom than the former supposition.

Why God condescends to call himself the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, though they are yet dead, we learn from Heb.xi,16. It is not because they are

now alive, but because "he *hath prepared* for them a city." "Wherefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city," into possession of which they will of course come in the future.

But enough on this argument. We have found it an irrefragable evidence for the resurrection of the dead, and a future life; but it affirms nothing whatever for consciousness in death. Luke xvi,19-31, or, *The Rich Man and Lazarus*. With the points brought to view in this scripture, and the use made of them, the reader is doubtless familiar. The poor man dies and is carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. The rich man also dies and is buried, and in hell he lifts up his eyes, being in torments, and calls for a drop of water to cool his tongue, etc. Where, surely, if not here, shall we find evidence of the life of the immortal soul in death? and the advocate of that doctrine thinks, no doubt, he has it here, beyond the possibility of refutation. But let us carefully examine the basis upon which it rests. There are but two views which can be taken of this scripture: one, that it is a parable, the other, a literal narration. If it is a parable, the following language is applicable to it: "Allegory is a combination of

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kindred metaphors, so connected in sense as to form a kind of story. The parables of Scripture, as well as fables that point a moral, are varieties of this figure." <sup>9</sup>1 Such is the nature of this Scripture, if it is a parable. But in regard to the use of metaphorical language in proof of any doctrine, Dr. Clarke thus speaks: "Let it be remembered, that by the consent of all (except the basely interested), no *metaphor* is ever to be produced in *proof* of a doctrine. In the things that concern our eternal salvation, we need the most *pointed* and *express evidence* on which to establish the faith of our souls." <sup>10</sup>2 Those by whose "consent" this stands as a rule, will not take any exceptions to our rigidly adhering to it. The other class we do not feel specially bound to gratify. Hence, we may dismiss all further consideration of the subject in the light of a parable; since, if it is such, it cannot be legitimately brought forward to sustain the infinite weight of the soul's immortality.

But if it is a literal narration, what then? Well, let us see. The beggar dies, and is carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. Let it be noted right here that it is the beggar himself that is spoken of, and not any of his immaterial appendages. The beggar died; and the beggar, the very one that died, not his immortal soul, is carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. Now, the inquiry arises, and a pertinent one it is, too, *When* do the angels, according to the scriptures, bear those who have died, into Abraham's bosom, or, which is doubtless meant by this expression, into the state of the blessed? Inspirations answers, "And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." Matt.xxiv,31. When is this? It is when

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the Son of man is seen coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. See verse 30. It is then that the mighty voice of the archangel's trumpet pierces the silent chambers of the dead and calls them forth. 1Thess.iv,16,17. This part of the scene, then, is definitely located. We *have no proof* that at death



the angels bear away the immortal soul into Abraham's bosom. This has to be assumed in order to make this scripture available to the common theory. But this is assuming the very point in dispute, and begging the whole question.

The rich man also dies, and lifts up his eyes, being in torments. How long it is after he dies before he lifts up his eyes in torments, we are not directly informed. But when he looks up, he sees Lazarus in Abraham's bosom. It must, therefore, be after Lazarus has been carried there, which is not, as we have seen, till after he is raised. Again we ask, When is it that the wicked, represented by the rich man, will be in torments, and see the righteous in the kingdom? See Luke xiii, 24-28 for an answer: "Strive to enter in at the straight gate, for many, I say unto you, shall seek to enter in and shall not be able. When once the Master of the house hath risen up and shut to the door," etc., then he shall say, "Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out." This again locates it in the future; for it is when the Master of the house has risen up and shut to the door, or when the probation of our race is past. Thus, as a literal narration, the scene is inevitably located beyond the resurrection. It cannot, therefore, be used to prove the conscious entrance of the soul of man into bliss or woe at the hour of death.

And here we leave it. For if we have found on good and satisfactory reasons, that either as parable

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or literal narration, it cannot be made available to that theory which we oppose, we have carried the exposition as far as the scope and object of these pages strictly demand. It is with a full appreciation of the justness of that sentiment which forbids our pulling down a man's house without giving a better one, that we thus speak. But it is to a theory as a whole that this sentiment applies, and not to the particular reasons on which it rests; and as regards the theory in full, we are doing it no violence; for while we are showing (satisfactorily to all, we trust,) the weakness of the evidence which supports the mystical views of the present day, we *are* giving something better in their place, a more substantial theory, according to the plain and harmonious teaching of the Sacred Word. In this particular instance, we are only endeavoring to dissuade persons from leaning on a false prop, and putting trust in fallacious reasoning; and we are equally solicitous to do as much as this, whether the popular theory be true or false.

I. Luke xxiii,43, or, *The Thief on the Cross*. "And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." An express affirmation, it is claimed, that they would both be conscious and both in paradise that day, though their bodies should be cold in death. But there is no reasonable exposition of this scripture that can conduct us to such a conclusion; while there are several that lead to just the opposite. Before offering, however, any solution of the passage, we will state the objection that lies like a mountain barrier in the way of the common exposition: it is, that Christ *did not go* in that same day to paradise. He said, three days after he had made the above promise to the thief, that he had not yet ascended to his Father. John xx,17. In harmony with this

declaration the promise must of course be understood. In other words, paradise must be located somewhere

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away from the presence of the Father, if it still be true that the spirits of Jesus and the thief went there on the very identical day on which they died. Paradise is therefore made to mean a place for disembodied spirits; simply a state of separate existence for souls, where they are kept till the resurrection. What argument exists for this position other than a law of necessity or convenience, we are not scripturally informed.

But paradise is definitely located in the Word of God; and when we hear the Scripture writers speaking of paradise, we may know with the utmost certainty to what place they refer. Let us for a moment look at the testimony on this point.

First, Paul says [2Cor.xii,2], "I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago (whether in the body I cannot tell, or whether out of the body I cannot tell; God knoweth), such an one caught up to the third Heaven." In verse 4, he tells us that he was caught up to *paradise*. This testimony settles one fact, namely, that paradise is located in the third heaven.

Again, we read, in Rev.ii,7, in the promise of the Saviour to the overcomers in the Ephesus church, "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." Another nail in a sure place. Paradise, then, we have found to be in the third heaven, and in paradise is the tree of life. One more inquiry concerning the location of this tree of life will definitely settle this question.

In Rev.xxi and xxii, we have a description of the New Jerusalem, the holy city which is above. In chap.xxii,1,2, we read: "And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it [the city] and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruit, and yielded her

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fruit every month." By this testimony, we learn that the tree of life, which grows in the midst of the paradise of God, is in the holy city, fast by the river of life, which proceeds from the throne of God. Nothing could be more explicit than this. We have now found the paradise of the New Testament. It is in the third heaven, where God maintains his residence and his throne.

Apply this fact to the testimony of Luke xxiii,43, and John xx,17, and the declaration of the Saviour that he had not yet ascended to his Father, the third day after his crucifixion, is as plain and positive a declaration as could be made that he had not yet been to paradise.

And what does this prove? Does it prove that the declaration of the Saviour failed? Not by any means. It only shows that the words, "This day," in the expression, "This day shalt thou be with me in paradise," as it stands in the common version, do not refer to that day on which the Saviour died; and that they err egregiously who make paradise some convenient, separate apartment, some accommodating "ante-chamber" for the reception of that creature of the imagination - the conscious disembodied spirit.

What, then, is the import of this scripture? is the next inquiry. Let the inquirer give his attention, and we will tell him, to his entire satisfaction, we trust. The difficulty arises from the manner in which the sentence is punctuated. The comma is unfortunately so placed as to make "to-day" qualify the declaration, "shalt thou be with me in paradise;" unfortunately placed, we say, because it makes Christ, three days afterward, expressly contradict what, according to this construction, he here promised. And as the punctuation is not the work of inspiration, and, withal, of but recent origin, the comma in its present form not having been invented till the year 1790, we shall take the liberty to place

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the comma after "to-day," making "to-day" an adjunct of the phrase, "I say unto thee." It will then read thus: "Verily, I say unto thee *to-day*, thou shalt be with me," etc. Some Greek MSS., according to Griesbach, place the comma after "to-day," in this declaration. But the objector accuses us of making sad nonsense of the text by this change; and he asks in bitter irony, "Didn't the thief know it was that day without Christ's telling him?" Very true, as a matter of fact; but let the objector beware, lest his sarcasm fall upon the Scriptures themselves; for such very expressions do occur therein. See Zech. ix, 12, "Turn you to the stronghold, ye prisoners of hope: even *to-day* do I declare that I will render double unto thee." Transposing this sentence, without altering the sense, and we have phraseology similar to that of Luke xxiii, 43; namely, "I declare unto you even *to-day*, I will render double unto thee." The events threatened here were to take place in the future, when the Lord should bend Judah, etc. See context. So the phrase, "to-day," could not qualify the "rendering double," etc., but only the declaration.

Here, then, is an expression exactly parallel with that in Luke, and the same irony is applicable; thus, "Did not the prisoners of hope know it was that day when the declaration was made to them?" But let our opponents now discard their unworthy weapon; for here it is leveled against the words of Inspiration itself.

But when we take into consideration the circumstances of the case, we see a force and propriety in the Saviour's making his declaration emphatically upon that day. He had been preaching the advent of the kingdom of heaven to listening multitudes. A kingdom, he had promised to his followers. But the powers of death and darkness had apparently

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triumphed, and were crushing into the very grave both his prospects and his promises. He who was expected to be the king of the coming kingdom, stretched upon the shameful cross, was expiring in ignominy and reproach; his disciples were scattered; and where now was the prospect of that kingdom which had been preached and promised? But amid the supernatural influences at work upon that memorable day, a ray of divine illumination may have flashed in upon the soul of the poor thief, traveling the same road of death beside his Lord. A conviction of the truthfulness of his claims as the Messiah, the Son of God, may have fastened upon his mind, and a desire have sprung up in his heart to trust his lot in his hands, leading him to put up a humble and sincere petition, Lord, in mercy remember me when the days of thy triumph and glory shall come. Yes,

says the suffering Saviour, in the hearing of the mocking multitude, I say unto thee *to-day* - to-day, in this hour of my darkness and agony - to-day, when the fatal cross is apparently giving the lie to all my pretensions - to-day, a day of forlorn prospects and withered hopes, so far as human eyes can see - verily, *to-day* I say unto thee, thou shalt be with me in paradise, when my kingdom shall be established in triumph and glory.

Thus, there is a divine force and beauty in these words of our Lord, as uttered on that occasion. How like a sun at midnight would they have broken in upon the gloom that enshrouded the sorrowing hearts of the disciples, had they fathomed their import. For who had occasion to sink in despair, if not he upon whom all depended, and that, too, when sinking under the agonies of the cross. But lo! no cloud of gloom is sufficient to fix its shadows upon his serene brow. His divine foresight, riding calmly over the events of the present, fixes itself upon that coming period of glory, when he shall see

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of the travail of his soul and be satisfied. There in the hour of his deepest humility, he points them to the joys of paradise.

Thus, by a simple removal of the comma one word forward, the stone of stumbling is taken out of this text, by making it harmonize with other scriptures; and thus, the promise, by having reference to something in the future, and not to anything to be performed on that day, contains no affirmation of consciousness in death.

Another explanation of this passage is based on the nature of the thief's request. He requested to be remembered, not particularly that day or the next, but *when* the Lord should come in his kingdom. The Lord replies, Verily I say unto you, to-day, or *this* day [when I come in my kingdom], thou shalt be with me in paradise.

Again, it is claimed by some that what the thief said was only in mockery of Christ, denominated King by the inscriptions upon his cross; and that his reply was only a more solemn asseveration of what could not be: "Shalt thou be [dost thou think it possible that thou shalt be] with me in paradise?" In this case the adverb, "to-day," could be reasonably disposed of only by putting the comma after it, and making it qualify "say," as in the first exposition.

Thus, three expositions are given of Luke xxiii,43. There is a degree of plausibility in each. The reader can adopt that which seems to him most satisfactory; but if he should have the curiosity to inquire which the writer was inclined to regard as the truthful one, he would be told, The first.

m. Acts vii,59. "And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" Here, it is claimed, Stephen called upon God to receive his conscious, intelligent soul, when he should fall in death. Christ used a similar expression in Luke xxiii,46: "Into thy hands

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I commend my spirit." The expression seems to be borrowed from Ps.xxxi,5; which Psalm declares how David put his trust in the Lord against those who "devised to take away his *life*. But, we inquire, if the soul lives right along in one uninterrupted course of existence, where would be the propriety of committing it

at the hour of death into the hands of our Maker, any more than at any other time? There would be none. The expression bears upon the very face of it evidence that those making use of it desired to commit something into the care of their Maker which was about to pass out of their possession; to commit something into his hands for safe keeping while they should fall back from the plane of life into unconsciousness. What was this? Answer, their *pneuma*. Now let us look at Robinson's second definition of this word, as follows: "The spirit of man, i.e., the *vital spirit, life, soul* [*animal soul* - *Greenfield*]; Latin, *anima*, the principle of life residing in the breath, breathed into man from God, and again returning to God." This, then, is what Stephen commended to his God, to be bestowed upon him again at that time when they who for Christ's sake lose their life, shall find it. Matt.x,39.

n. Rom.viii,38,39. "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, etc., shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord." It is claimed that death cannot separate us from the love of God; but, as God cannot exercise his love toward any but a rational and conscious creature, therefore, the soul must be alive after death. <sup>111</sup> To what far-fetched and abortive reasoning will wrong theories lead intelligent men. We owe the reader an apology for noticing this passage at all. We should not here introduce it, were it not used as an objection to the view we advocate;

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and we should not believe it could ever be urged as an objection, had we not actually seen it. The reasoning of the apostle has to be completely inverted before any argument (may we be pardoned the misnomer) can be manufactured out of it for the conscious-state theory. For it is of our love to God, through Christ, and not of his to us, that the apostle speaks. It has reference, also, wholly to this life. Thus he says, verse 35, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" That is, shall these things which we have to endure in this life on account of our profession of the gospel and our love for Christ, quench that love in anywise? Shall we compromise the gospel, and alienate ourselves from the love of Christ, who has done so much for us, and through whom we hope for so much [see the whole chapter], to avoid a little persecution, peril, and distress? The separation from the love of Christ by death, of which he speaks, is the same as the separation by persecution, etc.; but tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril and sword, do not necessarily kill us; they have respect to this life; the separation, therefore, is something which takes place here - simply an alienation of our hearts from him. And shall all these things, he asks - nay, more, shall even the prospect of death on account of our profession of Christ, prevent our loving and following him? No! is the implied and emphatic answer.

Such we believe to be the view which any one must take of this passage, who does not find himself under the unfortunate necessity of making out a case.

But looking at this scripture from the objector's stand-point, the singular inquiry at once forced itself upon us, Can the immortal soul in its disembodied

state suffer tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril and sword!?

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o. 1Cor.v,5. "To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." We may remark here that it is not till the day of the Lord Jesus that the spirit is spoken of as being saved. It does not say that the spirit may go off to Heaven in conscious existence at the hour of death. The means through which persons will be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus is the resurrection, as we shall presently see. The salvation of the whole person is what is undoubtedly referred to here; *pneuma*, the spirit, being put simply in contrast with *sarkos*, the flesh. The destruction of the flesh, good authorities understand in a literal manner, of the power with which the apostles were authorized to punish offenders in a supernatural manner with disease or death. John xx,23; Acts xiii,11, etc.

p. 2Cor.iv,16. "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." Is this inward man the immortal soul? We answer, No; but the new man which we put on, Christ formed within *the hope* of glory. See Col.iii,9,10; Eph.iv,22,24; iii,16,17; Col.i,27.

q. 2Cor.v,8. "We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord." This is the only real expression in this chapter from which an argument for the conscious state can be drawn. But we hold it to be wrong to take an isolated expression, and build upon it a great doctrine, without taking into consideration the general tenor of the context with which it stands connected. And what is the intent of Paul's discourse here? He is contrasting the temporal and eternal states. See previous chapter, verses 17,18. "The things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." "Our earthly house of this tabernacle,"

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and the "building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens," of the first verse of chap. v, bring to view the same things. "For in this [in this state] we groan earnestly," says he, "desiring to be clothed upon with our house from Heaven." And this being clothed upon is explained in verse 4, to be the swallowing up of mortality in life. The same scene is brought to view in Rom.viii, 22,23: "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves [almost the same expression], waiting for the adoption, to wit., the *redemption of our body*." Such are the scenes brought to view in 2Cor.v,1-10; but when they take place, or when it is that mortality is to be swallowed up of life, we are not there informed. Paul elsewhere, however, tells us [see chapter xv of his first epistle to these same Corinthians]: "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." Verse 53. When? "At the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." Verse 52. *Then* shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory" [or mortality is swallowed up of life]. Verse 54.

But what is meant by the "body" from which Paul desired to be absent? We answer, that, judging from the tenor of his whole argument, it must be a term to represent this mortal, groaning, travailing state. From this, to be sure, we are released by death; for the dead "rest from their labors;" but we cannot be present with the Lord till clothed upon with incorruption, as already shown.

r. 2Cor.xii,2. "I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago (whether in the body I cannot tell, or whether out of the body I cannot tell; God

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knoweth), such an one caught up to the third Heaven." There is such a thing, then, we are told, as the soul's maintaining a conscious existence out of the body. We submit that this does not follow. Mark the apostle's subject, verse 1. It is *visions* and *revelations*. He goes on to relate a view he had had of paradise, and states that he is in doubt whether he was taken up bodily into paradise or not. If he was not, he was, of course, according to his subject, in *vision*. All must admit that these two conditions are the only ones brought to view by the apostle; either being carried bodily into paradise, or viewing it in vision. All the apostle means, then, by the phrase, "out of the body," is merely to be in vision. But according to the view usually taken, as being out of the body (a separation of soul and body) is death, when the apostle had a vision, he *died*; and when he came out of vision, of course he had a *resurrection*! Will our friends go all the way with their theory? Paul, then, does not say it is possible for a man to be out of the body in the popular signification of that expression; for he only relates that he had had an inexpressible view of paradise; but whether he was taken up bodily into that glorious place, or whether, being wrapped in vision, the things were presented to his mind by the power of the Holy Ghost (in which case they would appear none the less real), he could not tell; God alone knew the means he had employed to give his servant a vision of his glory. What would be his astonishment, could he now be present, to behold the attempts that are made to wrest his language into proof for the conscious state of the dead: a doctrine which he so often, both directly and incidentally, had taken occasion to deny!

s. Phil.i,23. "For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better." We are anxious to give all the passages

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adduced by those who advocate life in death, their true bearing, and all the force to which they are entitled. Truth is too strong to need prevarication. We therefore differ from our opponents only where we feel obliged so to do - where to follow them would be, to the best of our discernment, to adopt unsound principles of interpretation. In the present instance we can go with them in every particular except the conclusion. We concede, then, that the language of Paul in Phil.i,23, and the context, conveys the following meaning: first, that he had only two states in view, viz., life and death; as he says in verse 20, "So now, also, Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain" [not to me, but to the cause of Christ]; that is, it would be equal gain to the cause of Christ whether he should live or die. Second, that he knew not which he should choose, provided it was placed before him as a matter of choice, for he had a desire to depart and be with Christ, but it was more needful

for his brethren that he should remain. If he should consult his own personal desires, he would depart; he longed to go: but then the church could illy spare him; they had need of his presence and his labors. "To abide in the flesh," says he, "is more needful for you." Perhaps the apostle here had his eye upon the grievous wolves, of which he elsewhere speaks; and he knew it was needful that he should live to beat back those fell destroyers from the fold of Christ. Third, that by the expression, "to depart," he meant death. Then, says the objector, you agree with us that when a saint dies he is immediately with Christ in Heaven? By no means, we reply. If you take this testimony to prove the conscious state, it is vulnerable still in its most vital point; for it does not state how long a time elapses between the departing and the being with Christ: it does not say that

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the being with Christ is immediate. But it would seem so, from the manner in which it is expressed, says one; and, we reply, it would not be proper to express it in any other manner, since a person absolutely unconscious, as in death, has no perception whatever of a lapse of time, and the next event of which he has any knowledge, is what opens to him beyond the resurrection. No perceptible time elapses to the dead between their death and the resurrection. When Abel shall come forth at the trump of God, it will seem to him but an instant before, that he was falling beneath the murderous blows of Cain.

Says Bishop Law, "The Scriptures, in speaking of the connection between our present and future being, do not take into the account our *intermediate state in death*; no more than we in describing the course of any man's actions, take into account the time *he sleeps*. Therefore, the Scriptures (to be consistent with themselves) *must affirm* an immediate connection between death and the judgement. Heb.ix,27; 2Cor.v,6,8.

It may be objected again, that Paul, according to this view, would gain nothing by departing, since he would not be with Christ any sooner that if he should remain in the flesh a while longer. Measuring the time absolutely, he would not, to be sure; but measuring it *by his consciousness* (his only means of measurement), and he would; just as much sooner as what time elapsed between the penning of that sentence and the day of his death. Paul, then, in Phil.i,23, does not contradict what he elsewhere says, when speaking of the dead, he tells us plainly that they *are asleep*.

t. 1Thess.iv,14. "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him." Yes, says the objector, bring them from Heaven; so they must now be with him there in a conscious

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state. Not quite so fast. The text speaks of those who sleep in Jesus. Do you believe those who have gone to Heaven are asleep? We always supposed that Heaven was a place of unceasing activity, and of uninterrupted joy. And, again, are all these persons going to be brought from Heaven asleep! What a theological incongruity! But, from what place are they brought, if not from Heaven? The same place, we answer, from which God brought our Lord Jesus Christ. And what place was that? See Heb.xiii,20: "Now the God of peace that brought again *from the dead* our Lord Jesus Christ," etc. We may then read the



text in Thessalonians, as follows: "For if we believe that Jesus died and God brought him from the dead, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him from the dead." Simply this the text affirms and nothing more. It is a glorious pledge of the resurrection, and so far diametrically opposed to the conscious-state theory.

u. 2Tim.iv,6. "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand." It is claimed that the departure here referred to is death, with which we agree. We take no exceptions to the remark so often made, "Departed this life," etc. But as Paul does not here intimate that his departure was to be to Heaven, or even to any conscious intermediate state, we have no right to infer this.

v. Heb.xii,23: "Ye are come to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written [in the Lamb's book of life] in Heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect." Of this passage, two expositions may be given. The first is, that the apostle here certainly could not mean to tell the Hebrews that they had in reality and literally come to mount Zion [see verse 22], to the city of the living God, etc. This, then, was only prospective; and they had

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come, on a change of dispensation, only by faith, to all these things which are mentioned. The spirits of just men made perfect are not, therefore, spoken of as existing in the present tense. Let it be noticed again that it does not say spirits made perfect, but men made perfect. But when is it that men are made perfect? He tells us in verse 39,40, of chap. xi, of this same epistle to the Hebrews: "And these all [the ancient worthies] having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise, God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." The child of God in the nineteenth century may take up this language as his own. The Scriptures reveal to us God's grand design of having the whole family perfected together when all those who are written in Heaven shall be gathered home.

The second exposition, and which is not without its force, is, that Paul is here simply contrasting the two dispensations, the Mosaic and the Christian (which is evidently the case, and equally true on the exposition above given), and that we, Christians, are come, or have come, in the present tense, to mount Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem, etc. That is, that we are no longer, in this dispensation, to look to old Jerusalem, or to the earthly mount Zion, but to the Jerusalem above, the mother of us all; that we have come to it in this respect, that now our communication and intercourse is to be directly with it, without going through the circuitous medium of an outward priesthood, as in the former dispensation. In this sense, we have come to God and an innumerable company of angels [angels are more intimately connected with the believer and the work of this dispensation]; and to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in Heaven [we enjoy a closer union with those whose names are in the book of life than was

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ever experienced in any dispensation before]; and to the spirits of just men made perfect; that is, *persons*, perfected, not in the sense of Heb.xi,40, which refers to the final glorification, but perfect as Christ makes us perfect here, through the justification of his blood and the sanctification of his Spirit. And the Christian of this dispensation does come directly "to Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel."

It is in this sense that Dr. Clarke understands the passage. He says:

"*The spirits of just men made perfect.*" We cannot understand these terms without the assistance of Jewish phraseology. The Jews divide mankind into three classes. 1. The JUST PERFECT, *tsaddikim gemurim*. 2. The wicked perfect, *reshaim gemurim*. 3. Those between both, *beinoniyim*.

"1. The *just perfect* are those, First, who have conquered all brutal appetites and gross passions. Second, who have stood in the time of strong temptation. Third, who give alms with a sincere heart. Fourth, who worship the true God only. Fifth, who are not invidious. Sixth, those from whom God has taken *yester hara*, evil concupiscence, and given *yester tob*, the good principle.

2. The *wicked perfect* are those, First, who never repent. Second, they receive their portion in this life, because they can have none in the life to come, and are under the influence of *yester hara*, the evil principle.

"3. The *intermediate* are those who are influenced partly by the evil principle and partly by the good. See *Schoettgen*.

"In several parts of this epistle [to the Hebrews] *teleios*, the just man, signifies one who has a full knowledge of the Christian system, who is justified and saved by Christ Jesus; and the *teteleiomanoi* are

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the *adult Christians*, who are opposed to the *nepioi*, or babes, in knowledge and grace. See chap. v, 12-14; viii,11; and Gal.iv,1-3. *The spirits of just men made perfect*, or the *righteous perfect*, are the full-grown Christians; those who are justified by the blood and sanctified by the Spirit of Christ. Being *come* to such, implies that spiritual union which the disciples of Christ have with each other, and which they possess how far soever separate; for they are all joined in one Spirit, Eph.iv,3,4; and of one soul, Acts iv,32. This is a unity which was never possessed even by the Jews themselves, in their best state; it is peculiar to real Christianity: as to *nominal* Christianity, wars and desolations between man and his fellows, are quite consistent with *its* spirit." The reader is also referred to Dr. C.'s note at the end of the chapter. We are inclined to think that this latter exposition best expresses the sense of the passage.

w. 1Pet.iii,18,19. "For Christ also hath once suffered, etc., being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit, by which, also, he went and preached unto the spirits in prison." A paraphrase of this passage will, we think, make all plain. Thus, Being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit, by which, also, he went [not when he died, but] when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing, etc., and preached to the spirits, or persons, in prison.

Dr. Clarke remarks on this passage, "*He went and preached. By the ministry of Noah, one hundred and twenty years.*" Thus, he places Christ's going and preaching by his Spirit, in the days of Noah, where it evidently belongs, and not during the time that his body lay in the grave.

Again, he says, "The word *pneumasi, spirits*, is supposed to render this view of the subject improbable,

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because this must mean *disembodied* spirits; but this certainly means righteous men, and men *still in the church militant*; and the Father of *spirits*, Heb.xii,9, means men *still in the body*; and the God of the *spirits* of all flesh, Num.xvi,22, and xxvii,16, means *men, not* in a disembodied state."

But, it may be asked, does it not speak of the spirits' being in prison? and does not that expression denote a state of death, and show that men are conscious, and can be preached to, in death? Answer. We have seen that the preaching took place in the days of Noah, to men in this present state; and if the spirits, or persons, were in prison while they were hearing the preaching, that expression must mean their detention under the arrest of divine justice, their days being limited to a hundred and twenty years. Thus detained, and their doom appointed, they might be represented as being in prison, the judgments of God waiting either for their repentance, or for the expiration of the time allotted to them, that they might suffer the threatened doom. But if the preaching to them did not take place *while* they were in prison, and this expression denotes the state of death into which they have since fallen, and now are, then the passage furnishes no sort of proof for the conscious state; for it simply affirms that Christ, by his Spirit, went in the days of Noah and preached to those who are *now* in prison, or in a state of death. We will only remark finally, that to locate the scene here brought to view, beyond the grave, and to say that Christ's soul or Spirit went, while his body lay in the grave, and preached to other souls which were detained somewhere after death where they could be *benefited* and *reformed* by Christ's preaching, smells too strong of *purgatory* ever to be found on the lips of a Protestant.

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x. 2Pet.i,14. "Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me." It is here claimed that the "I" that speaks, and the "my" that is in possession of a tabernacle, is Peter's soul, the man proper, and the tabernacle, is the body which he was going to lay off. That Peter here has reference to death, we doubt not; but it was to be as the Lord Jesus Christ had showed him. How had he shown him it would be? See John xxi, 18,19: "But when *thou* shalt be old, *thou* shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird *thee* and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. This spake he, signifying by what death *he* should glorify God." Here we are shown that the "thou" and the "he," claimed on 1Pet.i,14, to be Peter's soul, the man proper, was going to die, and by death glorify God. And Peter himself says in the next verse, "Moreover, I will endeavor that ye may be able after *my* decease to have these things always in remembrance." Here, then, the same "my," Peter's soul, the man proper, recollect, which in the verse before is in the possessive case, and

governed by decease, or *death*! Yes, Peter *himself* was going to die. We find no proof of a double entity here.

y. Rev.vi,9,10. "And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held; and they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" Let us understand the real difficulty of this text, before we enter upon its exposition. We have seen in our examination of the words soul and spirit, that soul may and does sometimes mean the body, and that dead soul is as proper an expression as living soul. But

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it is claimed that the souls here must be alive, for they are heard to cry. Their consciousness is based upon their crying. For this reason, and no other, they are supposed to be intelligent and conscious. But this is far from a necessary conclusion. See Gen.iv,9,10: "And the Lord said unto Cain . . . the *voice* of thy brother's blood *crieth* unto me from the ground." Was the blood conscious? No; but it revealed the fact that a murder had been committed, a life taken, and thus it called for vengeance. See also Hab.ii,11; James v,4, for other instances of similar expressions. So in Revelation, when the fifth seal was opened, John in symbolical vision saw the representation of an altar, and under that altar, like victims slain upon it and fallen by its side, he beheld those who had been martyred by the idolatry and superstition of Papal Rome; and their blood, even like the blood of Abel, cried to Almighty God for vengeance. And all this is in the strictest accordance with that beautiful figure of rhetoric, personification, which is "the attributing of life, action, intelligence, and personality to inanimate objects," and without which language itself would scarcely be complete.

But let us look at the picture here brought to view, according to the popular interpretation. First, we have souls under the altar of incense in Heaven - souls, it would seem, *shut up* in a certain place in Heaven; and second, these souls cry for vengeance on those who had slain them, or rather driven them from their bodies on earth; but these very persons, if current theology be correct, had been the means of their going directly to Heaven, had caused their entrance into all its unspeakable and perpetual bliss. Act they well or consistently to call for vengeance on such? Is the life on earth so much happier than the life in Heaven, and so superior to it that *vengeance* must be taken on those

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who presume to shorten it by ushering us into the latter? It would hardly seem so. But, third, these souls call upon God to avenge their *blood*; but we did not suppose that an immaterial, invisible, indivisible, indestructible, unimaginable, popular soul, had blood that could be shed, as is here represented. Is there not something of incongruity in the view usually taken of this passage? We think all must admit it.

We will now answer in order a few such questions as may suggest themselves to the mind of the reader, according to our view of this passage, and so dismiss it. 1. Who or what are the souls under the altar? Answer. Those who had been slain by Papal Rome: the fifth seal, before the opening of which they

were slain, denoting the time of the Reformation. It was during this decline of Papal rule that their fellow-servants and brethren were to be slain as they had been; and during this time it was said to them that they should rest. Job iii,17,18: "There the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary be at rest. There the prisoners rest together; they hear not the voice of the oppressor." How true of these victims of Papal persecution! John in Rev.xx,4, speaks again of these souls: "I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus . . . and *they lived* and reigned with Christ a thousand years." This shows that the time does not come for these souls to *live* until the resurrection. 2. What and where is the altar? It denotes the place where they were slain, and was "upon earth," says Dr. Clarke, "not in Heaven." 3. How could they cry if they were not conscious and intelligent? Ans. Even as Abel's blood did cry. 4. And white robes were given them? Showing the decision of Heaven on their characters: a good pledge that they will join the general assembly around the great white throne. Rev.vii,9.

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z. Rev.xxii,8,9. "And I John . . . fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which showed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not; for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets." This text is supposed to prove that one of the old prophets came to John as an angel, showing that the dead exist in a conscious state. But it does not so teach. The angel simply stated that he was John's fellow-servant, and the fellow-servant of John's brethren, the prophets, and the fellow-servant of them which keep the sayings of this book. The being of whom they were all worshipers together was the great God. Therefore, says the angel, do not worship me, since I am only a worshiper with you at the throne of God; but worship God. This angel had doubtless been sent to the ancient prophets to reveal things to them, as he had now come to John. Such we believe to be the legitimate teaching of this scripture, the last that is found in the book of God, supposed to teach a conscious state.

We have now examined a whole alphabet of scriptures which are brought forward as objections to the view we advocate. We have found that when interpreted in accordance with the acknowledged rule that scripture should explain scripture, many of them become positive testimony for the unconscious state of the dead; and those that still retain their meaning under a veil of mystery, we have abundantly shown prove nothing for the other side, and so, at most, are but neutral.

But this argument has been rather negative than positive. We now propose to bring forward a few scriptures which prove beyond all the arts of sophistry or the blindness of prejudice, the view we hold. The patient and candid attention of the reader is still invited.

### **DIRECT TESTIMONY FOR THE SLEEP OF THE DEAD**

We have now cleared the field of all objections; and the text which we at first brought forward as a plain enunciation of the truth that "the dead know not

anything," holds its sway without a rival. It stands like an unshaken monument on which the Holy Spirit has inscribed its mind, and given us a plain "Thus saith the Lord." This alone is sufficient for a final settlement of this controversy. But we cannot pass unnoticed the troops of texts which rapidly cluster, like a valiant body-guard, around it.

a. Gen.iii,19. "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." This was God's sentence upon Adam. The moral, responsible, intelligent Adam, is here addressed, the one that had sinned, and that Adam was remanded back to the dust, from whence he was taken. No part is here exempted for consciousness in death.

b. Deut.xxxi,16. "Thou shalt sleep with thy fathers." These were the words of the Lord to Moses. When the Bible speaks of a man in life, we understand that it means the whole rational, intelligent man; and we do not believe when it speaks of the same individual in death, that the language suddenly changes its meaning and refers only to the body, leaving the soul, the man proper, to fly off unnoticed to a higher state of activity and conscious being. Mark, then, that it is the Moses that *lived*, that was sentenced to *sleep* with his fathers. See, also, 2Sam.vii,12; 1Kings ii,10, etc.

c. Job iii,11-19. Job here testifies that could he have died in earliest infancy, he had been at rest with kings and counselors of the earth, which built desolate places for themselves, etc.; "as a hidden, untimely birth," to quote his own language, "*I had not been.*" Such is the condition Job declares the dead to be in. We imagine that none will contend

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for much consciousness here, except those who believe in the *pre*-existence of the human soul, as well as its life after death.

d. Job x,21,22. Speaking of death, Job says, "Before I go whence I shall not return, even to the land of darkness and the shadow of death; a land of darkness as darkness itself, and of the shadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkness." This is the place to which Job was going. But Job was a righteous man, and must have gone, according to general belief, directly to Heaven. Is this a description of Heaven?

e. Job xiv,10-12. Job here asks the direct question, "Man dieth and wasteth away; yea, man giveth up the ghost and where is he?" The very point we want to know, Job. Then, might the venerable patriarch reply, Mark well my answer! "As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up, so man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep." No plainer testimony can be needed, that, till the heavens be no more, or are "rolled together as a scroll," and the resurrection of the dead takes place, those who have fallen in death shall not awake nor be raised out of their sleep.

f. Verse 21. "His sons come to honor, and he *knoweth it not.*" What? Don't a dead man know more than all the living? Has not his soul opened into an unbounded field of consciousness? Is he not permitted to be the guardian of his friends? Scarcely. For his sons come to honor, an event so well calculated to please him, and he knows nothing of it: they are brought low, an event calculated

to grieve him, and he knows nothing of that; for he is gone to that place where, says another scripture, there *is no knowledge*.

g. Job xvii,13-16. "If I wait the grave is mine house." Job had told us in chap.xiv,14, "All the

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days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come." Now he says, "If I wait the grave is mine house." The change referred to, then, must be the resurrection; and what his condition would be till that time, he tells us in the following language: "I have made my bed in the darkness. I have said to corruption, Thou art my father; to the worm, Thou art my mother and my sister, . . . *when our rest together is in the dust*."

h. Ps.vi,5. "For in death there is no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks?" A positive declaration, on which comment is unnecessary.

i. Ps.lxxxviii,10. "Wilt thou show wonders to the dead? Shall the dead arise and praise thee?" Certainly, if they are in Heaven. But here is a declaration put in the interrogative form, to express the strongest possible denial of any such condition in death.

j. Ps.cxv,17. "The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence." Would the theology of our day speak thus of the dead? Let its funeral sermons answer. But we say, Let God be true, though at the expense of all men-made creeds, and traditionary dogmas.

k. Ps.cxlvi,3,4. "Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help. His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish." What kind of consciousness is it supposed a man could keep up without thoughts? But in the very day of his death his thoughts perish.

l. Eccl.ix,5,6,10. "For the living know that they shall die; but the dead *know not anything*, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also, their *love* and their *hatred* and their *envy* is now *perished*, neither have they any more a portion forever in anything that is done under the sun. Whatsoever thy hand findeth

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to do, do it with thy might; for there is no *work*, nor *device*, nor *knowledge*, nor *wisdom*, in the grave, whither thou goest." <sup>121</sup> Comment unnecessary.

m. Isa.xxvi,19. "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 the dead." Is it possible that the phraseology of this text can be misunderstood? It speaks of dead men's again living, dead bodies' arising, and the earth's casting out the dead. And the life-giving command is addressed to them thus: "Awake and sing." Who? Ye who are already conscious, basking in the bliss of Heaven, and alive with the praises of God? No; but, "Ye who *dwell in dust*;" ye who are in your graves; ye who sleep. If all those who are dead are conscious, this language can have no application whatever.

n. Isa.xxxviii,18,19. "For the grave cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee; they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth. The *living*, the *living*, he shall praise thee as I do this day; the father to the children shall make

known thy truth." Such is the plain, unequivocal testimony of good king Hezekiah. God had in mercy added to his life fifteen years; and in his song of thanksgiving he thus tells us why he rejoiced: it was because in the grave he could not praise him, as he desired to do; for the living alone could praise him as he did that day. Contrast this with the sentiment of the hymns which enter into divine worship at the present day:

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"I'll praise my Maker while I've breath; And when my *voice* is *lost* in death, Praise shall employ my nobler powers."

Hezekiah, it seems, thought differently; and now, reader, which do you prefer, the imagination of the poet, or the inspiration of Isaiah?

o. Dan.xii,2. "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake," etc. They are not sleeping in the dust of the earth if they are in Heaven; and if the resurrection is simply the coming back of the soul, the man proper, to resume the old body, this language is a very improper description of such an event.

p. Hos.xiii,14. "I will ransom them from the power of the grave, I will redeem them from death." Where is the necessity of this, or who would wish to be thus redeemed, if death is, as we are told, "but the gate to endless joy?"

q. Matt.xxvii,52. "And the graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints which slept arose." Not bodies of the saints which were in Heaven.

r. John v,28,29. "The hour is coming in which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth." But there are none there, says popular theology. It will be vain to endeavor to apply this language to the body merely; for is hearing an attribute of the body when the soul has departed?

s. John vii,34. "Ye shall seek me and shall not find me; and where I am thither ye cannot come." This was the language of Jesus when speaking of going to his Father. Should any say that this was addressed to the wicked Jews, who would not, of course, go to Heaven to be with Jesus when they died, we reply, that he said the same to his disciples, also. Chap.xiii,33.

t. John xi,11-14, etc. Jesus said, "Our friend

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Lazarus sleepeth, but I go that I may awake him out of sleep. Howbeit, Jesus spake of his death." Read the whole account: it speaks of anything but a conscious state in death. And in the account of the raising of Lazarus, verse 44, it is said, "And *he* that *was dead*, came forth," etc.

u. Acts ii,29,34. "Men and brethren, let me freely speak to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. For David *is not ascended into the heavens*." What? Do not the souls of the righteous mount up to God and glory the instant they are liberated by death from this "mortal coil?" And who more likely to do this than David, a man after God's own heart? But no; such is not the teaching of the infallible oracle. David in the days of Peter had not ascended into Heaven. Where was he? Chap.xii,36, answers: "For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid to his fathers, *and saw corruption*."



v. Acts vii,60. "And when he [Stephen] had said thus, he (went to Heaven, to Jesus whom he had seen standing on the right hand of God? No; but) fell *asleep*."

w. 1Cor.xv,20. "But now is Christ risen and become the first-fruits of them that slept." See also, verse 51: "We shall not all sleep," etc., language entirely incompatible with the idea of consciousness in death.

x. 1Thess.iv,13,14. "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." We have had occasion to notice this scripture once before, and shall refer to it again. We quote it here simply to show that the dead are represented as asleep.

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y. 2Pet.ii,9. "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished." This testimony shows that the unjust do not enter into a place of punishment at death, but are *reserved* to the day of judgment. Where are they reserved? Answer. In the general receptacle of the dead, the grave. See Job xxi,30.

z. Rev.xx,5. "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection." By this first resurrection a portion of the dead are restored to life, consciousness, and activity, while it is said of those whose condition is not affected by this resurrection, that they *lived not* for a thousand years. This proves that up to the time of this resurrection, *all* the dead were in a condition just the opposite of life - a condition in which it might be said of them that they "lived not." And this, mark, is spoken of the whole conscious being, not of the body merely. No language could more positively show that in death the whole person is in a state just the opposite of life.

We have now introduced twenty-six positive scriptures for unconsciousness in death, answering text for text to those which are considered as objections to this view. We trust that those which are so considered have been shown to be no objections, while the import of these direct proof texts no sophistry can evade. The testimony on this point is well summed up by Bishop Law, as follows: "I proceed to consider what account the Scriptures give of that state to which death reduces us. And this we find represented by *sleep*; by a negation of all *life, thought, or action*; by *rest, resting-place, or home, silence, oblivion, darkness, destruction, or corruption*."

Can the reader longer hesitate to which view to give his adherence? Can he longer doubt upon

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which side the testimony of the Bible stands? Let him also note the nature of the evidence. On one side we have plain and positive testimony, language which cannot be mistaken not turned from its literal meaning; on the other side we have figures and inferences, none of them necessary, most of them far-fetched and inapplicable. Let the reader who is disposed to give this subject a thorough examination, notice this peculiarity. And let the matter be reversed. Let the believer in the popular theory imagine for a moment the testimony on his side

which we have on ours; let him imagine that he could find a few texts reading like this: "The dead know more than all the living," - "when a man dies his thoughts do not perish," - "his love and his hatred, etc., do not cease," - "into the grave nothing but the body goes," etc., and we would ask him if, candidly and sincerely, he would not feel much better with a few such texts on his side than he does at present. But there is another great doctrine of the word of God which amounts to the most positive evidence upon this point, and that is,

## THE RESURRECTION

There are various views extant of this event, and various theories relative to the time and manner of its accomplishment. But we speak of that literal resurrection which the Bible assures us shall take place, and that, too, at the last day. It is the resurrection of those that sleep in their graves. The Saviour himself declares, "The hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth." John v,28,29. It is an event which is yet future. Paul said, when disputing with Tertullus before the governor, I "have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust." Acts xxiv,15.

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And he tells us in chap.xxvi,7, that unto that promise the twelve tribes hope to come. He also reasoned of a judgment to come, chap.xxiv,25, and declares that God hath appointed a day for this very purpose. Chap.xvii,31.

These two great events, therefore, the resurrection and a general judgment, being fixed facts, according to the plain declarations of the Bible, the important inquiry arises, What need is there of a resurrection, if the man proper ceases not to exist at death, but lives on in a more enlarged and perfect sphere of consciousness and activity? If the body is but a trammel, a clog, to the operations of the soul, what need that it should come back and gather up its scattered particles from the silent tomb? Says Wm. Tyndale, while defending the doctrine of Martin Luther, that the dead sleep, "In putting departed souls in Heaven, hell, and purgatory, you destroy the argument wherewith Christ and Paul prove the resurrection. . . . If the souls be in Heaven, tell me why they be not in as good case as the angels be? and then what cause is there of the resurrection?" Most just and pertinent question; one which places the tendency of the popular doctrine in its true light; for, indeed, what cause is there of the resurrection in such a case as that?

Again: What propriety can there be in a general judgment at the last day, if those who pass from this state of existence, enter immediately at death into happiness or misery accordingly as their characters have been good or bad? Is there possibility of mistake in the decision passed upon men at death? and is it perhaps the case that some have been unjustly tormented in hell, and others unworthily basking in the bliss of Heaven for ages past, so that there must needs be a general assize on the whole human race, to correct these momentous errors of former decisions? Such a view reflects on the

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character of the divine government. Thus the popular teaching renders two cardinal events in the Bible plan of salvation, altogether useless and unnecessary; and any view, which leads us to conclusions so serious in their nature, we respectfully submit, should be held with modesty and received with caution.

The resurrection is the great event for which the sacred writers looked and longed. It was the hope of the patient Job: "I know that my Redeemer liveth," exclaims he in the assurance of faith, "and that he will 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." Job xix,24,26. This was the satisfactory hope of the psalmist David: "As for me," he says, "I will behold Thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness." Ps.xvii,15. To the same theme Isaiah tuned the lyre, and this was the burden of his joyful song: "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 the dead." Isa.xxvi,19. It was the hope of the apostle Paul through all his manifold sufferings and toil. For this he could take up any cross and sacrifice any temporal good. And if he could esteem his afflictions, his troubles on every side, his perplexities, persecutions, stripes, imprisonments and perils; - if he could esteem all these but light afflictions, yea, if he could utterly lose sight of them, it was in view of the "glory which shall be revealed in us," "knowing," says he, "that he which raised up the Lord Jesus, *shall raise up us also by Jesus*, and shall present us with you." 2Cor.iv,14. He could count all things loss, if by any means he might attain to a resurrection [*exanastasis*] out from among the dead. Phil.iii,8-11.

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And well might prophets and apostles look forward with joyful anticipation to this glorious event; for it is when this takes place, and not before, that they are to receive their reward. Notice particularly this point. Mark the time which the Bible designates as the time of reward to the righteous and of punishment to the wicked. You will find it to be not at death; but at the resurrection. Thus the Saviour teaches: "But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind; and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee; for thou shalt be recompensed," not at death, but, "*at the resurrection of the just.*" Luke xiv,13,14.

Mark also the language by which the Lord would restrain that voice of weeping which was heard in Ramah. When Herod sent forth and slew all the children in Bethlehem from two years old and under, in hopes thereby to put to death the infant Saviour, then was fulfilled, says Matthew, what was spoken by the prophet, "In Ramah there was a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they were not." But what said the Lord to Rachel? See the original prophecy, Jer.xxxi,15-17: "Thus saith the Lord, refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears; for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord; and they shall come again from the land of the enemy. And there is hope in thine end, saith the Lord, that thy children shall come again to their own border." Not thus would the mourning Rachels of the 19th century be comforted by the professed

shepherds of the flock of Christ. They would tell them, Refrain thy voice from weeping; for thy sons are now angel cherubs chanting glad anthems round the throne of the Eternal. But the Lord points the mourners in Ramah forward to the resurrection

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for their hope; and though till that time their children "were not," or were out of existence, in the land of death, the great enemy of our race, yet, says the Lord, they shall come again from the land of the enemy, they shall return again to their own border, and thy work shall be rewarded; and he bids them refrain their voices from weeping, their eyes from tears, and their hearts from sorrow, in view of that glorious event.

The apostles represent the day of Christ's coming and the resurrection as the time when the saints will receive their crowns of glory. Says Peter, "And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." 1Pet.v,4. And Paul says that there is laid up for him a crown of righteousness, and not for him only, but for all those also that love his appearing, and which shall be given him in that day [the day of Christ's appearing]. These holy apostles were not expecting their crowns of reward sooner than this.

This is more directly stated in 1Thess.iv,13-18. "For I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren," says Paul, "concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not even as others which have no hope." In what respect would he not have us ignorant concerning them? Of their present condition, of course, and their future destiny. As to their present condition, the text bears upon the very face of it, the declaration that they are asleep; and as to their future destiny, he tells us that they shall not always remain asleep; but "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.*" Ah, there is the grand fulcrum of their hope - the coming of Christ and the resurrection of the dead. And Paul continues, "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up

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together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." Whoever believes this testimony, must dissent from the commonly received opinion; for the apostle plainly declares that it is by this means, viz., a resurrection and being caught up, that we go to be with the Lord, and not by going to Heaven, as a conscious spirit or soul at death. Mark it! The Lord shall come, the dead shall be raised, we shall all be caught up, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. And Paul continues, "Wherefore comfort one another with these words." Here the apostle gives us plain instruction in view of death and those who have fallen therein. He points out our true hope in such cases, and tells us by what words we should comfort one another. But how many think you, reader, would strive at the present day to comfort their mourning friends with such words as these? How many out of any one hundred popular ministers which you might select in the land, would make the least allusion to such a train of argument, if called to officiate in the last service of respect which we here pay to the departed? Not many, we think. Would not the voice of their consolation consist rather of such language as the following - language used by the Rev. Mr.

Cowen, Presbyterian minister, at the funeral occasion of the Hon. Mr. Benton, of St. Louis:-

"Dear friends, your loss is his infinite gain. He is now perfectly and forever free from sorrow, toil and pain. His sun has risen to set no more. His day has dawned never to be succeeded by another night. The last storm has spent its fury upon him. The sea of life he has crossed, and is now safely moored in the haven of eternal rest. His bliss is complete. His coronation day is passed. A crown of glory is his. He has been attired from Heaven's wardrobe. He is clothed

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in peerless, spotless white. He has joined the choir of the redeemed. He has attuned his voice to the sweet music of the skies.

"Hark! the thrilling symphonies seem, methinks, to seize us."

The reader can but mark, at least, the contrast which exists between the language of the Bible and that of popular theology, when speaking respectively upon this subject.

But further: Future existence itself is made to depend on the resurrection. The teaching of the Bible everywhere is - No resurrection, no future life. "This is the Father's will which sent me," says Jesus, "that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." Jno.vi,39. The import of this scripture unquestionably is, that if he did not raise it up at the last day, it was lost.

But the reader is requested to notice particularly the reasoning of Paul in 1Cor.xv. So pointed is his testimony that we can do no better than to transcribe a few verses entire. Verses 12-23. "Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ from the

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dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept. 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. But every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming."

Several points are clearly set forth in this testimony of Paul's. He declares that if there is no resurrection of the dead, Christ is not risen; and if Christ is not risen, then they which are fallen asleep in Christ *are perished!* Could he speak thus of those whose vigorous, conscious and immortal spirits were living right on despite the hour of death, and all the more vital and conscious on account of that event? Are such perished unless the scattered particles of the inanimate body be gathered up again? Far from it. Then we must conclude that such is not the condition of man; that there is no part of him which survives in a conscious state

when he goes down into the grave; for the apostle declared that unless he comes forth again from the grave, he is perished, that is the end of him, he is irrecoverably and forever gone.

The apostle carries out the same idea further along, when he declares that all his efforts, self-denial, labors and sufferings, are all in vain, if the dead rise not. "What advantageth it me," says he, "if the dead rise not?" And in this case he intimates that we may as well make the best of an unfortunate condition, and eat and drink, for tomorrow we die! How, as with a thunderbolt from Heaven, is the popular theory scathed and shivered by this reasoning of the great apostle!

But he does not leave us to this alternative; for Christ has arisen, he declares. Glorious fact! and glorious pledge of the resurrection of the saints! There is then a resurrection to come. The race shall again be made alive. "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made

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alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits, afterward they that are Christ's at his coming."

When our Saviour was about to leave his sorrowful disciples, he told them that he was going to prepare a place for them: he informed them moreover of his design that they should ultimately be with himself. But how was this to be accomplished? Was it through death, by which a deathless spirit would be released to soar away to meet its Saviour? No: but, says he, I will *come again* and receive you to myself, that where I am there ye may be also. Should any say that this coming of the Saviour is at death, we reply, that the disciples of our Lord did not so understand it. See John xxi,22,23. Jesus incidentally remarked concerning one of his followers, "If I will that he tarry *till I come*, what is that to thee? follow thou me;" and the saying went immediately abroad among the disciples, on the strength of these words, that that disciple should *not die*.

The eminent and pious Joseph Alleine also testifies: "But we shall lift up our heads because the day of our redemption draweth nigh. This is the day I look for, and wait for, and have laid up all my hopes in. If the Lord return not, I profess myself undone; my preaching is vain, and my suffering is vain. The thing you see is established, and every circumstance is determined. How sweet are the words that dropped from the precious lips of our departing Lord! What generous cordials hath he left us in his parting sermon and his last prayer! And yet of all the rest these are the sweetest: 'I will come again and receive you unto myself' that where I am there ye may be also. What need you any further witness?"

By this view the coming of Christ and the resurrection of the dead are allowed to hold that place of pre-eminent importance and glory which

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the Scriptures everywhere ascribe to them. And whatever theory would make it otherwise, thereby gives *prima facie* evidence of being radically defective. The coming of Christ and the resurrection of the dead! The stupendous and all-consummating crisis of this world's history! Lose not sight of them; rob them not of their importance. Alas that men should so far depart from that form of doctrine delivered unto them in the holy oracles, as to close these the glorious and only portals of immortality, and endeavor to get men into Heaven "some other way."

We come now to the third and last division of our subject, which is,

### **MAN BEYOND THE GRAVE**

Thus far in our investigation we have found no intimation that man in his present state is in possession of an inherent, immortal principle. we have found no testimony relative to him in the grave, which shows him to be a compound being, only separated, not killed, by death. We have found that the resurrection is the only avenue to a future life. And now we approach the most momentous and solemn division of our inquiry; for beyond the resurrection no less than the long lines of eternity stretch away before us; and whatever sentence is then pronounced upon the guilty of our race, it is forever.

We have here an inquiry to answer concerning the two classes of mankind: Of one it is, What profit is it that they have kept the ordinances of the Lord? and of the other, "What shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?" Let the points already settled in this investigation be here kept distinctly in view. Those who contend for the eternal misery of the wicked are too apt to reason in a circle. Thus, when the immortality

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of the soul is the point to be proved, they will say the wicked are to be tormented eternally, therefore the soul is immortal; and when endless misery is the point in dispute, they will invert their former proposition, and tell us that the soul is immortal, and therefore the wicked will live forever in misery; thus playing from one declaration to the other, and traveling complacently around within the limits of a complete circle. But nothing can here be presumed from the immortality of the soul in favor of the unending torment of the wicked; for we have not found any immortality yet predicated of the soul. If then it be a fact that the wicked will exist forever in devouring fire, it must rest upon express declarations of scripture to that effect, and upon them alone. We will then examine those texts which are supposed to prove this point.

### **EXAMINATION OF TEXTS SUPPOSED TO PROVE ETERNAL MISERY**

a. Dan.xii,2. "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." The shame is here made to stand in connection with the contempt, and so like that to be everlasting. But we reply, it is not so connected; and even if it was, neither the shame nor the contempt are emotions to be exercised by those who are thus raised in this condition, but by others toward them. This consideration at once removes this text entirely from the field of this controversy. The Syriac reads, "Some to death and the eternal contempt of their companions."

b. Matt.xxv,41. "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his angels." Provided the term everlasting here means endless duration, we might inquire how the

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fact that the fire was to be eternal could prove the indestructibility of the beings or substances cast into it. We venture to say that in any other book but the Bible it would be considered as proof of just the reverse. The expression is similarly used in Matt.xviii,8.

c. Matt.xxv,46. "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal." We raise no issue on the duration of the punishment brought to view in this text, but only on its nature. The difficulty we apprehend arises from confounding punishment with conscious suffering, whereas it is not necessarily such. Mark where the antithesis occurs: it is between life and punishment. Do not change these terms, as is too often done, to happiness and misery. we enter our solemn protest against such treatment of the word of God. We believe that Inspiration knew what ideas it wished to convey, and in what language to convey them. We therefore plead for the plain and literal import of its terms. Life then means life; and life here is just the opposite of the punishment brought to view. But is eternal life in misery the opposite of eternal life as such? This will hardly be claimed by any one. It is rather an eternal "cutting off" from life; an idea which enters largely into the definition of the word here translated punishment. That an eternal deprivation of life would be eternal punishment we think must be evident to all, besides being directly declared to be such by an inspired apostle. See 2Thess.1,9, where we are told what the punishment is, and the same term is used to denote its duration: "Who shall be *punished* with everlasting *destruction* from [or by, see chap.ii,8; Acts iii, 19] the presence of the Lord."

d. Mark iii,29. "But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation." And

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what is this damnation? a continual and never-ending infliction of torment? Nothing of the kind; but a judgment or condemnation, the effects of which will be eternal. Just as we read of eternal salvation, Heb.v,9, eternal judgment Heb.vi,2, and eternal redemption, Heb.ix,12: not that these are perpetually going on, but only are in their effects eternal.

e. Mark ix,44. "Where their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched." This declaration is repeated in verses 46,48. We are told that if a hand or foot offend us it is better to cut it off, or an eye, to pluck it out; for it is better to go into LIFE maimed, than having two hands, two feet, etc., to go into hell [*gehenna*], into the fire that never shall be quenched. If this language were for the first time met with in the N.T. it might strike some, perhaps, as the most expressive imagery of eternal torment; but even in this case others might reply, and we think upon as good ground, No: fire is the very symbol of complete destruction, and the expression can denote nothing less than the complete consumption of those who are cast into it. But as the expression was familiar to those whom Christ was addressing, let us turn to instances of its use, and thus learn the idea it would convey to their minds. If we can ascertain this, we have, of course, the true sense of this passage.

Turn then to Jer.xvii,27. "but if ye will not hearken unto me to hallow the Sabbath-day, and not to bear a burden, even entering in at the gates of



Jerusalem on the Sabbath-day; then will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched." Here it is expressly declared that a fire kindled in the gates of Jerusalem should not be quenched; but no one can suppose that a fire thus kindled could burn eternally. And thus we learn the meaning of one expression, which is that fire

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which is not by any extraneous means extinguished, but is suffered to burn on till it has entirely consumed whatever it preys upon, is said to be unquenchable, or never to be quenched. To the same purpose see Eze.xx,47,48: "Thus saith the Lord God: Behold I will kindle a fire in thee, and it shall devour every green tree in thee, and every dry tree; the flaming flame shall not be quenched, and all faces from the south to the north shall be burned therein. And all flesh shall see that I the Lord have kindled it: it shall not be quenched." Again: Isa.lxvi,24. "And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched: and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh." Here the same phraseology is used as in Mark ix, and from this no doubt, the latter was taken; but here it is said to be *carcasses* upon which the worm riots and the flame feeds. Notice also the place of punishment to which Mark alludes: it is *Gehenna*. And what was *Gehenna*? Ans. "The valley of Hinnom, south of Jerusalem, once celebrated for the horrid worship of Moloch and afterward polluted with every species of filth, as well as the carcasses of animals, and dead bodies of malefactors; to *consume which*, in order to avert the pestilence which such a mass of corruption would occasion, *constant fires were kept burning.*" *Greenfield*. Such is the scene to which our Lord alludes; and from this allusion, men for eighteen hundred years this side of that time, would fain derive the idea of eternal suffering to suit the genius of their own age. But this is nothing less than an effort to derive the idea of indestructibility from figures of the most utter and complete destruction.

To this we may only add a remark more: The unquenchable fire of verse 43 (used also in Matt.iii,12; Luke iii,17), is *pur asbestou*; and this very

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term, Eusebius, who was a learned Greek, and doubtless understood his native tongue sufficiently to write it accurately, employs in two instances in recounting the martyrdom of Christians. Cronion and Julian, after being tortured in various ways, were consumed in an "unquenchable fire," *puri asbesto*. The same is also said of Epimachus and Alexander. "The *pur asbestou*," says Wetstein, "denotes such a fire as cannot be extinguished before it has consumed and destroyed all." And Bloomfield, speaking of the oriental custom of burning straw and stubble, adds, "The *pur asbestou* completes the awful image of *total destruction.*"<sup>131</sup>

f. Rom.ii,6-9. "Who will render to every man according to his deeds, . . . unto them that are contentious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish." We notice this portion of scripture only because it is sometimes urged as an objection to the doctrine of the destruction of the wicked. But the objector should not thus ignore the fact that we have never denied, but believe as firmly as any can, that indignation and wrath,

tribulation and anguish will be recompensed upon every soul of man that doeth evil. The question between us is concerning the duration of this tribulation and anguish, and on this, the text is entirely silent.

g. Jude 7. "Even as Sodom and Gomorrah . . . are set forth for an example suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." Let it be noticed here, that it is the *example* and not the *suffering* which is in the present tense, and all difficulty vanishes at once. To be set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire, and to be eternally suffering in fire, are two very different conditions. Sodom suffered the vengeance of eternal fire; and

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what was the effect of that vengeance? Was it a never-ceasing preservation in the devouring element? By no means. The vengeance of that fire turned those cities into ashes. "Turning," says Peter, "the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah *into ashes*, condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly." 2Epis.ii,6. But those fires are not now burning. Seek out the site of those ancient and abandoned cities, and you will find the brackish waters of the Dead Sea rolling their sluggish waves over the spot where they once stood. To the example here set forth, the ungodly would do well to take heed; for just such an overthrow, just such a destruction awaits them, unless they speedily turn from their wicked ways that they may live.

h. Rev.xiv,11. "And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever; and they have no rest day nor night who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name." In the preceding verse we are told that they drink of the unmingled wrath of God, and are tormented in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb. This scripture is taken to prove the unending torment of all the unregenerate of our race. But a moment's consideration is sufficient to convince any one that it cannot have so broad an application. It is a definite and limited class that is here referred to. It is only against the worshipers of the beast and his image that this threatening is directed; and this appellation can include but comparatively a small portion of all the sinners who have ever lived. And hence even if this scripture proves eternal torture for some it does not for the whole. But the phrase upon which eternity of suffering is here especially suspended is, that the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever. Does this convey such an idea? We will see; for the expression was not

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new in John's day. It was borrowed from the Old Testament. See Isa.xxxiv,9,10. The prophet here speaking of the land of Idumea, says: "And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch. It shall not be quenched night nor day: the smoke thereof shall go up forever: from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it forever and ever."

Whether this language refers to the literal land of Edom south and east of Judea, or to the general destruction of the ungodly at the end of this age, is altogether immaterial to the argument. if the literal land of Idumea is meant, and the language has reference to the desolations which have fallen upon it, then certainly no eternity of duration is implied in the smoke's going up forever. And if

reference is had to the overflowing desolation of this earth which shall wrap the sinner in its fiery folds, at that time when the Man of Sin shall be consumed with the spirit of Christ's mouth, and destroyed by the brightness of his coming, no eternity is even then found in the expression; for this earth is destined eventually to be purified from its stains of sin, and become the abode of the righteous. The phrase therefore, the smoke of their torment shall go up forever and ever, must be limited in its duration; and being so, another proof for the eternity of conscious misery ceases to exist. *Aion*, the word here translated forever, is thus defined by Schrevelius in his Greek Lexicon: "An age; a long period of time; indefinite duration; time whether *longer* or *shorter*."

i. Rev.xx,10. "And the Devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever." The same explanation may be offered here as on

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the former objection. It only speaks of the Devil, the beast and the false prophet. But the ancient world and the present heathen world are alike ignorant of either the beast or false prophet. It does not therefore refer to the whole race. The means of torture, the lake of fire, is again mentioned in verse 14; and there it is the symbol of complete and utter destruction. Death and Hades (personified), it says, were cast into the lake of fire. But of death we read that the "last enemy that shall be destroyed is death;" and "there shall be *no more* death." Being cast into the lake of fire denotes their utter extinction. In verse 15 we read further: "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the lake of fire." And why may not the lake of fire in this instance denote as utter an extinction of the persons who are cast into it, as it did in the verse before of death which was cast into it? Yes, why? since the definition of the original word forever cannot prove its torment to be unlimited in duration.

But it may be asked if the same term is not employed to express the existence of the righteous, and if the torture of the wicked will not be equally long. We answer that the term forever, according to a rule laid down by Dr. Clarke, signifies only, as long as a thing considering the surrounding circumstances can exist. In his closing remarks on 2Kings v, speaking of the curse of leprosy pronounce upon Gehazi forever, he says: "Some have thought, because of the prophet's curse, 'The leprosy of Naaman shall cleave unto thee and to thy seed forever,' that there are persons still alive who are this man's descendants, and afflicted with this horrible disease. Mr. Maundrell, when he was in Judea, made diligent inquiry concerning this, but could not ascertain the truth of the supposition. To me it appears absurd; the denunciation took place in the posterity of Gehazi till it should become

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extinct; and under the influence of this disorder, this must *soon* have taken place. The *forever* implies as long as any of his posterity should remain. This is the import of the word, *leolam*. It *takes in the whole extent or duration of the thing to which it is applied*. The *forever* of Gehazi was till his posterity became extinct."

Cruden says, "The words eternal, everlasting, and forever, are sometimes taken for a long time, and are not always to be understood strictly. Thus, 'Thou shalt be our guide from this time forth even forever,' that is, during our whole life. And in many other places of scripture, and in particular when the word forever is applied to the Jewish rites and privileges, it commonly signifies no more than during the standing of that commonwealth, until the coming of the Messiah." <sup>14</sup> 1 Now the people of God are declared to be clothed at last with incorruptibility and immortality: *their* "lifetime," will consequently be absolutely without end. But the "surrounding circumstances" in which the wicked are placed, utterly preclude a long extenuation of their existence.

We have now noticed all the more prominent passages which are supposed to teach eternal misery. If we have not noticed every text which is urged to this end, we may safely take the position that if these do not prove it, there are none which can. If the reader has never before examined this subject, he will perhaps be surprised to learn how few texts there are which have even a semblance of proving the immortality of the lost. Whether or not it is proved by the texts examined he can now judge. Should he however still be inclined to think it is, we would request him to suspend his judgment for a while till we have briefly glanced at another class of scriptures.

### THE QUESTION ANSWERED

The question still recurs, "what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?" We have seen that the arguments used to show that they will forever exist in conscious and intolerable torture are not valid. What then is to be their doom? Answer: "The soul that sinneth it shall *die*." Eze.xviii,4. "The wages of sin is *death*." Rom.vi,23. But it may be necessary to inquire into the meaning of this term, so completely has modern theology loaded with mysticism the word of God. What is the death with which the Bible threatens the sinner? To facilitate our inquiry here, let us look at

The death threatened Adam. "In the day that thou eatest thereof" [of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil], said God to Adam, "thou shalt surely die." What was meant by this sentence? Death spiritual, death temporal, and death eternal, is the glib answer of thousands of religious teachers. But what is death spiritual? It is a state of sin and alienation from God. But this was the *result* of Adam's act of disobedience, and not its *penalty*. To make this a part of the threatening is to make God say to Adam, "In the day thou sinnest thou shalt *surely be a sinner!*" This is making too sad nonsense of the words of Jehovah to be for a moment tolerated. And could it be death eternal? by no means; for were it such, Adam could have no release from it; but the bands of that death will be broken, and Adam brought to life again; for in Christ shall all be made alive. Death temporal is alone left to fulfill the penalty. But it is objected that such a death cannot be meant, as Adam did not die upon that very day. Nothing is gained by such an objection; for there is probably no one who will not

admit that literal death is embraced in the penalty and takes place as the result of Adam's transgressions; and then the objection lies equally against themselves; for Adam did not die literally till he had reached the age of nine hundred and thirty years.

An exact parallel to this case is found in 1Sam.xv,28: "And Samuel said unto him [Saul], The Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee *this day*, and hath given it to a neighbor of thine that is better than thou." Yet, although the kingdom was declared to be rent from him that very day, it was not till several years after this that the sentence was carried into execution, Saul slain, and the kingdom actually given to his successor.

So with Adam. The sentence of death passed upon him in that very day. He had no sooner broken that command, the penalty of which was declared to be death, than he was as good as a dead man. He then entered upon a dying state. Dying thou shalt die, reads the margin; but it is more fully explained by the Lord himself when, pronouncing upon Adam the sentence of his guilt, he said, In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, *till* thou return unto the ground: for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return. Gen.iii,19. The gradual process by which he should return again to his native element is here fully implied. The threatened punishment was inflicted. Adam has suffered the penalty of his first transgression, death. Death temporal, or rather we should say, death temporary, is entailed in consequence upon all our race. And had not the plan of salvation immediately supervened upon the fall, this would have been the end of Adam and his posterity; for we have already seen that death is a state of non-existence, and the only avenue there is from that

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land of dark unconsciousness back to life is through the resurrection, which is effected by Christ. We now know what death means in one instance, at least, when pronounced as the penalty of sin. We see to what state Adam has been reduced as the result of his transgression, as the wages of his sin.

We are now prepared to carry our investigation a step further. The temporary death which men suffer in this state, entailed on them through a fallen nature, happens to all alike, irrespective of character. But there is a death before us which is not irrespective of character. We all are to answer for our personal acts and transgressions. "Every one of us shall give account of himself to God." Rom.xiv,12. For this purpose we are all to have a future life. And if then there are found remaining against us, sins unrepented of and unforgiven, what will be our sentence? Answer: The same fearful sentence which has everywhere from first to last been pronounced against sin, "The soul that sinneth it shall *die!*" Sentence was pronounced upon Adam for his sin; it is pronounced upon us for our sin. It was told Adam he should die; it is told us that we shall die. We have seen the effect that death had upon Adam; and who shall affirm that it will have a different effect upon us? The death we die in this state is called the first, because there is another lying beyond it for the transgressor to experience; and that is called the second in relation to the temporal, which is the first. Now do these deaths differ in their nature? we have no reason so to infer. Every consideration which can be brought to bear upon the subject leads us inevitably to the conclusion that they

do not differ, and holds us immovably there. Let this point be carefully considered. We are confident it will prove a grand nucleus around which nothing but truth can cluster.

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But we hasten to notice some of those scriptures which speak to us unmistakably of the sinner's doom. In entering upon this department it is not our object to multiply testimony. One plain declaration of the Lord of hosts is sufficient for implicit faith: it would not be materially strengthened though an hundred times repeated.

The wicked shall be destroyed. "The Lord preserveth all them that love him; but all the wicked will he destroy." Here preservation is promised only to those who love God, and in opposition to this, *destruction* is threatened to the wicked. But human wisdom teaches us that God will preserve the wicked in hell - preserve them for the mere sake of torturing them. Mr. Benson, an English divine, says, "God is therefore present in hell to see the punishment of these rebels. His fiery indignation kindles, and his incensed fury feeds the flame of their torment, while his powerful presence and operation *maintains their being*, and renders all their powers most acutely sensible, thus setting the keenest edge upon their pain, and making it cut most intolerably deep."

The wicked shall perish. "For 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 iii,16. A double enunciation of the truth is couched in this short text. It is that eternal life is to be obtained only through Christ, and that all who do not thus obtain it, will eventually perish. John testifies further on the same point in his 1st epistle, v,11: "And this is the record: that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." From which it follows, as a most natural consequence, that "he that hath not the Son of God *hath not life*." Verse 12.

The wicked shall go to perdition. "We are not

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of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul." Heb.x,39. We either gain the salvation of our souls by a perseverance in faith, and obtain eternal life by a patient continuance in well-doing, Rom.ii,7, or we sink back into perdition, which is defined to be utter ruin or *destruction*.

The wicked shall come to an end and be as though they had not been. "For yet a little while and the wicked shall not be; yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place and *it shall not be*." Ps.xxxvii,10. No: there will be neither a sinner nor any *place* for a sinner, after God has executed upon them his just judgements. "They shall be as though they had not been." Obad.16.

The wicked shall go down into death. "The wages of sin is death." Rom.vi,23. "Sin when it is finished bringeth forth death." Jas.i,15. In Rom.ii, Paul tells us of certain characters which are certainly deserving, if any can be, of eternal torture; but in passing sentence upon them, does he draw out before us a picture of unending conscious misery, a course for which he has the most appropriate occasion, if it be true? Not at all: he only tells us in accordance with reason as well as revelation, that they are worthy of *death*. But death is a state which can be reached only on a complete extinction of life. As long as there is any life about

a man, he is not dead. "The death that never dies," is a contradiction of terms. Nor can a person properly be said to be dying, unless he is tending to a state of death which he will by and by reach. And yet the popular view of this subject is well expressed in the following language of Thomas Vincent: "The torments of hell will not be in one part only, but in every part, not in a weaker degree, but in the greatest extremity; not for a day, or a month, or a year, but forever: the wicked will be always dying, never

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dead; the pangs of death will ever be upon them, and yet they shall never give up the ghost; if they could die they would think themselves happy; they will always be roaring and never breath out their last; always sinking and never come to the bottom; always burning in those flames, and never consumed; the eternity of hell will be the hell of hell."

But again the Lord says, speaking of a certain class of his enemies, "For yet a little while and the indignation shall cease, and mine anger in their destruction, Isa.x,25: showing us conclusively that all those with whom the Lord has occasion to be angry, as he is with all the wicked, Ps.vii,11, will be finally destroyed, and in that destruction his anger toward them will cease. Yet the majority of divines tell us that God's "fiery indignation and incensed fury" toward them will never cease; that he will never literally destroy them, but will forever torment them, and keep them alive expressly that he may torment them. Says Benson again, "He will exert *all* his divine attributes to make them as wretched as the capacity of their nature will admit." And he continues, "They must be perpetually swelling their enormous sums of guilt, and still running deeper, immensely deeper in debt to divine and infinite justice. Hence after the longest imaginable period, they will be so far from having discharged their debt, that they will find more due than when they first began to suffer." Thus the sinner is represented as being able to distance in sin the power of Omnipotence to punish. They go on accumulating loads of guilt in their rebellion against the divine government, while God, exerting *all* his divine attributes, follows tardily after, in fruitless efforts to make the terrors of his punishment adequate to the infinitude of their guilt. Oh, horrid picture of perverted imagination! Did we not believe its authors labored under the sincere

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conviction that they were doing God service, and did we not know that many good and estimable persons still defend the doctrine under an earnest though mistaken zeal for God, we should pronounce it the most arrant blasphemy.

The wicked are compared to the most inflammable and perishable substances. Had the wicked been compared to the most durable substances with which we are acquainted in nature; had they been likened to the "everlasting hills," the during rock, or the precious metals, especially gold, the most incorruptible of all substances; such comparisons would not have been without their weight in giving us an idea of an eternity of existence; nor can we think they would have been overlooked by the other side. We therefore claim an equal significance on our side of the question for the fact that they are everywhere compared to just the opposite of the above-named substances - substances the most perishable and corruptible of any that exist. For no idea can be drawn from

such comparisons at all compatible with the idea of eternal preservation in the midst of glowing and devouring fire. Thus they are likened to chaff, Matt.iii,12, stubble Mal.iv,1, tares, Matt.xiii,40, withered branches to be burned, John xv,6, bad fish, Matt.xiii,47,48, and thistle down, Isa.xvii,3, margin.

The wicked shall be consumed and devoured by fire. Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness, etc. Therefore as the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, so their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust! Isa.v, 20-24. Reader, have you ever seen fire devour stubble, or flame consume chaff? Then you have seen a figure of the destruction of the wicked. And let the advocate of eternal misery tell us, if such language does not

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denote the utter consumption of the wicked, what language would do it, if the doctrine were true. Let us know what language Inspiration should have used, had it wished to convey such an idea. Is it such as this? "But the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs; they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away." Ps.xxxvii,20. "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." The word here rendered devour, *katephagn*, says Stuart, is "intensive, to *eat up*, *devour*, so that it denotes utter excision." In the light of this scripture we can readily understand how it is that the wicked are to be recompensed in the earth. Prov.xi,31. Coming up in the second resurrection at the end of the 1000 years of Rev.xx,5, they come up around the New Jerusalem, the beloved city, the abode of the saints, then descended from heaven to earth, chap.xxi,5, and then their fearful retribution overtakes them. It is then that they have their portion in those purifying fires that sweep over the earth, in which, according to Peter's testimony, the elements of this great globe itself shall melt with fervent heat. 2Pet.iii,10,12. For it is at the day of Judgment [by which of course we must understand the execution of the Judgment] and perdition of ungodly men, that this takes place. See verse 7. So, too, the righteous as they go forth upon the earth, verse 13, destined to be their eternal and glorious abode will receive their recompense in the earth. Then will be fulfilled the word of the Lord by the prophet Malachi, which says, "For behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven: and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither

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root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name, shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts." Mark the distinctness of this language. It does not say that the wicked shall be as ashes, nor does it introduce any comparisons whatever, but plainly states a plain fact, that they *shall be ashes*, literally, under the soles of the saints' feet.

Then will the universe be clean and pure. Then the stain of sin will all be wiped away forever; sinners, and the great enemy that deceived them (for he,



too, shall be destroyed, Heb.ii,14) being rooted out from the land of the living. Its every scar now impressed upon the handiwork of God shall be effaced; and this unfortunate earth shall be re-adorned, as only God, omnipotent in power and omniscient in wisdom, is able to adorn it. And then will arise that glad anthem of universal Jubilee, in which shall join *every creature* which is in Heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, ascribing blessing, and honor, and glory and power, unto him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever. Rev.v,13. There is no room here for a great receptacle of fiery torment, where an innumerable company of human beings shall burn and blaspheme and sin and suffer forever and ever. There is no room in this great song of joy for the discordant and hopeless wailing of the damned. There is no provision made for an eternal rebellion against the government of God, and eternal blasphemy against his holy name! No! only the loyal subjects of the great Captain of our salvation, only such as love life, and seek for it, and prepare themselves for its inestimable blessings, shall ever enjoy the glorious boon; while those

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who put from themselves the word of God, and "judge themselves unworthy of everlasting life," Acts xiii, 46, will be remanded back to the original elements from which they sprung; and strict Justice will write upon their unhonored and unlamented graves that they themselves were the arbiters of their own fate.

## **TWO ALLEGED AND FINAL DIFFICULTIES CONSIDERED**

As in the ages before our existence we suffered no punishment, so it is claimed it will be no punishment to be reduced to that state again. To this we reply, that those who never had an existence cannot, of course, be conceived of in relation to rewards and punishments at all. But when a person has once seen light of life, when he has lived long enough to taste its sweets and appreciate its blessings, is it then no punishment to be deprived of it? Is it no evil? is it no loss? Says Luther Lee, "We maintain that the simple loss of existence cannot be a penalty or punishment in the circumstance of the sinner after the general resurrection." <sup>15</sup> 1 And what are these circumstances? He comes up to the beloved city, and sees the people of God in the everlasting kingdom. Then says the Saviour, addressing a class of sinners, there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of God. What is the cause of this wailing? It is not that that they have to choose between annihilation or eternal torture. Had they this privilege, some might perhaps choose the former; others would not. But with eternal misery the sinner has nothing to do. That is but a thing of the imagination, and cannot enter in any wise into his account. The conditions between which he can draw his cheerless comparisons

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are, the blessed and happy state of the righteous within the city of God, and his own hapless lot outside its walls. And we may well infer from the nature of the case, as well as the Saviour's language, that it is *because* he finds himself thus

thrust out, that he lifts up his voice in lamentation and woe. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of God, *and ye yourselves thrust out!* The sinner then begins to see what he has lost; the sense of it, like a barbed arrow, pierces his soul; and the thought that the glorious inheritance before him might have been his but for his own self-willed and perverse career, sets the keenest edge upon every pang of remorse. And as he looks far away into eternity, to the utmost limit which the mind's eye can reach, and gets a glimpse of the inconceivable blessedness and glory which he might have enjoyed, but for his idol sin, the hopeless thought that all is lost will be sufficient to rend the hardest and most obdurate heart with unutterable agony. Say not then that loss of existence under such circumstances is no penalty or punishment. Those who thus speak now, should it be their lot at last to try, in person, the truth of their statements, we venture to affirm would find their ideas of the subject intensely modified. At any rate, may it never be our lot, dear reader, to be brought to so fearful a test.

But again: The Bible plainly teaches degrees of punishment; and how is this compatible, it is asked, with the idea of a mere state of death to which all alike will be reduced? Let us ask the believers in eternal misery how they will maintain degrees in *their* system. They tell us the intensity of the pain endured will be in each case proportioned to the guilt of the sufferer. But how can this be? Are not the flames of hell equally severe in all parts? and will they not equally affect

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*all* the immaterial souls cast therein? But God can interpose, it is answered, to produce the effect desired. Very well, then, we reply, cannot he also interpose, if necessary, according to our view, and graduate the pain attendant upon the sinner's being reduced to a state of death as the climax of his penalty? So then our view is equal with the common one in this respect, while it possesses a great advantage over it in another; for while that has to find its degrees of punishment in intensity of pain alone, the duration in all cases being equal, ours may have not only degrees in pain, but in duration also; for while some may perish in a short space of time, the weary sufferings of others may be long drawn out. But yet we apprehend that the bodily suffering will be but an unnoticed trifle compared with that mental agony, that keen anguish which will rack their souls as they get a view of their incomparable loss, each according to his capacity, and consequently a deeper experience in sin, the burden of his fate will be proportionately greater. While the man of giant intellect, and almost boundless comprehension, who thereby possessed greater influence for evil, and hence was the more guilty for devoting those powers to that evil, being able to understand his situation fully, comprehend his fate and realize his loss, will feel it most keenly of all. Into *his* soul indeed the iron will enter most intolerably deep. And thus, by an established law of mind, the sufferings of each may be most accurately adjusted to the magnitude of their guilt.

But if death is the wages of sin, it is asked, when

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a man is once dead, why not let him remain so? Why should God raise him just to put him to death again? Does not this view make him as unjust and cruel as

that which represents him as keeping sinners alive in hell for the express purpose of tormenting them? We answer, No; and for this reason: God has told us that we shall be brought to account for our own sins; but in order to this, we must have a resurrection to a future life; for the death we die here, we die in Adam and not on account of our personal transgressions. No one thinks, when death comes upon him here, that he is dying for his own sins, and that but for them he would live on. But the Bible tells us here in our lifetime that the soul that sinneth, it shall die, in addition to the death we die in Adam. We must therefore be raised from this first death to give account of ourselves to God. And he has told us that this time shall be to the sinner a time of weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth, a time of tribulation, distress and anguish of spirit, ending finally in death, from which no resurrection ever again will call him. We can only say therefore to this suggestion, that God will be faithful to his word.

Then, says one, the sinner will long for death as a release from his evils, and experience a sense of relief when all is over. No, friend, not even this pitiful semblance of consolation is granted you; for no such sense of relief will ever come. The words of another will best illustrate this point:

"But the sense of relief when death comes at last.' We hardly need to reply: there can be no sense of relief. The light of life gone out, the expired soul can never know that it has escaped from pain. The bold transgressor may fix his thoughts upon it now, heedless of all that intervenes; but he will forget to think of it then. To waken from a troubled dream and to know that it was only a dream, is an exceeding joy; and with transport do the friends of one dying in delirium note a gleam of returning reason, ere he breathes his last. But the soul's death knows no waking;

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its maddening fever ends in no sweet moment of rest. It can never feel that its woe is ended. The agony ends, not in a happy consciousness that all is past, but in eternal night, -- in the blackness of darkness forever!"<sup>16</sup> 1

Fearful! scene! from a participation in which we would that all who read these pages might haste to make a timely and eternal escape.

## RECAPITULATION

Let us collect and note the conclusions to which the foregoing investigation has led us. We have found,

1. That man was not endowed in his creation with any inherent immortal principle; that immortality and eternal existence are never predicated of either the soul or spirit irrespective of character.

2. That there is no inspired description of man in death, which represents him as a compound being surviving the dissolution of the body; but that the whole man is reduced to unconsciousness, and thus sleeps till the voice of Omnipotence shall bring him up again from the grave.

3. That the resurrection is affirmed of the whole race.

4. That the expressions used to describe the punishment of the wicked which then takes place, viz., the smoke of their torment ascending up forever and ever,

everlasting and unquenchable fire, and a never-dying worm, were not such terms as would convey the idea of an eternity of existence to those who heard them; but on the contrary, according to the *usus loquendi* of the age in which they were spoken, they would denote the most utter and complete destruction of all the objects to which they were applied.

5. That eternal life is suspended upon conditions, and can never be obtained except through compliance with those conditions; that incorruption and immortality are yet to be put on, but not till the resurrection, 1 Cor. xv, 53, 54; that they are to be obtained only through Christ, and consequently that all who are out of him will never receive them, but must on the other hand "reap corruption," Gal. vi. 8, die, be slain, be consumed, be destroyed, perish, be rooted out of the land of the living, be burnt up as withered branches, dried thorns, chaff and stubble, be ashes under the saints' feet, and reach a state which so far as a conscious existence is concerned, will be absolutely as though they had never been.

And we hesitate not to affirm with the utmost assurance,

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that in all those conclusions both reason and revelation stand fully with us.

Are you then ready to inquire how it is that the doctrine of the soul's immortality has come to be so generally received! We will tell you: *It has been taken for granted!* Says Bishop Tillotson, "The immortality of the soul is rather supposed or taken for granted, than expressly revealed in the Bible." <sup>17</sup> 1 "It is taken for granted" that immortality is an essential attribute of the soul, and that therefore for the Bible to affirm it would be mere tautology. But we reply, Is not immortality an essential attribute also of Jehovah? Yet the Bible has been tautological enough to plainly state this fact. And it would seem that it might have carried its "tautology" a little further, and told us as much, at least *once*, about the soul, if that too was immortal; for surely its immortality cannot be *more essential* than that of Jehovah.

### **FALSE IMPRESSIONS CORRECTED**

But nature everywhere revolts, we are told, against our doctrine of annihilation, and everywhere proves it false; for nothing ever has been, nor ever can be annihilated. To which we reply, Very true; and here we would correct the impression which some seem to entertain, that we believe in any such annihilation of the wicked; or the annihilation of anything as matter. In reference to the wicked we simply affirm that they will be annihilated as living beings, the matter of which they are composed passing into other forms. The second definition of annihilate, according to Webster, is, "To destroy the form or the peculiar distinctive properties, so that the specific thing no longer exists; as, to *annihilate* a forest by cutting and carrying away the trees, though the timber may still exist; to *annihilate* a house, by demolishing the structure." Just so of the wicked: as conscious intelligent beings they are annihilated, being resolved into their original elements.

But many are ready to ask with apparent solicitude, Why preach this doctrine even if it be true? What good can result? And will not the tendency be evil? Or, rather to put it in the strong language of some, Its tendency will be evil; "it will make more infidels than Tom Paine's Age of Reason; and no conversions to God will ever follow in the track of its blighting and soul-destroying influence." We are acquainted with individuals who take this position, and who have expressed it in almost these words. But we are happy

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to know that such a view of the subject is an entire misapprehension; and we are still more happy to be able to correct it both from the testimony of our opponents and from our own observation. They entirely mistake the doctrine to which such charges belong. Would they but apply them to their own views, and we say it with all due deference, we apprehend they would be far nearer the truth. Concerning the tendency of the popular doctrine, the eminent Saurin at the close of one of his sermons, thus speaks:

"I sink, I sink, under the awful weight of my subject; and I declare, when I see my friends, my relations, the people of my charge,-this whole congregation, when I think that I, that you, that we are all exposed to these torments; when I see in the lukewarmness of my devotions, in the languor of my love, in the levity of my resolutions and designs, the least evidence, though it be only possible or presumptive, of my future misery, I find in the thought a mortal poison, that diffuseth itself through every period of my existence, rendering society tiresome, nourishment insipid, pleasure disgustful, *and life itself a cruel bitter*. I cease to wonder, that the fear of hell hath made some *melancholy*, others *mad*; that it hath disposed some to expose themselves to living martyrdom, by fleeing from all commerce with the rest of mankind, and others to suffer the most terrible violent torments."

We add but one more testimony concerning the difficulties of the received view. It is from Albert Barnes, who speaks as follows; "I confess when I look upon a world of sinners and of sufferers; upon death-beds and grave-yards, upon the world of woe filled with hosts to suffer forever; when I see my friends, my parents, my family, my people, my fellow-citizens; when I look upon a whole race all involved in this sin and danger, and when I see the great mass of them wholly unconcerned, and when I feel that God only can save them, and yet he does not do it -- I am struck dumb. It is all dark, dark, dark to my soul, and I cannot disguise it." <sup>181</sup>

Such is the effect of the doctrine of eternal misery with some, according to the confession of its own advocates. No one can say that such effects are either good or desirable; And why does it not have this effect on more? We answer, it is because the lips only mechanically assent to what the heart and reason either will not try to realize, or else do not seriously believe. Says Bishop Newton, "Imagine a creature nay, imagine numberless creatures produced out of nothing . . . delivered over to torments of endless ages, without

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the least hope or possibility of relaxation or redemption. Imagine it you may, but you can never seriously believe it, nor reconcile it to God and goodness." <sup>191</sup>

But the majority are affected by it far differently. Every better emotion of their nature revolts at the idea, and they will not accept it. They cannot believe that God is thus cruel, tyrannical, revengeful, implacable; the personification in short, of every trait of character, which when seen in men here, we consider unmistakable marks of debasement and degradation; and believing the Bible and Christianity to be identified with such teaching as this, with equal promptness they too are rejected and cast away. But here we need not enlarge. Probably no one will read these pages under whose observation some case has not come, of persons driven into skepticism, yes, driven and held there, by the popular doctrine of eternal misery -- a doctrine which has been well described by a Christian writer, as "a theology that is confused entangled, imperfect, and gloomy; a theology which, while it abundantly breeds infidelity among the educated classes, fails to spread through the body of the population, and but dimly, or only as a flickering candle enlightens the world." <sup>202</sup>

But how with the view we have tried to present? Quite the reverse as our own observation proves. Instances have come under our immediate knowledge of persons who, when they saw the divine harmony of God's system of government, as brought to view in his word, when they saw the just and reasonable disposition which the Bible declares that he will make of all those who will persist in rebellion against him, -- a disposition in which justice and mercy so beautifully blend, have been able to take that Bible and say for the first time in their life they could believe it to be the book of God. And believing this, they have been led to turn their feet into its testimonies, and strive by obedience to its plain requirements to escape a doom which they could see to be just and therefore knew to be certain. This has been the experience of many. Let, then, the impression no longer exist, and the assertion no more be made, that these views tend to irreligion and infidelity. Their fruits everywhere show just the reverse.

Can it then be wondered at that we should be solicitous to disabuse the minds of the people in this respect? Shall we not have a zeal for the Lord, and be untiring in our efforts to wipe off from the book and character of God, the aspersions which are by this doctrine cast upon them? God represents

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himself to his creatures by his own sweet name of Love; he declares that he is very pitiful and of tender mercy, long suffering and slow to anger, not hasty to execute sentence against an evil work, not gratified in any manner by the death of the wicked, and not willing that any should perish; he declares that he delighteth in mercy, that he will not contend forever, neither be always wroth. And can it be that while thus representing himself to the inhabitants of earth, he was kindling fiery torture on multitudes of wretched beings in dreary regions of hell, feeding their flame with his incensed fury, preserving and tormenting them in infinite indignation, exerting all his divine attributes to make them as wretched as the capacity of their nature would admit, and maintaining a fixed purpose to do this through the endless ages of eternity! If not, "what a portentous error must it be!" How fearfully is his character misrepresented! What a bold and audacious libel is uttered against his holy name!

The root and trunk of all this, is the "taken-for-granted" position that the soul is immortal. But search through your Bible and see if you find it so. See if you will not rather be prepared to exclaim with the eminent commentator, Olshausen, that "the doctrine of the 'immortality of the soul,' and the name, are *alike unknown to the entire Bible.*"<sup>21</sup> 1 See if you can find the death that never dies, never-dying soul, and endless torture. If not, we ask you to reject the idea at once as a most dangerous and destructive error. Men are thus rejecting it. The leaven is working in the public mind. Men are growing suspicious of the truth of a declaration, first uttered by a doubtful character in Eden, perpetuated thence through heathenism, and at last through the medium of the Mother of harlots, disseminated through all the veins and channels of Orthodoxy. But truth will work its way up, however deeply the rubbish may have been heaped upon it; and before the bright rising of its light, all antiquated superstitions and traditionary dogmas will lie exposed in their native deformity.

## CONCLUSION

Before we take the parting hand, dear reader, if you are one whose peace is not yet made with God, allow us to second the tender entreaty which he extends to you: "Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die!" "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that he turn from his way and live." Life and death

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are set before you. The Saviour bids you look unto him and live. Mercy entreats you to destroy not yourself. The Spirit and the Bride bid you come and partake of the water of life freely. You can no longer take refuge from an awakened conscience under the idea that the threatenings of the Lord are not understood, and may not therefore be so terrific as supposed. The sinner's doom is unmistakably declared; and in the justness of that sentence, however slightly you may now realize the heinousness and just desert of sin, your own reason can but heartily concur. Will you then plunge headlong to ruin? or will you turn and accept the immense gratuity of eternal life? Of course you do not *mean* to perish. We accuse you not of this. The shining form of Hope is dancing on before you in the path of life- hope that ere it is too late, ere the silver cord be loosed or ever the golden bowl be broken, you will make sure a treasure and inheritance in Heaven. We would impress upon your mind that this hope *may* deceive you. Ere you reach the delusive phantom, the earth may suddenly open beneath your feet, and Hades receive you to its fixed embrace. Ere you overtake the beckoning form, ere the good intention be carried out, ere you grasp the prize, now held only by the uncertain tenure of good resolve, the glory of the coming Judge descending through the parting and dissolving heavens, may suddenly burst upon your unprepared soul. Yes! the great voice from the temple of Heaven crying, "It is finished!" may suddenly arrest you in the midst of your delaying and dallying career! The heavenly court of mercy may cease its sitting, ere you have made a friend of the great Advocate who alone can plead your cause! "Procrastination is the thief of time." It may be the thief of your eternal bliss. Its

every moment is high-handed and insane presumption. Its path is a path of unseen and innumerable dangers. You have no lease of your life. The present state is one of exposure and peril. The shafts of death are flying thickly about you. Time is short and its sands are swiftly falling. The bliss of heaven, or the blackness of darkness forever, will soon be yours. With the saved or lost you must soon take your position. There is no intermediate ground. Choose then, we beseech you, the enduring portion. Choose for eternity, choose wisely, choose *now*. And may it be ours to join the great song of salvation at last ascribing blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, unto Him who sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb who poured out his soul an offering for sin, that whosoever would believe on him might not perish but have everlasting life.



<sup>1</sup> Fables of Infidelity, p.73.

<sup>2</sup> His lifeless body was endued with a soul, whereby he became a living, rational creature." - *Cruden*.

"The body out of the dust of the earth, the soul immediately breathed from God himself." - *Clarke*.

<sup>3</sup> Discussion with Storrs, p. 14.

<sup>4</sup> Whateley, Essay 1, on a Future State.

<sup>5</sup> Dobney, p. 101.

<sup>6</sup> Leland on the Advantages, etc., of Revelation.

<sup>7</sup> E.H. Chapin, Horticultural Address.

<sup>8</sup> These scriptures, and others under similar heads, for the sake of convenient reference, are noticed in the order in which they stand, from Genesis onward.

<sup>9</sup> Quackenbos' Rhetoric, p.248.

<sup>10</sup> Comment on Matt.v,26.

<sup>11</sup> Immortality of the Soul, by Luther Lee, p.111.

<sup>12</sup> Our friends who believe in the immortality of the soul, will not, of course, refer such testimony as this, and also some before quoted, to the body merely, for let them remember that they do not regard the body, in itself considered, as knowing anything in this life; and it is the same thing that has knowledge in this life, that knows not anything in death.

<sup>13</sup> Debt and Grace, p.197.

<sup>14</sup> Unabridged Concordance, under the word Eternal.

<sup>15</sup> Immortality of the Soul, p, 128.

<sup>16</sup> Debt and Grace, by C. F. Hudson, p. 424.

<sup>17</sup> Sermons, Vol. ii, 1774.

<sup>18</sup> Sermons pp. 124, 125.

<sup>19</sup> Dissertation No. 60.

<sup>20</sup> I. Taylor.

<sup>21</sup> Comment on 1Cor.xv,19,20.