

THE  
**GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM**

*By the Late Wiley Jones*  
Norfolk, Virginia



ADVOCATED IN A SERIES OF  
**TEN DISCOURSES**  
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## P R E F A C E

These discourses are not *verbatim* reports, but were written out principally from short notes used in speaking. The subjects, as will be seen, are of the utmost importance, embracing the leading points of "The faith of the gospel."

This volume is now sent on its travels with the humble and fervent prayer that, under the blessing of the Lord, it may assist many in obtaining a knowledge of that Gospel which "is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."

Norfolk, March, 1879.

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## FOURTH DISCOURSE

Volume No. 2

### THE SURE MERCIES; OR THE COVENANT WITH DAVID

"Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, He would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ."—Ac. ii, 30, 31.

The great plan of redemption has been gradually unfolded to man. Commencing in Genesis with a few comprehensive sentences it is progressively expanded, as to details, until it shines forth in the apostolic writings as the fully revealed "Gospel of the kingdom." Thus the covenant with David gives a deeper insight to many things that had been mentioned before, especially into that clause of the Abrahamic covenant that speaks of Christ as a great conqueror that "shall possess the gate of His enemies." Of the prominence and importance of this covenant we have sufficient proof in the fact that it is made a part of the gospel as proclaimed by Peter in the great Pentecostal sermon. I once met a person who had thought nothing was said of the KINGDOM in that sermon, but confessed being mistaken after attention was called to what it says of David's throne. "The gospel of the kingdom" which Peter was commanded to preach is composed of those truths which the Bible reveals concerning that kingdom. How then could Peter or any one else preach the gospel of the kingdom with those truths left out? That would be as impossible as to possess the whole on any object without possessing the ingredients or parts of which it is composed; or to have a landscape with the land left out.

We have here but a short memorandum of the principal heads of Peter's discourse, for we are told that he used "many other words," which are not recorded.—Ac. ii, 40. The covenant with David however, being too important a point to be left out, was recorded as a portion of Scripture which "is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."—2 Tim. iii, 16. The few but seldom words here recorded about that covenant open the door to all that the Bible says concerning the kingdom of God. Surely the seating of Christ on David's throne must be a matter of profound importance to us all, inasmuch as the Lord hath "sworn with an oath" that it shall be done. To find that oath I turn to 2 Sam. vii, as the marginal reference in my Bible invites me to do. There we find the solemn covenant in these words, "When thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy Seed after thee which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish His kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will establish the throne of His kingdom FOREVER. I will be His Father, and He shall be my Son. If He commit iniquity, I will chasten Him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men; but my mercy shall not depart away from Him as I took it away from Saul whom I put away before thee. And

thine house and thy kingdom shall be established forever BEFORE THEE: thy throne shall be established FOREVER."

Solomon means peaceable, but that prince in all his glory was but a faint type of the true Prince of peace to whom this covenant points. David in his "last words" referred to this covenant and gave a description of the mighty Ruler to whom it points—a Ruler who had not then appeared in his family; for none but Christ can answer to these descriptions. "He that ruleth over men must be Just (Christ is 'the Just One,' Ac. iii, 14), ruling in the fear of God (Christ is 'of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord,' Isa. xi, 3). And he shall be as the light of the morning when the sun riseth (Christ is 'the true light'—'the light of the world'—'the sun of righteousness,' Jno. i, 9; viii, 12; Mal. iv, 2), even as a morning without clouds. Although my house be not so with God, yet He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure: for this is all my SALVATION and all my DESIRE."—2 Sam. xxiii, 5. Thus he comforted himself "waiting for the kingdom of God." In another place he speaks of the covenant in almost the very words of Peter, "The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David; He will not turn from it; of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne."—Psa. cxxxii, 11. Words from this covenant are applied to Christ in, Heb. i, 5, as being too high even for angels; of course then they are too high to be restricted to Solomon. As Matthew Henry says, "The establishing of his house, and his throne and his kingdom forever, and again and a third time forever, can be applied to no other than Christ and his kingdom." It does not say, "He will commit." but "If he commit iniquity," &c. Adam Clarke translates the clause, "Even in suffering for iniquity I will chasten Him with the rod of men and for the iniquity stripes due to the children of Adam;" and refers to Isa. liii, 4, 5. The "house" that He builds will be "a spiritual house" (1 Pet. ii, 5), infinitely superior to the temple made with hands, that Solomon built. House, both in ancient and modern usage frequently means a family, as, "come thou and all thy house into the ark."—Gen. vii, 1. "We are His house if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end."—Heb. iii, 6. The materials are now being selected and polished into shape by the power of the gospel of the kingdom acting on the minds and hearts and lives of those who believe it. The building is not yet completed, for the Scripture does not say, "It has grown unto an holy temple," but the process is still going on as indicated by the present tense progressive—"GROWETH unto an holy temple."—Ephes. ii, 21: iv, 16. It will not be completed until Christ comes. And indeed prophecy indicates that He will then even cause a literal temple to be built for the millennial age.—Ezekiel XL to XLIII.

☞ That Christ is to possess and reign on the throne of David is a truth affirmed in Scripture too plainly to admit of any doubt. ☞ The Pentecostal sermon alone proves this; but in addition to that are such testimonies as the following: "I have made



a covenant with my choser: I have sworn unto David, my servant, Thy seed will I establish forever, and build up thy throne to all generations. . . . Once have I sworn by my holiness, that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me."—Psa. lxxxix, 3, 4, 34-36. "Of this man's (David's) seed hath God, according to His promise, raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus."—Ac. xiii, 23. "The Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David."—Lu. i, 32, 33. "Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this."—Isa. ix, 7.

Now inasmuch as David has "not ascended into the heavens" (Ac. ii, 34), we know that he has never reigned there; but it is an historical truth that he has reigned "in Jerusalem," and a prophetic truth that Christ will hereafter reign "in Jerusalem." You admit the historical part to mean the literal Jerusalem on earth; why not admit the prophetic part to mean the same?—1 Chron. xxix, 27; Isa. xxiv, 23. If the Czar of Russia were to say to the young Napoleon, "I will give unto thee the throne of thy father, Napoleon III, but come up to St. Petersburg and sojourn in my palace until the time comes for the fulfillment of the promise"; people would clearly understand him as meaning that, some of these days, the young Napoleon would be PERSONALLY enthroned in Paris, and reign over the French nation and all its colonies. And does not the divine promise that Christ shall be seated on "the throne of His father David" as clearly imply that He must return and be personally enthroned in Jerusalem and reign over the Jewish nation, and over all nations and lands throughout the world? Thousands of people would believe the Czar, although they would have no stronger reason than the word of fallible man for their belief. Now, "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater."—1 John v, 9. The miraculous and literal birth of Christ in Bethlehem, following the prediction by Gabriel of His reign on David's throne, is a sufficient pledge of His literal and miraculous reign in Jerusalem. It is as easy for the Lord to give a perfectly literal fulfillment to the one as to the other prophecy. When Herod in perplexity enquired of the chief priests and scribes where Christ should be born, they gave him a faithful answer:—"In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet."—Mat. ii, 5. They did not reply in the mystifying, evasive and skeptical style of certain modern teachers, "It is contrary to our ideas of the fitness of things to say that He who is to be called 'The Mighty God' (Isa. ix, 6, 7) can ever be literally born in any literal city on earth. That seems incongruous. Micah indeed says He will be born in Bethlehem, but we cannot suppose he means the literal Bethlehem, about six miles from here, on this very earth, for none but 'an alarmist' could think such a thing. Our exegesis, which is 'abreast of the times,' has led us to discard the expect-

tation of His birth in a material city, and to conclude that the prophet means no more than a figurative Bethlehem, whatever that might be; perhaps a city 'beyond the bounds of time and space.' But, in fact, we have never given much attention to the question of 'Where shall He be born?' For what difference can it make whether it shall be in Bethlehem or Athens, or even above the skies? We do not think we ought to be expected to give any definite answer to the question of your Royal Highness." It is a notorious fact that the prophecies concerning Messiah's reign on earth are treated very much in this way by some who ought to know better.

Listen to few more testimonies concerning Zion and Jerusalem. "Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." Isa. ii, 3, 4. "At that time they shall call Jerusalem the THRONE of the Lord; and ALL the nations shall be gathered unto it."—Jer. v, 17. This does not refer to the Mosaic dispensation, for then only the Jewish nation was required to gather there for worship. Nor to the present dispensation, for not even christians are required to go thither now. It must therefore refer to the future or MILLENNIAL dispensation, after the second Advent. Compare Zec. xiv, 4, 5, 16, 17. "And the name of the city from that day shall be THE LORD IS THERE."—Ez. xlvi, 35. "So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God dwelling in Zion my holy mountain; then shall Jerusalem be holy, there shall be no strangers pass through her any more." Joel iii, 17. The present overturned condition of the throne of David and city of Jerusalem was in literal fulfillment of prophecy, as also their future restoration will be. When Zedekiah, a "profane and wicked prince," reigned on that throne in Jerusalem the Lord sent this word to him, "I will overturn, overturn, overturn it; and it shall be no more, until He comes whose right it is; and I will give it Him."—Eze. xxi, 27. Accordingly, soon after that, the Throne of David was overturned, about four hundred and twenty-eight years after Solomon began to reign. And so the Scripture says, "Thou hast made his glory to cease, and cast his throne down to the ground."—Psa. lxxxix, 44. And as to the city and its people, the Saviour predicted before He suffered, "They shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles (strangers passing through her, Joel iii, 17). until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."—Lu. xxi, 24. But it will not remain trodden down, for there shall be a "New Jerusalem . . . and the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it" as truly as the throne of David was in the old Jerusalem. The heathen who saw the destruction of the old Jerusalem by the Romans perhaps thought they saw the last of that city, as when they burned the martyrs they thought they saw the last of them. And no doubt many of its captive citizens, led away and sold in foreign lands, "wept when they remembered Zion." She had rejected her Lord, and the glory had departed. And haughty, corrupt Rome, seated on seven hills and insulting the

skies with smoke of idol altars, appeared to have nearly the whole world under her sway. But it is **Jerusalem**, not Rome, Ninevah, Washington or London, that the Lord has "graven on the palms of His hands."—Isa. xlix, 16. And John who had walked in the streets of the old city, and lived to know of her destruction, was comforted by a prophetic and rapturous view of the new Jerusalem, having the glory of God, and into which no Judas, nor Pilate, nor Herod, nor Caiaphas can enter, but only "they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."—Rev. xxi, 2, 11, 27; xxii, 3. Two great prophetic periods are limited by the word "until," and will end together. They are, 1st, The personal absence of Christ in heaven "UNTIL the times of restitution" or restoration. 2nd, The down-treading of Jerusalem "UNTIL the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." They will end when the Lord Jesus shall personally "return and build again the tabernacle of David that is fallen down." "When the Lord shall build up Zion, He shall appear in all His glory."—Ac. xv, 16; Psa. cii, 16.

The Saviour is now seated on His Father's throne, but while there speaks of **another**—His own—on which he will take His seat when He returns to the earth. We learn this from His two sayings, "To him that overcometh Will I grant to sit with me on my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father on His throne." Rev. iii, 21; and "When the Son of man shall **come** in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, **then** shall He sit upon the throne of His glory," or "His throne of glory," as the American Bible Union renders it; or "His glorious throne,"—Campbell's edition. The fact that He **comes** to take His seat on it proves that His throne will be on earth; for if it were in heaven His coming here would be leaving it instead of coming to it.

Those words of the covenant, "Thy kingdom shall be established forever before thee" are explained by the similar promise that "The Lord of hosts shall reign in mount Zion and in Jerusalem and before His ancients gloriously."—Isa. xxiv, 23. In the Greek it is the same word, **enopion**, in both places, and means "in the presence of," it being so rendered in many places, as for instance, "I am Gabriel that stand (**enopion**) in the presence of God."—Lu. 1, 19. "Many other signs truly did Jesus (**enopion**) in the presence of His disciples.—Jno. xx, 30. Hence the promise to David meant the privilege of being "ever with the Lord" in His "everlasting kingdom."—2 Pet. i, 11. And this justifies David's remarkable saying that the covenant was "all of his salvation and all of his desire."—2 Sam. xxiii, 5. The eternal blessings involved in that promise are "the sure mercies of David." But these mercies are not for David exclusively, for the promise to all believers is "I will give to **you** the sure mercies of David."—Ac. xiii, 34. The pronoun "**you**" (Greek, **humin**) is plural here, as usual in King James' version the singular being thee or thou, and means that all believers are joint-heirs with Christ of the **royalty** promised in this covenant, as

they are of the inheritance promised in the Abrahamic covenant. The following are some of the testimonies concerning the future royal honors of the redeemed: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne."—Rev. iii, 21. "If we suffer we shall also reign with him."—2 Tim. ii, 12. "Then shall the king say unto them on His right hand, come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom."—Mat. xxv, 34. "A King shall reign in righteousness and princes shall rule in judgment."—Isa. xxxii, 1. "It is your Father's good pleasure to give to you the kingdom."—Lu. xii, 32. "The kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High."—Dan. vii, 27. "They lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."—Rev. xx, 4. "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth."—Rev. v, 10. It is not we did or do reign, but "we shall reign"—it is future. That future relationship which Christ will sustain to the church is represented under the beautiful similitude of a royal Bridegroom and His Bride, endowed by Him with queenly honors, and seated with Him on His throne."—Psa. xlv; Mat. xxv, 10; Rev. xix, 7; 21, 2, 9.

But the Lord Jesus did not obtain the throne of David and reign in Jerusalem at His first coming. The wicked persons then usurping authority in that city rejected Him; as indicated by such expressions as, "We will not have this man to reign over us. . . . This is the heir, come let us kill him. . . . We have no king but Caesar."—Mat. xxi, 38; Lu. xix, 14; Jno. xix, 15. And so, after they had crucified Him, He arose from the dead and ascended into heaven, without obtaining possession either of the covenanted land, or of the covenanted throne. But He holds the title-deeds to both, and His claims are just as good and fresh to-day as they ever were. The enmity and wrath of man cannot possibly defeat the immutable decrees of Him who maketh the wrath of man praise Him, and restraineth the remainder of wrath. The church is therefore not to lose faith in the promises. Her lord has left her with the blessed and comforting assurance of His literal and personal return—"this same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner—Ac. i, 11. "The Lord HIMSELF shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise."—1 Thes. iv, 16. We see then that He has never relinquished His claims but will certainly enforce them all at His return; for He himself has assured us that "when the Son of man shall COME in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, THEN shall He sit upon the throne of His glory."—Mat. xxv, 31. Then with the land of Canaan as a nucleus and Jerusalem as a capital, His dominion shall by miraculous judgments break in pieces all other kingdoms, and extend "from sea even to sea; and from the river to the ends of the earth."—Dan. ii, 35, 44; Zec. ix, 10.

For the king then seated on the "holy hill of Zion" shall have, not Canaan only, but "the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession."—Psa. ii, 6, 8.

The two "covenants of promise"—one with Abraham and the other with David—centre in Christ the great Heir. I have now explained those covenants to you, and have shown that all christians have a direct and personal interest in both of them. But what was their condition before obtaining that interest? Let Paul answer,—“At that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having **no hope**, and without God in the world.”—Ephes. ii, 12. There are two ways of being a stranger from a will or covenant:—1st, As to **information** concerning it. Such a person knows neither what benefits are offered in it, nor the terms on which they are offered. Persons of accountability (i. e. ability to give account) who are in this condition with regard to the "covenants of promise" are in danger of being "destroyed for lack of **knowledge**;" being "alienated from the life of God through **ignorance** that is in them."—Hos. iv, 6: Ephes. iv, 18. But, 2nd, a man may be well acquainted with the reading of a will or covenant without having one particle of **personal** interest or share in it, merely on account of not having complied with its **terms**. His name not being in the document, he is, as far as personal interest is concerned, still an alien and stranger to it; and has no right to expect any benefits from it. And so with regard to the covenants of promise; you may understand and believe them and yet remain a stranger from them simply by refusing to comply with the specified terms or conditions on which one is made an heir. In other words, you may believe the glorious gospel of the kingdom—of which those covenants form the **main outlines**—and yet if you refuse to be baptized for the remission of sins, and to have your name enrolled in the Lamb's book of life you still remain an alien and a stranger from the covenants, "having no **hope**."—Eph. 2-11-13.

You must admit the first and second propositions of the following plain syllogism, and admitting them to be true, you must admit the third as a necessary consequence—1: You cannot be saved if you refuse to believe that gospel which Christ and His apostles preached. 2: They preached the gospel of the kingdom. 3: **Therefore** you cannot be saved if you refuse to believe the gospel of the kingdom. And the things of the death of God's Son and the things of His name. Must we then believe that so many benevolent people and so many eloquent preachers will have to believe the gospel of the kingdom and be baptized for the remission of sins before they can be saved! Why not? We ought to be perfectly willing to believe **anything** that God's word says to us. I suppose that none of those preachers are more eloquent," or more "mighty in the Scriptures," or more "fervent in the spirit," or more "diligently" devoted to their work than Apollos: and yet even he needed to have "expounded unto him

the way of God more perfectly," by two humble believers of the gospel of the kingdom.—Ac. xviii, 24, 26. I suppose that none of those benevolent people excel Cornelius. He was "A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always. A just man, and of good report among all the nations of the Jews." And yet, notwithstanding all these excellencies, he "was warned from God," yes, "warned," to send for a preacher of the gospel of the kingdom, and to hear from him words whereby he might "be saved," and after hearing those words he had to "be baptized."—Ac. x, 1, 2, 22, 48: xi, 14. To the question, "What shall we do?" Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins."—Ac. ii, 38. And here let me ask every candid person, if all the people now living on the earth, together with all who have lived since the day of Pentecost had been there in Peter's presence that day, can you suppose that he would have altered his answer in the slightest particular for the sake of complying with their notions, partialities, or prejudices? Not in one jot or tittle would he have altered or compromised it, for it is the word which God commanded him to speak.

It is a gospel repentance—a "repentance unto life"—which is here required.\*—Ac. xi, 18. Such a repentance does not stop with merely being sorry for sins committed: nor even with forming a resolution to forsake them; but is an actual "ceasing to do evil and learning to do well."—Isa. i, 16, 17. **Testimony** on any subject must, of course, precede belief or faith in what is testified: that belief or faith must precede any feeling in correspondence with the truths testified: and that feeling must precede action in conformity to it. **Testimony, faith, feeling, action** are therefore seen to be bound together by a natural and gracious necessity. And will not every Bible-student say that when a person HEARS the gospel of the kingdom, BELIEVES it, and FEELS and ACTS according to the truths which it contains and the duties which it enjoins,—such a person has "become a new creature in Christ Jesus," and has undergone that change of heart and life which is an evidence of true conversion to God?

And now will you walk in this pathway? Will you believe and feel and act as the gospel requires, and thus obtain an eternal inheritance in the kingdom at last? Unless you obtain that inheritance you will not be saved. This is God's plan of saving people. Rest assured then that if saved at all, you will be saved in that kingdom which He will establish on earth at the second coming of Christ. God has proved His pardoning love in giving His only begotten Son to die for you. No "mourner's bench," with agonizing prayer and weeping is now needed to secure His mercy. The mourning and agony were endured by the holy

\* *Metanoeo* (repent), "To perceive or come to a conviction afterwards; to change one's mind or purpose; to repent." *Metanoia* (repentance), "After-thought; a change of mind on reflection; hence repentance."—So these two words are defined in *Lexicon of Liddell & Scott*. "Repentance is strictly a change of mind, and includes the whole of that alteration with respect to views, disposition, and conduct, which is affected by the power of the gospel."—*Edwards' Encyclopedia*.

Saviour in the lonely vale of Gethsemane, and on the bloody steep of Calvary. "Surely **He** hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows."—Isa. liii, 4. Have you faith in **His** tears, **His** prayers, and **His** intercession? if so come just as you are, with a heart filled with love to Jesus and faith in His word. "Him that cometh unto me I will in **no wise cast out.**"

"Remember **now** thy Creator, in the days of thy youth."—Eccl. xii, 1. Beware of that pernicious notion that you ought to "sow your wild oats;" it has been the destruction of thousands who have seen their error when it was **too late**; and so, with habits of evil fixed upon them like leopard spots that could not be changed, they have sunk down into the sinner's grave—lost, lost, lost. You may be sure that Samuel and Timothy sowed no wild oats, for the latter from a child, knew the Holy Scriptures; and "Samuel ministered before the Lord, being a child, girded with a linen ephod." But the brightest and best instance of all was the holy Redeemer, who, in childhood as in later years, left an example for mankind. As early as twelve years of age He was found in the great Temple at Jerusalem saying, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" —Luke ii, 49.

Parents, if you have sons and daughters who believe the gospel of the kingdom, speak to them about the importance of coming **now** and dedicating their young lives to God "in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten." You see their danger while they remain out of the ark of safety; does it not distress you to know that the children of your love are the children of God's wrath? Do not encourage them in worldliness under the notion that in due time they will forsake such things and be all the better for the experience. This would be doing evil that good may come: a principle positively condemned by Scripture. Would you not think a physician utterly insane who would take a patient only a little ailing, and send him off to a "Pest House" among fevers and epidemics, to contract all its contagions before administering any remedy? What if the fearful experiment be carried **too far**! And the patient **die**, instead of coming out of it all and enjoying better health than ever before! How broad and comprehensive, yet how tender and eloquent is that exhortation to Christian parents concerning their children,—"**Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.**"—Ephes. vi, 4. It does not teach you to bring them up wrong, hoping they will **never** go wrong.

There is no excuse for any one to remain out of the ark of safety. The door of salvation is open to **you**, whether old or young, rich or poor. What you have to do may be told in a few words,—believe the joyful tidings that Christ is coming soon to establish His glorious and blissful kingdom on this earth, and that through the merits of His precious blood you may obtain endless life and happiness in that kingdom "at the resurrection of the just." And expressed as it were in a nutshell, is "the gospel of the kingdom." Believe this gospel, then be baptized for the remission of sins, thenceforth continue "faithful unto death;"

and you will surely be saved when the Redeemer comes. No "mourners' bench" in all this arrangement. That bench and the process carried on at it are contrary to the free grace of the gospel. Some have gone away from such a bench under the desponding impression that religion was not for them, and so their last condition became worse than the first. When the prodigal son said, "I will arise and go to my father," did he have to fall down at the door and go through a mourners'-bench process—weeping, screaming, and getting some of the old neighbors to come and link their petitions with his—in order to get his father reconciled? No; but "when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had **compassion**, and ran, and fell on his neck, and **kissed** him, and said to his servants, bring forth the **best robe** and put it on him, and put a **ring** on his hand, and **shoes** on his feet; and bring hither the **fatted calf**, and kill it, and let us eat and be merry: for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found." What a thrilling parable is this! full of meat for men, and milk for babes. Plain enough for a child to understand it, and yet profoundly describing the depths of God's mercy! How it would mar and jar the whole parable to pieces to crowd into it such an incongruous and unscriptural thing as a modern mourner's bench! Christ is the One Mediator who has prepared the way for the sinner's return—"God was **IN CHRIST** reconciling the world unto himself."—2 Cor. v, 19. No one then ought to imagine himself rejected, but all ought to gladly **ACCEPT** the freely-offered salvation, as on the day of Pentecost "they gladly received the word." Pardon is not only freely offered to but warmly urged upon even the vilest of sinners, for when Peter was preaching to those who "by wicked hands had crucified and slain the Saviour," he "testified and exhorted" with many words, saying, "Save yourselves from this untoward generation."—Ac. ii, 23, 40. The word here translated "exhorted" (*parakaleo*) is a very strong one, and means, according to Greenfield's Lexicon, "To call upon, invite, exhort, admonish, persuade, beg, beseech, implore." It is used to describe the fervent entreaty of Jairus for his daughter, and is there translated "besought."—Lu. viii, 41. It is a duty enjoining upon those who preach the gospel—"reprove, rebuke, exhort," *parakaleo*.—2 Tim. iv, 2. And there is a sufficient cause for all this fervid exhortation; your eternal welfare depends on your accepting the offered salvation. "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?"—Heb. ii, 3.

Sinner, how can you find any enjoyment or have one peaceful hour so long as your name is not in the Book of Life? I wonder you are not startled from sleep at the midnight hour with those fearful words ringing in your ears:—"Whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."—Rev. xx, 15. What a sweeping word is that whosoever! There are two great Whosoevers in the Bible—this, describing the coming doom of the wicked and the other pointing to the only door of escape:—"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. Will you now believe in Him, so that in the resurrection you may obtain that life and all the blessings pertaining thereto?

## FIFTH DISCOURSE

And for this cause He is the Mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first Testament, they which are called might receive the promise of the (tes) eternal inheritance."—Heb. ix, 15.

Somewhere in the universe the righteous will obtain what the Scriptures call "An heavenly country," Heb. xi, 16; "An inheritance among them that are sanctified," Ac. xxvi, 18; "The inheritance of the saints in light," Col. i, 12; "The land of the promise," Heb. xi, 9; "The eternal inheritance." In the present state men soon die and leave their wealth to others. No human law can write such a deed to a piece of property as will secure its owner from death. The lease hardly goes beyond threescore years and ten. But that future inheritance will be "forever," "eternal." Psa. xxxvii, 18. Another precious thought is, it will be "in light." We quickly feel the depressing effect of a dark and murky atmosphere, or the animating influence of bright and balmy weather. "Truly the light is sweet."—Eccl. xi, 7. It is sometimes used as a symbol of joy. "Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart."—Psa. xcvi, 11. Imagine if you can what a gloomy abode the earth would be were we deprived of the present measure of light which the Lord has commanded to shine upon it. (There will be a sevenfold increase of that light if Isa. xxx, 26, is to be taken literally.) A third feature serving to render that inheritance of inestimable value is that it will be "among them that are sanctified." It is well known what effect the neighbors have on the value of a piece of land. Men will pay a large price for a lot or farm in a good neighborhood, who would regard it a great calamity to have to reside on the same piece of land surrounded by bad neighbors. Well, in this respect the future inheritance will be all that heart can wish. The society will excel anything that the mind of mortal man can imagine. A fourth very important and essential feature is that it will be a "country," a "land," a real and tangible abode for beings with tangible, immortal, and glorified bodies ilke their Lord. "The righteous shall inherit substance."—Prov. viii, 21. I cannot imagine how there could be tangible resurrected bodies without any tangible pedestal or territory to rest upon. After creating Adam and Eve the Lord did not throw them off into space to float forever as mere atoms in the air, but gave them a beautiful and tangible territory to dwell upon. The resurrection of the Saviour proves that His redeemed will have tangible bodies, for they "shall be like Him," shall "bear His image," and have their bodies "fashioned like unto His own glorious body."—1 John iii, 2; 1 Cor. xv, 49; Phil. iii, 21. That glorious fashion will never become old, but will have the stamp of immortality fixed upon it. Some giddy people have said, "Better be out of the world than out of the fashion"; but they had indeed better be out of the

world, yes, better never have come into the world than to be kept out of that fashion when the Saviour comes.

I have met persons who cry out against "materiality," when at the same time they are utterly unable to tell us either where materiality ends, or where their favorite "immateriality begins. In denying the tangibility of the future existence they have denied the tangible resurrection of the body, and thus have lost themselves in the cold, murky and shoreless ocean of speculation. But "the disciple whom Jesus loved" was not of that school, for he has described to us a Saviour whom his "hands had handled," and they did even "eat and drink with Him after He rose from the dead."—1 John i, 1: Ac. x, 41. The Saviour had foretold that he would be crucified and raised again the third day, and had even given visible evidence of the resurrection, in raising the ruler's daughter, the widow's son, and Lazarus. But still Thomas doubted the real and tangible resurrection of his Lord. Perhaps he was tainted with something like the modern mysticism, and insisted on a figurative interpretation. Before he could believe in the literal fulfillment of the Saviour's prophecy he must "see in His hands the print of the nails, and put his finger into the print of the nails, and thrust his hand into His side." Well, whatever false theory had beclouded the mind of Thomas, his conversion was thorough. When permitted to see for himself he did not cry out, "This is too literal, this is too material; I'll have nothing to do with it." No, but from the depths of his heart he says, "My Lord and My God." In his estimation, the Saviour's tangibility did not lessen His divinity.—John xx, 25-28.

In the resurrected and "spiritual body" there will be infinitely more reality than in this "mortal body" which "appear-eth for a little time and then vanisheth away."—Jas. iv, 14. We may conjecture that the perishable blood, which is the life of the present flesh (Deut. xii, 23), will be superceded by the imperishable Spirit in the future constitution; so that the body will then be "flesh and bones," but not "flesh and blood." This will make the glory and beauty of the spiritual body infinitely excel that of the mortal body. According to Chemistry, carbon is the basis of charcoal, and the Diamond is pure carbon, or charcoal changed, crystalized, glorified. So the spiritual body will be the present humble body "changed" immortalized, glorified. I have read of a Jacinth no larger than a pea, but which is said to flash and glow with a lustre that seems to indicate the presence of fire and flame. Even the sun and stars are used to illustrate the future glory of the redeemed.—Dan. xii, 3: Mat. xiii, 43. So we may well believe that the resurrection body will be stronger than the Diamond, more beautiful than the Jacinth, and bright as the stars or sun; yet without blood.

As already intimated, a great community of such beings must have a tangible abode; something must be some where. On a clear night you can see a great many stars in the sky; with a telescope you could see more; and with perfect vision perhaps the whole sky would seem one silvery surface of star-work, with-

out a single blue interspace. But could you point to a single spot in that star-work and say, on Scriptural authority, "That shall be forever the saints' secure abode?" Let us then consider where will the inheritance be? when will it be obtained? and by what means.

1. Where will the inheritance be? This and the other two questions are explained under the similtude of a Testament or covenant promising a certain inheritance to certain heirs. The fact that the word translated "testament," (diatheke), means also a "covenant" produces no obscurity in the text book but rather brings out the meaning more clearly; because the testament or will referred to contains within itself the nature of a covenant also, inasmuch as although it is brought into force by a death (like a will), yet its bequests are to be given to heirs on conditions which (as in a covenant), must be **agreed to and complied with** by them. And now to find the inheritance for which we are looking we must first find the testament or covenant in which it is described. Paul mentions two testaments—the Abrahamic and Mosaic. The latter he calls "the first testament" because though the last made it was the first that was brought into force.—Heb. ix, 18. He also calls it "the old testament" because in his time it had become old and "ready to vanish away."—2 Cor. iii, 14; Heb. viii, 13. It is only in a loose or metonymic way that we speak of all the books from Genesis to Malachi as "The Old Testament" i. e. it contains Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy, in which the old testament or Mosaic covenant was written. It also contains the "prophets," to whom we are still commanded to "take heed," (2 Pet. i, 19); but we are forbidden to put ourselves under the Mosaic law. We must therefore distinguish between "the law and the prophets." Now if we search the Mosaic testament with all eagerness we shall never find our eternal inheritance **there**. That testament has indeed shown us a nation settled upon a land; but at the same time it was warned then that they were but "strangers and sojourners" i. e. **temporary residents** upon it.—Lev. xxv, 23. Accordingly, as their history proves, they possessed it but a **little while**."—Isa. lxiii, 18. An eternal inheritance requires eternal life as a qualification for it. But the Mosaic testament could not give that eternal life because it could not give **righteousness**, of which that life is the reward; hence the etrnal inheritance came not by the law of Moses. In this argument Paul clearly affirms that none but the righteous can obtain eternal life, and none but those who have eternal life can obtain the eternal inheritance. "As **righteousness** tendeth to life: so he that pursueth evil pursueth it to his own death."—Prov. xi, 19. "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ."—Rom. vi, 23; Gal. iii, 21; ii, 21.

Having shown that the Mosaic testament or covenant did not give an eternal inheritance, let us now turn to the Abrahamic testament or covenant. This is called "the new testament" as distinguished from the Mosaic, because it is "**everlasting**;" for what is everlasting must be always new; and will never become

old and vanish away, as did the Mosaic. The effects of this new covenant must remain as long as the redeemed and their inheritance exist. It is also "new" because although typically confirmed four hundred and thirty years before the law it was not anti-typically or fully confirmed until about fifteen hundred years after the law, when the blood of Christ was shed as "the blood of the everlasting covenant," and thus a different, "a new and living way," was opened up for the pardon of sin, a way new and different from any that had been seen before, whether under the Mosaic or the patriarchal dispensation.—Heb. xiii, 20: x, 20.

The following reasons prove that it is the Abrahamic covenant in which all Christians now stand, and hence the inheritance promised in that covenant is theirs: 1st, The law could not disannul it, Gal. iii, 17. 2nd, Christ came "to confirm" its promises, Rom. xv, 8. 3rd, He is the one Seed named in that covenant and therefore the Heir, while they are the multitudinous seed and joint-heirs with Him on the same inheritance.—Gal. iii, 16, 29: Rom. viii, 17. 4th, It is "an everlasting covenant," and therefore still in force.—Gen. xvii, 7, 8: 1 Chron. xvi, 15-18.

Paul says this new covenant, of which Christ is Mediator, is "better" than the Mosaic, and was "established upon better promises."—Heb. viii, 6. Let us contrast them in a few particulars.—Moses was mediator of the Mosaic covenant: but Christ is Mediator of the Abrahamic. The Mosaic was dedicated by blood of calves and goats "which can never take away sin:" but the Abrahamic by the precious blood of Jesus Christ which "cleanseth us from all sin."—1 Jno. i, 7. The Mosaic covenant was only provisional or temporary—till Christ should come: but the Abrahamic is everlasting.—Gal. iii, 19. The Mosaic covenant could not confer righteousness, eternal life, nor the eternal inheritance: but the Abrahamic confers all these on its heirs. The Mosaic bequeathed chiefly to one nation, the Abrahamic bequeaths to believers of all nations.

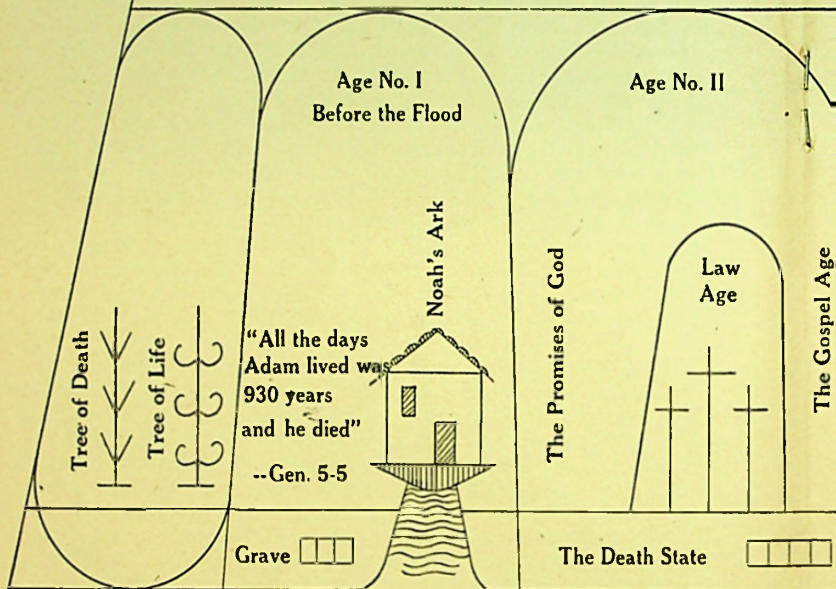
All these considerations with regard to the two covenants prove conclusively that it is the Abrahamic covenant in which we must find the eternal inheritance pointed out. Paul says, "To Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He saith not And to seeds, as of many, but as of one, And to thy Seed, which is Christ. And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise."—Gal. iii, 16-18. In this brief quotation is condensed a rich treasure of wisdom. Among other things it tells us that the INHERITANCE is the thing promised; that Abraham and his Seed (i. e. Christ and the saints, ver. 29) are the heirs; and that these promises, also called a "covenant," were made four hundred and thirty years before the law. Now, commencing with the giving of the law at Sanai, and measuring backwards four hundred and thirty years, we come to the days when the covenant was being made, and we hear the Lord

promising to give an **eternal inheritance** to Abraham and his Seed. In such expressions as the following the promise is several times repeated—"Unto thy Seed will I give **this land**."—Gen. xii, 7. "All the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy Seed **forever**."—Gen. xiii, 15. "I will give unto thee, and to thy Seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan for an **everlasting possession**."—Gen. xvii, 8. Nor is this all of the inheritance, for when Christ and His joint-heirs take possession of that land the kingdom of God will be established there and will quickly fill the "**whole earth**;" hence another promise of Scripture says that Christ shall have "**the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession**;" and another, "**Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth**."—Dan. ii, 35: Psa. ii, 8: Mat. v, 5.

We have now proved, 1st, That the Abrahamic covenant is "**the New testament**" spoken of in the text; 2nd, That Christ is the Heir and all the righteous joint-heirs with Him; 3rd, That the land of Canaan and the **whole earth** will be their "**eternal inheritance**."

Some, although they cannot deny this plain conclusion, try to avoid confessing that the earth is to be our future inheritance by saying they do not think it "**essential**" to believe it. But this undertaking to sit in judgment on Holy Scripture, and divide off its truths into essential and non-essential is a presumptuous and perilous affair. What would you think of a man who, trying to reduce faith and morals to the utmost minimum—to a mere skeleton—would undertake to form for himself a creed and moral code omitting every truth and every grace of virtue except what he might deem "**absolutely essential**" to his final salvation? Do you think a character based on such a creed and such a code as that would be approved in the day of judgment, or that such a man would be saved at all? To suppress the many precious promises which declare the whereabouts of the inheritance is like impiously trying to run a pen through those promises, or to hide their light under a bushel. The Lord has not revealed anything superfluous; "**whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning**."—Rom. xv, 4. "All Scripture is profitable for **doctrine**."—2 Tim. iii, 16. We should gladly accept "every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."—Mat. iv, 4. The whereabouts of the inheritance is a prominent part of the gospel of the kingdom which we must believe in order to be saved. Compare Mat. xxiv, 14; Mar. xvi, 16. The Lord has told us where the inheritance will be, and has sworn to perform His promise—"I will **perform** the oath which I swore unto Abraham,"—(Gen. xxvi, 3); surely then it is essential to believe that He will keep His word. The blessed Son of God has also told us where it will be, saying "**blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth**"—(Mat. v, 5); and it is essential to believe Him also, for "**He that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him**."—Jno. iii, 36.

## FROM EDEN LOST TO EDEN RESTORED



Adam and Even, Sin and Death by Sin (Rom. 5:12, 13; Gen. 2:16-19). Caused by the Devil's Lie (Gen. 3:1-4). Adam back to dust (Gen. 3:17-23). A redeemer in promise of a baby King (Gen. 3:15). The seed of woman; life eternal only in Christ (John 3:16; 1st John 5:11, 12).

All people destroyed by flood but eight souls (Gen. 6:1-7; Gen. 7:21 to 23). The flood B. C. 2448. This was a special judgment on man for his evil ways (Gen. 6:5, 6).

The promises given unto Abraham B. C. 2247 and 195 years after the flood (Gen. 12:1, 2, 3; Gen. 13:14). The earth promised to Abram and Christ (Gal. 3:16-19; Gen. 15:18).

The baby King promised 740 years B. C. (Isa. 9:6, 7). Place of birth foretold 740 B. C. (Mich. 5:2; Matt. 2:2 to 6).

Christ's death foretold 712 B. C. (Isa. 53:6 to 11). Jesus' death and resurrection (John 19; Rev. 1:18; Luke 24). The first resurrection (1st Cor. 15:23; Col. 1:18).

The thousand years reign. "I saw thrones" (Rev. 20:4, 5; Rev. 5:10; Rev. 3:21; Rev. 20:6). They will rule nations with rod of iron (Rev. 5:26, 27). In this reign the child will die an hundred years old. (Isa. 65:18 to 25).

Satan will deceive nations and fire from God will destroy them (Rev. 20:8, 9). The devil will be destroyed (Rev. 20:10; Heb. 2:14).

The final judgment under the great white throne (Rev. 20:11). The rest of dead raised, with one fair chance offered to all; the wicked will be destroyed (Rev. 21:8; Isa. 25:13, 14).

The kingdom is delivered up to God the Father (1st Cor. 15:23, 24; Dan. 7:13, 14). That God may be all in all (Rev. 22:1-5). The endless day of the new heaven of joy.

## AGE No. III WILL HAVE NO END

The  
Thousand Years Reign  
--Rev. 20-6

Trees  
of Life

Trees of Life

Grave

The Kingdom of God and  
Christ Over All the  
Earth Under the  
Whole Heavens--  
Zach. 14-8, 9; Dan.  
7-26, 27; Execute  
Judgment in  
Earth Jer.  
23, 5  
and 6

Satan loosed out of  
prison a little  
season or time

The books opened--  
another book opened:  
the Book of Life,  
after this  
the Second Death

We pass out of times of the restoring  
of all things into the time of all new  
things, Acts 3-19; Rev. 21, 1 to 7;  
Rev. 22, 1 to 5 tells of this New Heaven  
and Earth, 2 Peter 3-13 tells of the New  
Heavens and New Earth. God grant us  
a part in this Endless Age of Endless  
Life and Joy without end.

Common sense teaches us that in taking a journey to any place we are much more apt to get there and will have a much easier journey if we know just where it is before we start; otherwise we are liable to go in the opposite direction, and perhaps never get there. Does an attorney in writing a deed of great importance think it non essential to specify the whereabouts of the estate conveyed? In the parables of the supper and the marriage feast—(Lu. xiv; Mat. xxii), suppose you that the servants who carried the invitations neglected to tell the invited ones where the supper or feast would be? Is it customary to leave out such an important item as that? Well, the servants in those parables represent those who preach "the gospel of the kingdom," by which gospel the Lord is inviting us to "His kingdom and glory." And truly that gospel tells us plainly enough where the kingdom and glory will be. These are "things which are revealed" and therefore "belong unto us and to our children forever."—Deut. xxix, 29.

2. When will the inheritance be obtained? "A testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth."—Heb. ix, 17. And in some instances an estate is not received until a long time after the testator's death, owing to the non-age of some of the heirs. But was it ever known in any court of law since the world began, that a portion of the heirs, not only during the non-age of some but also before the birth of some, and even before the death of the testator were put in possession of the inheritance? Now whether we call the arrangement alluded to in the text a testament or only a covenant, there can be no disputing the fact that it required the death of Christ to bring it into force. How then could those heirs who died before the Testator obtain immediately that inheritance; entering into possession of an heavenly Canaan at death, as some people tell us? Would not this be utterly subversive of the testamentary illustration? Why speak of the eternal inheritance as something to be obtained by and after the death of Christ if it could be equally obtained without and before His death? This very epistle to the Hebrews declares that those who died before the death of Christ "received not the promise," and shall "not be made perfect without us."—Heb. xi, 39, 40. After Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had been dead nearly two hundred years the giving of the inheritance to them was spoken of as still future.—Ex. vi, 4. All the heirs will receive it together, at the resurrection, as many lines of argument converge to prove. Some of those lines of argument are, (1) those testimonies which mention particular heirs; (2) those which describe the present condition of the inheritance; (3) those relating to the state of the dead; (b) the great parables.

Abraham obtained "none inheritance in it," and the great Redeemer himself even while sojourning upon it "had not where to lay his head."—Ac. vii, 5; Mat. viii, 20. But when He shall "come in His glory" He will receive "the uttermost parts of the earth" for his possession.—Psa. ii, 8.



The inheritance itself had yet to be prepared even for the apostles; how then could the patriarchal heirs who died during the previous four thousand years be already in it, If the patriarchs were already in it, and it was good enough for them, was it not good enough for the apostles? But how can you suppose that the Saviour speaks of the holy heaven above as the place to be prepared? Since it is already good enough for the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit and the holy angels, I would think that we ought rather to be prepared for that, than that for us. But it is evident that the groaning earth, waiting to be delivered shall indeed be prepared and repaired by Him who will "make all things new."—Rev. xxi, 5; Rom. viii, 21.\* The regenerated earth which the meek shall inherit (Mat. v, 5) after thus prepared, will be as homogeneous with their risen and glorified bodies as the present earth is with their present bodies. The Saviour's going to heaven has much to do with the making ready or preparing of that inheritance; and we must wait until He shall "come again" and receive us to himself, before we can enter into possession of it. The present state of the dead proves they will not obtain it before the resurrection. They "know not anything"—Eccles. ix, 5. "The grave is their house"—Job xvii, 13. They "sleep in the dust of the earth"—Dan. xii, 2. Have "not ascended into heaven"—Ac. ii, 34. They "shall be recompensed at the resurrection of the just"—(Lu. xiv, 14), "when the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels—(Mat. xvi, 27), and when they shall put on the prerequisite immortality."—1 Cor. xv, 54.

The great parables prove the same. The laborers in the vineyard were employed at different hours during the day, but paid off at one stated season, "when evening was come."—Luke xx, 8. We must be content to go by the Master's clock; our times are in His hand. When the great dial-plate above that marks the times and seasons points to the hour of His return, He will come without delay and call the laborers, from "the last" that entered the vineyard and are still toiling above the sod, to "the first" who entered it long ago and are now sleeping in the silent grave. "Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee," says Job xiv, 15. Yes, from land and ocean He will summon them—"gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice," even by the great Sacrifice on Calvary. How beautifully the parable fits with calling persons into the church all through the past ages and dispensations, and rewarding them all together at the resurrection when the Lord comes! And just as the laborers are not paid off irregularly through the day, as if the steward were kept in his office constantly employing one and paying another; so neither are the wheat and tares gathered singly and at odd times all through the year, but in the time of harvest, at the end

\* "God intends to rescue the creation from this confused state, and to deliver it from being thus held in bondage to man's depravity, that it may partake of and minister to the glorious liberty of His children."—Scott, on Rom. viii. "The whole earth shall become a more beautiful paradise than Adam ever saw."—John Wesley, in Sermon on the New Creation.

of the age, *aion*. Also the good fish and bad are represented as arraigned and separated in the multitude, when the net is full and brought to shore; not only by one, every few minutes, as by a hook and line process. Thus with wonderful clearness these parables teach that the righteous are not singly and every day going from some part or other of the "field" or "vineyard" or "sea" immediately to glory—though we hear in some funeral sermons that the deceased has "gone to his reward"—but must wait and "be recompensed at the resurrection of the just," not at the death of the just.—Luke xiv, 14. The attitude of those who have turned to God is that of "waiting for His Son from heaven."—1 Thess. i, 10. Even the righteous dead may be spoken of as waiting for Him, for Job says, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come," and "If I wait the grave is my house."—Job xiv, 14: xvii, 14. And so they have only, as it were, changed waiting rooms—they in the grave, we in the world. I have been told that some of the early Christians, to express their faith, were buried in a standing posture as if anxiously "gazing up into heaven" (like the disciples on Olivet). "not having received the promises," but waiting for the returning Saviour.

The Church has waited long and suffered much during the heavenly Bridegroom's absence in the "far country" to which He has gone; and what if in the very act of returning some angelic band were to meet Him in the skies and say, "She is even now dead, for the last Christian on earth has been put to death by persecution," would even that cause Him to turn back? An earthly physician, if met on the way by tidings that his patient is dead, turns back and goes to struggle with death and be again defeated on some other battle-field. But Oh! it is not so with Christ, the great physician. Such tidings would but hasten him hither, for He could say, as He did of the ruler's daughter, "She is not dead but sleepeth." And on His arrival, His bright presence will throw a stream of light into the deepest grave of His people, and His sweet voice awaken all their dust into life and everlasting joy.

Although neither in life nor death have the heirs yet obtained their inheritance, yet it is guaranteed to them in a testament which "cannot be broken"; for its divine Executor is able to carry out all its provisions even though it require the raising of most of the heirs from the dead. Christ is related to that will as Testator, Executor, Surety, and Heir. In human affairs these offices would require four different persons, but when they all center in Christ they have an illustrative use which must not be strained beyond that point which they are intended to elucidate. Thus the words Lamb, Lion, Vine, Door, Sacrifice, High Priest, Advocate, Judge, &c., do not conflict at all as applied to Christ, but are only used to describe the various attributes displayed by Him in so many parts and portions of His work. For instance, His first coming to suffer was like a "Lamb";

His future coming to conquer will be as a "Lion."—Isa. liii, 7: John i, 29: Rev. v, 5.

3. By what means will the inheritance be obtained? In the present state men are disqualified from holding everlasting or eternal possession of their property on account of death, and death itself is the result of sin—"By one man's disobedience sin entered into the world, and death by sin."—Rom. v, 12. How then can we get rid of sin and death? Divine mercy has provided a way for us. "Christ died for our sins."—I Cor. xv, 3. "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. It is therefore "by means of" the death of Christ that the inheritance is made possible. This enables us to understand why His blood is called "the blood of the everlasting covenant," or the "blood of the new testament shed for many for the remission of sins."—Heb. xiii, 20: Mat. xxvi, 28. Hence learn the preciousness of that inheritance, from the fact that Christ has died to secure it for us. And so the whole blood-washed throng of heirs—those who lived before as well as those who lived after His death—will meet in the resurrection and unite with grateful hearts and voices in the song of redemption, saying, "Thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, and hast made us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth."—Rev. 5, 10.

See that glorified inheritance of the saints in light! a perpetual paradise restored! populous with bright forms! resounding with angelic odes! and teeming with all pleasant things! And when you contemplate these things remember the agony and the tears which the holy Saviour endured to purchase them for you. And now He promises that if you will do His commandments, He will give you a right—even a right—to the tree of life. Oh what condescending love! that a sinner without even a crumb of bread or breath of air, should be offered a right to the tree of life in the midst of the paradise of God!—Rev. 2-7. The Saviour's enriching love is free to the humblest, and mighty to save. Take an instance from His walks among men. On some of the uplands leading from the great and fertile plain of Esdraelon, stood the little city of Nain reposing in the quiet sunlight amid the verdant fields and vineyards of that favored land. But sadness reigns in at least one household of that city, for lo! a funeral train is winding like a wintry shadow along the streets and issuing forth from one of the gates. The corpse is borne by sympathizing friends; it is a young man, cut down in the morning of his days, torn from the cheerful society of young persons before the plans of his life had even begun to be realized perhaps. This was a startling stroke, but what makes it still more distressing, he was "the only son of his mother;" and, sadder still, "she a widow." In that vast procession—for there was much people of the city with her—I can almost imagine that I can see her tottering along, almost blinded with swift falling tears; her head bowed with woe,

and her heart almost broken as she thinks "who will care for mother now?" But ah! just over the hills another company is approaching to meet them by the same pathway. The blessed Jesus, the great Prophet of Israel, is there, and His disciples, and throngs of people with Him. And little does the weeping mother know whose all-seeing and pitying eye has already "had compassion on her." The gentle Saviour has comprehended the whole scene at a glance, and says unto her, "Weep not." Then He came and touched the coffin, and they that bare him stood still. As if His gentle heart was too full for words, He makes that speaking gesture with His hand, "Stop!" And what a blest obedience was that! Suppose they had gone on. His own mother could have advised them, "Whatsoever He saith unto you, do."—a golden saying which all of us ought to let "sink down into" our hearts, and echo its musical sweetness along the vista of our pilgrimage, through all the scenes of life. "Whatsoever He saith unto you do," for there is a blessing in it. Well, they stood still. And now a solemn hush comes over that vast assembly, with one thrilling moment of suspense, when probably not a sound was heard but the too uncontrollable sobbings of the mother; and there sounds out on the air the sweet and heavenly voice of Jesus, "young man I say unto thee arise," "And he that was dead sat up and began to speak," and "He delivered him to his mother." After rescuing him from the bloody jaws of the graveworm, the Saviour might have claimed him for His attendant or body-servant, as it were; but no, He gave him back to his mother. There was much for that young man to do in his humble sphere. "Let every little candle shine, you in your corner and I in mine." Perhaps the young man was needful to the comfort of his widowed mother, and the Saviour would thus teach all young persons "to show piety at home, and to requite their parents: for this is good and acceptable before God."—1 Tim. v, 4. The Saviour himself even in the rack of agony which He suffered on the cross did not forget to make provision for His mother, commending her to the care of the beloved disciple. This great miracle teaches that the Saviour watches over the needs of parents, and pities their bereavements. "The eyes of the Lord are in every place beholding the evil and the good." Fathers and mothers, who then can be so dear to you as the Lord Jesus? I beseech you to come to Jesus yourselves and bring your children with you. "The Lord said unto Noah come thou and all thy house into the ark."

Oh that we had some Andrews here. He had a way of bringing his friends to Jesus. He brought Peter that afterwards became such a great apostle. On another occasion some Greeks desired to see Jesus and there we find Andrew again lending his assistance. But is there one in this house to-day who says, "No one cares for me?" Let poor old blind Bartimeus tell you that you are mistaken. As he sat by the wayside begging he heard a commotion of many voices and footsteps and when he enquired what it was they told him "Jesus of Nazareth passeth by." No doubt he had heard of the Saviour's great miracles, and so he

cried out, "Jesus thou Son of David, have mercy on me." But the persons around him told him to "hold his peace." Not discouraged by their coldness however, he cried the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me." And though every body seemed to scorn him, no one to take him by the hand or give him one word of encouragement, yet the blessed Saviour's own quick ear had heard that humble cry, and so He stood still and commanded the poor blind man to be called unto Him. Then see how quickly the popular voice is changed; they had rebuked him before, but now they say "Be of good comfort, rise; He calleth thee." And so he came and was healed and followed Jesus.—Mar. x, 46-52. So then, whether any one else invites you or not, "be of good comfort, rise; He calleth thee."

## SIXTH DISCOURSE

### IMMORTALITY, AND HOW IT MAY BE OBTAINED.

"God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."—Jno. iii, 16.

The word immortality means "never-dying existence." It therefore, of course, implies the idea of eternal or everlasting life. Correct views on this question are very necessary to a clear understanding and full appreciation of the gospel of the kingdom. It is thought by some that every person, however wicked, is already in possession of immortality. But according to Cruden's Concordance the word immortality occurs but five times in the Bible (Apocrypha always excepted), and is never applied to sinners. **Once** we are told that Christ has brought it to light through the gospel. 2 Tim. i, 10. **Once** that God only hath it.—1 Tim. vi, 17. **Once** that we must "seek for" it. (Do you seek for what you already have?)—Rom. ii, 7. **Twice** that the righteous will put it on at the resurrection.—1 Cor. xv, 53, 54. Thus the immortality which the gospel offers to men is an **endless life manifested through an incorruptible body at the resurrection.** This immortality was exemplified or brought to light by the literal and bodily resurrection of Christ from the dead, to die no more; which resurrection is a precedent of ours—"Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming."—1 Cor. xv, 23.\*

The word "soul" is found several hundred times in the Bible, but the phrase "immortal soul" is never once used in that Holy Book. According to Cruden's Concordance, the word "immortal" occurs but **once** in the Bible, and is then applied not to the human soul but to God—"the King eternal, immortal, invisible."—1 Tim. i, 17. Having now shown that the phrases "immortal soul and immortality of the soul" (the pet phrases of some writers and speakers) are never found in the Bible, it follows that if mankind would observe the same silence as the Bible does concerning them we would never hear them used in human language.

\* "Immortality, in the sacred writings, is never applied to the spirit of man. It is not the doctrine of Plato which the resurrection of Jesus proves. It is the immortality of the body of which his resurrection is a proof and pledge. This was never developed till He became the firstborn from the dead."—A. CAMPBELL, in "Christian System," p. 281, A. D. 1839.

And surely "the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul," (Psa. xix, 7), and hence the whole gospel and the whole plan of redemption can be fully and effectually advocated without these phrases. The Bible contains enough words to express its own doctrines, and we should esteem it a virtue to expurgate from our faith such phrases as are neither found in or justified by that Holy Book. How then were these phrases brought into use? Chamber's Encyclopedia says, "The Egyptian nation appears to have been the first to declare that the soul was immortal."—Edition of 1876. But if it had been a doctrine of God, and of such importance as some think, we should suppose that Israel would have been the first to declare it, and not the abominable Egyptians; for "the secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him," and "the meek will He guide in judgment."—Psa. xxv, 9, 14. The Commentary of Jamieson, Faussett and Brown, highly extolled by preachers and college professors of various denominations, says, "No where is the immortality of the soul, distinct from the body taught: a notion which many erroneously have deplate the anomalous state brought about by death as the consummation to be earnestly looked for (2 Cor. v, 4), but the resurrection."—On 1 Cor. xv, 53. Some of the heathen philosophized not only the conscious existence of the soul after leaving the body, but also before coming into it. Perhaps they thought the soul could get along as well without the body before inhabiting it as afterwards. But facts proved that men had no recollection of having lived in a previous life, and this objection threatened to explode the theory: with fertile invention however they affirmed that their souls, before coming into their present bodies, had to drink a cup of forgetfulness. But an early Christian writer answered, "How then did they remember that cup?" And thus the tangled web of heathen philosophy on that point was proved to be "foolishness."

A reliable Greek and Hebrew scholar will testify that the words translated "soul" (*nephesh* in Hebrew and *psuche* in Greek) are in Genesis four times applied to fishes, fowls, and creeping things of the earth before they are applied to man. The English reader may see two of these instances by the marginal reading of Gen. i, 20, 30. And when applied to man in ch. ii, 7, it is not even then said that he became an immortal or ever-living soul, or that he had such a soul put into him; but simply, "man became a living soul." On this passage the American Bible Union says, "The Hebrew word (*nephesh*) here rendered soul, includes all beings that have animal life; and hence it is applied to animals of the sea and land in Gen. i, 20, 21, 24, 30. The English word *soul* (like the German *seele*) originally had this extent of meaning, as in verses 20, 30, in the margin of the common English version."—Genesis with Notes, 1873. These are stubborn and valuable facts which the sincere enquirer after truth will not dare ignore. Do you not see then what a monstrous thing it would be to say that a soul is an immortal something which can live and act with an individuality of its own while the body

is mouldering in the dust? Can any one suppose that every fish, fowl, &c., has an immortal part of that kind when he reads, "Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creatures that hath life (margin soul)?"—Gen. i, 20. Would it not be profane to take a title which, occurring but once in the Scripture, is applied to God, and apply that sacred title to every fish, fowl, and wicked man? When the Bible declares that "God ONLY hath immortality," (2 Tim. vi, -15), would it not be a positive falsehood to say that every fish, fowl, and every man, however vile, has it also? Could we persistently affirm such a falsehood and hope to escape the lake of fire?—Rev. xxi, 8.

The "Speaker's Commentary," by "Bishops and other clergy of the Church of England," says on Gen. ii, 7, "All animals have the body, all the living soul, but the breath of life breathed into his nostrils by God himself is said of man alone." But neither does the phrase "breath of life" prove a present immortality in man for the lower animals also have the breath of life—"there went in unto Noah into the ark, two and two of all flesh wherein is the breath of life."—Gen. vii, 15, 22. "They have all one breath."—Eccles. iii, 19. What then is the true condition of the dead between death and the resurrection? Let the Bible answer. "The dead know not anything . . . There is no work, nor devise, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave (hades) whither thou goest."—Ecc. ix, 5, 6. This proves them unconscious and inactive; and hence without either pleasure or pain. It is the night "when no man can work."—Jno. ix, 4; Ecc. ix, 5. "In that very day his thoughts perish."—Psa. cxlvi, 4. "His sons come to honor, and he knoweth it not; and they are brought low, but he perceiveth it not of them."—Job xiv, 21. "Thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us."—Isa. lxiii, 16. They "dwell in dust."—Isa. xxvi, 19. They "sleep in the dust of the earth." Dan. xii, 2. They "sleep in Jesus."—Jno. xi, 11, 14; 1 Thes. iv, 14. They have "not ascended into the heavens."—Ac. ii, 34. "I shall go to him" (2 Sam. xii, 23), means "I will go down into the grave unto my son."—Gen. xxxvii, 35. It is plain from these testimonies that the future reward of the righteous depends on the resurrection—they are to be recompensed "at the resurrection of the just,"—not at the death of the just.—Lu. xiv, 14. Paul, after naming some of his sufferings, make all of his hopes of compensation depend on the resurrection, saying, "What advantage it me if the dead rise not?"—First Corinthians xv, 32.\* He did not preach Jesus and the immortal soul, as many now try to do, but "Jesus and the resurrection."—Ac. xvii, 18. With much force Adam Clarke says concerning the resurrection, "There is not a doctrine in the gospel on which more stress is

\* "What the apostle says here is a regular and legitimate conclusion from the doctrine, that there is no resurrection; for if there be no resurrection, then there can be no judgment; no future state of rewards and punishments; why, therefore, should we bear crosses and keep ourselves under continual discipline! Let us eat and drink, take all the pleasure we can, for to-morrow we die: and there is an end of us forever."—Adam Clarke. On Heb. xi, 19, the same writer says, "The resurrection of the dead must have been a doctrine of the patriarchs: they expected a heavenly inheritance; they saw they died as did other men; and they must have known that they could not enjoy it but in consequence of a resurrection from the dead."

laid; and there is not a doctrine in the present system of preaching which is treated with more neglect." It is the theory of going to glory at death which causes the doctrine of the resurrection to be treated with so much neglect.\* The personal coming of Christ, on which the resurrection depends, is also neglected from the same cause. In perfect and beautiful harmony with its teaching that the resurrection is the time of reward, the Bible also teaches that the second coming of Christ is the time of reward; so the two classes of testimony ought to be viewed together, one serving to strengthen and confirm the other. We can have no resurrection before Christ comes, for "the Lord himself shall descend from heaven . . . and the dead in Christ shall rise."—1 Thes. iv, 16. And "then shall He reward every man according to his work."—Mat. xvi, 27. "When the chief Shepherd shall appear ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."—1 Pet. v, 4. "It is a righteous thing with God to recompense affliction to those who afflict you, and to you who are afflicted rest with us, at the Revelation of the Lord Jesus." A. B. Union's translation of 2 Thes. i, 6, 7. Here we perceive that neither the "affliction" (*thlipsis*) pertaining to wicked, nor the "rest" (*anesis*) pertaining to the righteous will be received before He comes. It is a mistake to suppose, as some have done, that the word "rest" in the last quotation is a verb; for it is as much a noun as the word "tribulation" or "affliction" in the same quotation. Paul is here teaching that the Lord, at His coming, will recompense two things—to the one party "affliction;" to the other "rest." And "let us labor therefore to enter into that rest."—Heb. iv, 11. From Paul we learn that the advent and resurrection will occur under the "the last trumpet," and from John that the seventh is the last (for he makes no mention of an eighth), also that under it the kingdom of God will be established on earth, and the "reward given to small and great."—1 Thes. iv, 16; 1 Cor. xv, 52; with Rev. xi, 15-18. Till He come, therefore, the righteous dead must calmly sleep in the revolving earth as if rocked in some great cradle and hymned over by the zephyr and the storm. Have you not seen a loving mother go to her child and, thinking it had slept long enough, gently place her hand upon its brow and wake it up? Well, "precious in the eyes of the Lord is the death of His saints." He marks the moments of their slumbers, and will send a beautiful white-robed angel by-and-by to awaken each of them and say, perhaps in the very words of Scripture, "The Master is come and calleth for thee."—John xi, 28.

Having now proved that man in the present state does not possess immortality, and having traced out his whereabouts from the morning of creation to the morning of resurrection, let us next enquire what will become of him at the resurrection? If

\* "In putting souls in heaven, hell, and purgatory, ye destroy the arguments 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?" Tyndale, a great reformer and martyr of the sixteenth century—of whom Edwards' Encyclopedia says: "To this great man we are under great obligations for our emancipation from the fetters of Popery."



righteous he will enter upon the enjoyment of the promised inheritance and of all the shining rewards of a blissful eternity. He will be qualified for those eternal joys by the gift of that immortality or eternal life which is obtained not by nature, but through Christ alone; for "the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life **through our Lord Jesus Christ.**"—Rom. vi, 23. But when the wicked stand before Him who "was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead," they will be sentenced to "everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power."—Ac. 10, 42: 2 Thes. i, 9. There is a great abundance of testimony to prove the grand truth that, after being condemned at the judgment, the wicked shall be blotted out of existence; but surely the following selections ought to be enough to convince all who are not blinded by sheer prejudice:—"The day cometh that shall burn as an oven, and all the proud, yea and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of Hosts, that it shall leave them neither **root nor branch** . . . 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."—Mal. iv, 1, 3. "The enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs; they shall **consume**; into smoke shall they **consume** away . . . Yet a little while and the wicked shall **not be.**"—Psa. xxxvii, 10, 20. "The wicked shall be **silent** in darkness."—1 Sam. ii, 9. They shall be "no more." Psa. civ, 35. They shall be "as nothing."—Isa. xli, 12: Jer. x, 24. They shall pass away and perish "as a snail which melteth," and "as wax melteth before the fire."—Psalms lviii, 8; lxviii, 2. "They shall be utterly burned with fire."—2 Samuel xxiii, 6, 7. They shall be burned up as **chaff** or **tares** of the field.—Matt. iii, 12; xiii, 30, 40. To express their doom in a sentence, "They shall be as **though they had not been.**"—Obadiah 16. Could any human ingenuity frame words into sentences that would more clearly and completely express the utter and final extinction of the wicked? After sinning, Adam was driven out of Eden lest he should eat of the tree of life and live forever. An immortal sinner would be a calamity in the universe.\*

Death is the severest penalty known to human law. It is called "capital **punishment**," and if never relieved or broken up by resurrection, would it not be an **everlasting** punishment? Now the Bible does not say "the wages of sin is **torture**," but the wages of sin is **death**"—Rom. vi, 23. And that will be the "everlasting punishment" threatened against the wicked, "the second death," a death from which there will be no awakening. Scripture clearly explains what is meant by "the fire that shall not be quenched"; for in Jer. xvii, 27, we read, "I will kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it

\* "He drove him out of paradise, and removed him from the tree of life because He pitied him, (and did not desire that he should continue a sinner forever, nor that the sin which surrounded him should be immortal, and evil interminable.)"—Irenaeus (about A.D. 175) B. iii, c. xxiii. "Gregory Nazianzen (born about 328) says the exclusion from the tree of life was that evil might not be immortal, and that punishment might be an act of benevolence."—Speaker's Commentary.

shall not be quenched." The fulfillment of this prediction is recorded in Jer. lii, 13; Lam. iv, 11. Of course that fire is not burning now. When we say that a fire in a burning house could not be quenched, we mean simply that it consumed the house, don't we? Eusebius, a learned Greek ecclesiastical historian, relates (B. vi, c. 41) that "Epimachus and Alexander, who had continued for a long time in prison, enduring innumerable sufferings from scourges and scrapers, were also destroyed in *puri asbesto*"—the very same words which in Mat. iii, 12, and Lu. iii, 17, are translated "unquenchable fire." Must we suppose the fire which consumed those two martyrs to be burning yet, simply because it is called unquenchable? Notice that the fire shall burn "the carcasses" of the wicked, and that a carcass is neither a disembodied soul nor a living body; but, according to Webster, "a dead body of an animal, decaying remains of an animal." It is therefore the **body** which will be cast into that fire. Isa. lxvi, 24; Mat. v, 29, 30. When the carcasses of various animals were burned as the offal of ancient cities, the worms would consume what the fire did not. Neither the worms nor fire preserved those carcasses. We read of "everlasting fire," or, which is the same, "eternal fire," called so because its effects or results will be eternal, just as the "eternal redemption" and "eternal judgment" will be eternal in their effects or results, not that the acts of redeeming and judging will be always going on.—Heb. vi, 2, and ix, 12. The effect of the everlasting or eternal fire will be to reduce the wicked to ashes, for that was its effect in former times—"turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes." Compare Jude 7 with 2 Pet. ii, 6. If allowed to theorize, I would say that perhaps it will be an electric fire, like ten thousand thunderbolts focalized, for the occasion, in a veritable "lake of fire." And who can say that electricity, even in its invisible or diffused state, is not an "eternal" element of the material universe?

Many who advocate endless torture tell us that the fire will not be **literal**; pangs of conscience being the real torment. I think this notion started about A.D. 200, with Origen, of whom Adam Clarke says that he was "capable of believing and teaching the most absurd notions for grave truths." Would not this be almost neutralizing future punishment, especially in the case of those who deserve it most, namely, those who have become so steeped in sin as to be already "**past feeling**," "having their conscience seared with a hot iron."—1 Tim. iv, 2; Ephes. iv, 19. Surely the advocates of that theory would not dare to **allegorize** the history of Sodom and Gomorrha as they do the **prophecy** of the future fire! The **literal** burning of the wicked in those two cities has been "set forth for an example" of the future punishment.—Jude 7; Lu. 17, 26, 29. It was a literal fire which consumed the sacrifice and the armed men.—1 Kin. 18, 38; 2 Kin. i, 10-14. Surely then "Upon the wicked He shall reign snares," (margin, "Or, quick burning coals") fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest (margin, "Or, a burning tempest"): this shall be the portion of their cup.—Psalms xi, 6. The vague notion just referred to

concerning the nature of future punishment reminds me of an equally vague and mystifying notion concerning the place of it. A prominent preacher of the Methodist denomination said (according to a newspaper report of his discourse) that he did not know whether hell is "above or below." I would like to ask him if he ever heard of such a thing as going up to hell? When we read concerning a certain class of sinners that "the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever, we must remember that even in the legal precision of the law of Moses "forever" has a limited meaning—"he shall serve him forever," that is, until the death of the servant or master, for in death the servant is free from his master.—Job. iii, 19; Ex. xxi, 6. The "forever" in Jonah 2, 6, lasted only three days and nights. But I'm not saying that "forever," has everywhere a limited meaning, for it is a sound rule concerning the Greek *aion*, translated "forever," that, as the *Enc. Rel. Knowl.* says, "It must always be taken in the sense of unlimited duration, unless something appears in the subject or connection in which it occurs to limit its signification." Now, when applied to the conscious torment which the wicked will endure before expiring, something does appear in such a subject or connection, to limit its signification, for I have heaped up testimony which abundantly proves the wicked to be of a perishable and mortal nature. ☞ It is a fact of deep significance that they are not compared to anything fire-proof or indestructible, but only to the most evanescent and combustible materials, as CHAFF, STUBBLE, TARES, FAT OF LAMBS, &c. ☞ Throughout the Bible we are taught "the wages of sin is DEATH" (Rom. vi, 23); but it was the Serpent, the father of lies, who first denied this great truth, and, with as much bombast and solemnity as if he had been delivering a modern oration against it, said, "Ye shall not surely die, for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil."—Jno. viii, 44; Gen. iii, 4, 5. This bears a startling resemblance to the assertion of many who are still affirming sinners to be immortal and capable of existing and sinning as long as God and the angels live—in endless duration. But it is a libel on our poor mortal race to say we are capable of perpetuating an eternity of crime. With all our faults we are not so bad as that, for if, in the day of the Lord, we shall not be found worthy of endless life in holiness and happiness we shall not obtain endless life of any kind, but will only obtain "the wages of sin."\*

The following passages explain one another: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit (*pneuma*) shall return to God who gave it."—Eccles. xii, 7. "His breath (*pneuma*) goeth forth, he returneth to his earth."—Psa. cxlvi, 4. "Thou takest away their breath (*pneuma*), they die, and return to their

\* "Many of the primitive fathers in the church explicitly maintained the natural mortality of the soul."—Baptist Library, 1846, vol. 1, p. 455. "I think we are not warranted in concluding (as some have done) so positively concerning this question as to make it a point of Christian faith to interpret figuratively and not literally the 'death' and 'destruction' spoken of in Scripture as the doom of the condemned; and to insist on the belief that they are kept alive forever."—Archbishop WHATELY, *Future State*, p. 185.

dust."—Psa. civ, 29. "The body without the spirit (*pneuma*: margin, *breath*) is dead."—Jas. ii, 26. In the Greek it is the same word, *pneuma*, here translated "breath" and spirit." The first passage affirms that God gave the spirit or breath which returns, for it is He that "giveth to all life and breath;" it was He that breathed into man the breath of life.—Ac. xvii, 26; Gen. ii, 7. The second passage, being added to the first, affirms that although the spirit or breath returneth to God yet THE MAN HIMSELF, as indicated by the masculine personal pronoun "he, returned to his earth," and so they separate. Why should you be surprised that the man proper, the real person, the man himself, goes to dust? has not the divine sentence positively required this?—"Unto dust shalt thou return."—Gen. iii, 19. Would the return of the mere body to the dust, while the personal "he" or "thou" escapes to immediate glory be a fulfillment of this law? If you believe Solomon when he says "the spirit shall return to God" you are equally bound to believe him when he says, "the dead know not anything," and that, as to the item of death, both man and beast "go unto one place."—Eccles. iii, 20; ix, 5. But this is no denial of future rewards and punishments, for he also affirms that "God shall bring every work into judgment," which implies man's resurrection.—Eccles. xii, 14.

In the promise to the thief Griesbach notices a Greek reading which has no comma between "thee" and "to-day," Placing the comma after "to-day," I would understand the promise to mean, I say unto thee **to-day**, that is, I promptly give unto thee a present assurance as a comfort in a dying hour, that thou shalt be with me in the paradise at my coming. The word "to-day" might also be a precious reminder to the supplicant that in his particular case the prayer was not too late, but came "while it is called to-day."—Heb. iii, 13. It is not only our right but our duty to alter the punctuation when the sense requires it, for the punctuation of the Bible, either in Greek or English, was not placed there by the inspired writers, but is a human invention.\* I may remark that "shalt thou be," in the Saviour's answer, was not intended by the old English translation as a question, any more than "unto dust shalt thou return," in Gen. iii, 19. The A. B. U. translation reads "thou shalt be," which agrees better with the usage of modern English. Notice the inconsistency of those who tell you that the pronoun "thou" in the promise to the thief means his immortal soul, but that the same "thou" in the sentence "unto dust shalt thou return" means only the mortal body. *Semeron* ("to-day") is an adverb occurring in the New Testament thirty-nine times, and is rendered "to-day" eighteen times, and "this day" twenty-one times. In the single book of Deut., I find seven

\* "The sacred writings had originally, and for a long time, no punctuation, nor any such division as those of chapter and verse. The words were not so much as separated by intervals from one another. So late even as the fifth century the New Testament had none of the ordinary marks. They form as the reader has seen, no part of the original text, but are mere human contrivances. The punctuation is often very faulty. In some of the early printed editions the points seem to have been put in almost at random, and even in the present Greek text, as well as in the English version the sense and beauty of many passages are marred by injudicious and inaccurate punctuation."—Comprehensive Commentary, vol. 6.

occurrences of *semeron* having the comma after it, both in the Greek and English version.—Deut. iv, 40; xi, 8, 13, 28; xiii, 18; xix, 9; xviii, 1; also Ac. xxvi, 29. For another instance of declaring today, something to be done at a future time, see Zech. ix, 12, 13. Three days afterwards the blessed Saviour said that He had “not yet ascended” to His Father; how then can you suppose that the penitent thief went there with Him on the very day of the crucifixion? It sounds inconsistent when we hear people say that the holy apostles were required to wait until a place should be “prepared,” and the Saviour “come again” to them, but that the penitent thief did not have to wait at all but went there immediately at death. To understand the answer of the Lord, you must understand the prayer of the thief—he did not say, “Lord remember me when thou goest,” but “when thou comest in thy kingdom,” referring to the second coming when the kingdom will be established on earth. As Archbishop Whately has said, “Into thy kingdom is a mistranslation; it should be ‘in thy kingdom.’ The meaning is ‘at thy second coming’ in triumphant glory.”—Future State, p. 250. It is the same kind of expression as “when the Son of man cometh in His glory.”—Mat. xxv, 31. In both places the Greek is not *eis* (into), but *en* (in). The American Bible Union has therefore given the correct translation, “Lord remember me when thou comest in thy kingdom.” The answer agrees with this,—“Thou shalt be with me in the paradise (to *paradeisos*”); for the kingdom will be a blissful restored paradise on earth. Liddell and Scott define *paradeisos* (i.e. *paradise*). to be “a park, or pleasure-grounds; an oriental word used by for LXX for the garden of Eden.” The Greek version of Gen. ii, 8, 9, 10, 16, and iii, 3, 23, has *paradeisos* where the English has “garden.” And that paradise which once existed on earth will be permanently restored to the redeemed in a larger and infinitely better form when the now groaning and inanimate creation shall participate with them in “the glorious liberty of the children of God.”—Rom. viii, 21; Isa. li, 3, and xi, 9; Num. xiv, 21; Rev. ii, 7, and xxi, 5. But Paul seems to speak of paradise and a third heaven as the same, why then does he say “caught up into paradise,” if it is to be on earth? It may be spoken of as “up” because though on earth it will be a higher or more exalted state of existence than the persecuted and suffering life he was then leading. But this phrase contains no “up” in the Greek Campbell’s version (1832) renders it, “snatched away into paradise,” and “snatched away to the third heaven.”—2 Cor. xii, 2-4. In both places it is *arpozo* that is rendered “snatched away”; and in three Lexicons I do not find to “catch up” among its meanings. In Ac. viii, 39, it is properly rendered “caught away,” and in John vi, 15, “take by force.” Paul’s words accurately translated would be “snatched away to a third heaven,” “snatched way into the paradise.” Peter speaks of three heavens as consecutively pertaining to earth—(1) those which “were of old;” (2) those “which are now;” and (3) the future or “new heavens and earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.”—2 Peter iii, 5, 7, 13.

And that future heaven, when fully revealed, especially in the endless bliss beyond the Millennium, will be "a third heaven" or "the paradise" restored and far eclipsing the lost paradise. I suppose Paul meant that he had been favored prophetically with transporting and rapturous "visions and revelations" (ver. 1) of that future paradise, which it was not yet allowable to utter; somewhat as John was told to "seal up" what the seven thunders uttered.—Rev. x, 4. And that as to the manner of receiving them, he did not know whether those visions were communicated to him corporeally, or, as John says, "in the spirit."—Rev. xxi, 10.

When he says, "Whilst we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord," he does not mean that if in the resurrection body he would be absent from the Lord, for he declares that to be the very time when we shall be "ever with the Lord." 1—Thes. iv, 16. He was willing to be "absent from the body," but not being "unclothed" (for he, and Hezekiah before him, had already objected to that), but rather by being "clothed upon" by that eternal house—the resurrection body—and in that way be absent from "this vile body." This is not the disembodied absence of which Plato and Socrates philosophized, and of which a certain class of moderns profess to be so desirous.—2 Cor. v, 4, 8; Isa. xxxviii, 11, 14. Paul clearly indicated that he did not desire to be unclothed, and we should not so misconstrue his "desire to depart and be with Christ" as to make him contradict himself. This verb "to depart" is analuo (whence came the English "analyze), and in Lu. xii, 36, is translated "Return." But in Phil. i, 23, it is the infinitive of the article, and the celebrated Greek grammarist, Kuhner says, "The infinitive with the article is treated in all respect like a substantive verb." Why then might we not understand Paul as here expressing his desire for the return of Christ? But the words are plain enough as they stand, when we remember that the dead are asleep and they "know not anything"; hence, as they cannot count the flight of years, the moment of death seems to them to be the moment of being with Christ, in the resurrection morning; as though on a bed of pain, with weeping friends around them, they had closed their eyes for an imperceptible moment, and suddenly, with a start and a thrill awoke to the glories of the resurrection morning to find the great Redeemer here, and bright angels crowding into the room.



There is no mystery about the souls under the altar (Rev. vi, 9,) when you remember that the death of a martyr was compared to offering a sacrifice on an altar. Thus Paul says, "Even if I am poured out on the sacrifice and ministration of your faith, I rejoice."—A. B. U. version of Phil. ii, 17. And when about to be put to death by Nero, he said, "I am now ready to be offered."—2 Tim. iv, 6. Concerning the aged Polycarp who suffered martyrdom about A.D. 160, his biographer says, that "Placing his hands behind him, and he was bound like a distinguished ram out of a pure flock for sacrifice, and prepared to be an acceptable burnt offering unto God," he gave thanks and

prayed that he might be an "acceptable sacrifice to God." The ancient literal altar of burnt offering was made "hollow with boards," overlaid with brass, hence called the brazen altar. When the flesh of the sacrifice was offered on this altar the blood was poured out "at the bottom" of it.—Ex. xxvii, 9; Lev. iv, 30. Hence the blood when thus poured out and saturating the earth, would be "under the altar."\* And notice particularly that the Greek version of Lev. xvii, 14, says "The life (Greek *psuche*, soul) of all flesh is the blood thereof"—*psuche pases sarkos haima autou esti*. We may therefore, by metonymy, speak of the blood of the martyr under the altar, as the soul of the martyr crying "How long?" Thus Abel's blood cried from the ground unto God, and if that cry had been hieroglyphically represented, as under the fifth seal, it might have been described as the voice of the blood of Abel crying out and saying, "How long, O Lord, dost thou not avenge my blood upon Cain?" The "white robes" were appointed to them by divine decree, just as in the present tense it is said, "All things are yours."—1 Cor. iii, 22.

The mistaken idea that every man has innate and unconditional immortality is a foundation on which are built the following errors: 1, Metempsychosis, or the transmigration of souls into the bodies of beasts, birds or fishes. Edwards' Encyclopedia says this doctrine "prevails at the present day almost universally among the heathen nations of the East;" 2, Praying to the dead; 3, Purgatory; 4, Swedenborgianism; 5, The so-called "Spiritualism"; 6, Denial of the literal and bodily resurrection, affirming that the body is only a prison and that the soul can get along well enough without it; 7, Depreciating the importance of the second advent and the resurrection, and affirming that we are rewarded at death, in a disembodied state; 8, Depreciating the importance of the promised inheritance which the righteous will obtain in the kingdom that God will establish on earth; and affirming that as soon as they die they go to an inheritance beyond the skies; 9, Depreciating the merits of Christ through whom alone and by whose death we can obtain everlasting life, and affirming that we obtained it through Adam and by our natural birth; 10, Denial of a literal fire as the instrument of future punishment. (I suppose this is done because they cannot see how a material fire could hurt an "immaterial soul"); 11, Endless existence in a state of torture and blasphemy. This however has been found so thought-withering that some have endeavored to soften it by advocating; 12, The salvation of unconverted heathen idolaters; 13, The salvation of every sincere errorist; 14, Universal salvation.

Briefly stated, the following is the Scriptural doctrine concerning immortality, and it is a misunderstanding of some texts which causes them to be brought forward as if they conflicted with those here quoted.

\* "The altar is upon earth, not in heaven."—ADAM CLARKE. "Under the altar of God, that is under the earth."—VICTORINUS, towards the close of the third century.

1.  Immortality (i. e. eternal life) is not inherited by nature, and at birth, but is to be obtained only through Christ, and by none but the righteous.  Proof: "The gift of God is eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ."—Rom. vi, 23. "In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God had sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him."—1 Jno. iv, 9. This life is in His Son." Denying this would be denying "the record that God gave of His Son."—1 Jno. v, 10, 11. Hence He is called "our life," and "the way, the truth, and the life."—Col. iii, 4; Jno. xiv, 6. And that gift of eternal life is for none but a certain and specified class—"Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to AS MANY AS THOU HAST GIVEN HIM."—Jno. xvii, 2. Hence He does not say that Adam transmitted to them eternal life, but "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish."—Jno. x, 28. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."—Jno. iii, 16. The belief of this great truth enables us to properly and highly appreciate the great atonement and the precious blood poured out on the cross for us. It extols the sufferings and the divine love of our Saviour; and helps us to "give unto the Lord the glory due His name," as our Life-giver.—1sa. xcvi, 8. But it humbles the carnal pride of man by showing him that "we all do fade as a leaf" and that none of us are by nature immortal.

2. We have not yet obtained immortality, but it is a matter of promise, hope, and reward; and will be given to none but those who properly "seek for" it. Proof: "This is the promise that He hath promised us even eternal life." — 1 Jno. ii, 25. "In hope of eternal life . . . That being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs, according to the hope of eternal life." Titus i, 2; iii, 7. "If thou wilt enter into life **keep** the commandments."—Mat. xix, 17. "They that have done good shall come forth unto the resurrection of life."—Jno. v, 29. "To them who by patient continuance in well doing **SEEK** FOR glory, honor and immortality," He will render eternal life.—Rom. ii, 7. "As righteousness tendeth to life, so he that pursueth evil pursueth it to his own death."—Prov. xi, 19; vii, 35, 36.

3. It is to be obtained in the resurrection, at the personal coming of Christ. Proof: "They that have done good shall come forth to the resurrection of life."—Jno. v, 29. Many that shall sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake to everlasting life.—Dan. xii, 2. When "the Lord himself shall descend from heaven" and the dead in Christ shall rise, "this mortal shall put on immortality."—1 Thess. iv, 16; 1 Cor. xv, 42, 54.

Remember the terms on which that everlasting life is to be obtained. You must believe in the Son of God. This means, as proved in the second discourse, a belief of the message, testimony or doctrine which He preached. It is a mistake to suppose that you truly believe in Him so long as you refuse to believe His



word or doctrine. The vague notion that believing in the Son is something less than believing the Son, is a dangerous and delusive piece of sophistry. If any such quibble be raised about believing in the Son (ver. 16), John settles it in ver. 33 by showing the essentiality of believing the Son's testimony; and in v. 36 by saying, "He that believeth not the Son (no 'in' here) shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."—John iii, 33, 36. And so Paul, in a sublime sentence of three words, says, "I believe God," i. e. he believed what God had said.—Ac. xxvii, 25. Thus, too, "Abraham believed God," i. e. believed the promises which God had made to him.—Gal. iii, 6: Rom. iv, 21. And so in order to obtain eternal life you must be able to say, "I believe Jesus," i. e. believe the words that He preached—THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM. And will you not commence now to seek for that immortality which the Redeemer died to purchase for you? If you had the wealth of Stewart, the power of the Czar of Russia, the strength of Sampson, the wisdom of Solomon, and the long life of Methusaleh, but should come short of eternal life at last, your life would be a miserable failure, and you had better never have been born. But however humble your lot may now be, if you succeed in obtaining eternal life at the resurrection you will be unspeakably blest. You may regret having begun too late to seek for it, but surely you will never regret having begun too soon. Did you ever hear one on a death-bed regret having led a long and holy Christian life? O then, I beseech you, do not any longer "neglect so great salvation."

Look at three scenes in the sinner's career. 1. See him attentively and respectfully listening to the gospel of the kingdom, as its exceeding great and precious promises are explained concerning the coming of Christ, the establishing of that kingdom on earth, and the everlasting joys which the redeemed will then obtain therein. He listens to the invitations exhorting him to believe, be baptized, and lead a holy life, so that he may be saved when the kingdom comes. Perhaps tears gather in his eyes as he listens, and he is almost persuaded to be a Christian; but, with a great struggle, he hardens his heart, resists the good influence, and when the assembly is dissolved, he goes away sorrowful, because the love of sin has a deadly hold upon him.

2. Some time has passed; the scene is changed. Behold him prostrate on a bed of pain, groaning in the agonies of death; and oh! sad thought! he is dying in his sins. A young man, himself a sinner, having waited at the bedside of such a person, whose agony was too horrible to witness, declared to me at the breakfast table next morning, "I never want to see another sinner die." Yes, behold the sinner dying with no comfort in his last hour, but only "a fearful looking for the fiery indignation which shall devour the adversary."

3. See him in the resurrection, summoned from the grave and hurried before the great white throne of judgment. Pale and trembling, he stands to hear the awful sentence, and all in a moment his features appear to be pinched and shrunken, and I

seem to hear some, standing by, say, "How soon is the fruitless tree withered away!" Then hear that haunting scream—his last, long, unearthly shriek of woe as he is cast headlong into the consuming billows of the "lake of fire."

But look at three scenes in the Christian's career. 1. Having confessed his belief of the death of Christ and "the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ" (which things compose the gospel of the kingdom—Ac. viii, 12), and having repented and been baptized for the remission of sins, he comes up out of the water enabled henceforth to rejoice in hope of the glory of God.—Acts 2-38.

2. And when he comes to die, see the weeping friends around his bed; but on his own countenance is the mark of inward peace for he knows that underneath are the everlasting arms, and he can say, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."—Psa. xxiii. And so he passes quietly away unto death like the summer wave upon the shore.

3. At last behold him in the resurrection morn; he stands among the shining ranks and sings the glad redemption song. He and all that host in bright array have come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. And so "they shall hunger no more; neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."—Rev, vii, 14-17.



