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Studies in Eschatology ;
OR,
Existence After Death

BY

ULYSSES S. BARTZ, A.M.,
Pastor of the Hawthorn Avenue Presbyterian
Church of Idlewood, Pa.

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TO

PROF. M. B. RIDDLE, D.D., LL.D.,

FIRST AMONG TEACHERS,

IN MEMORY OF HIS INSPIRATION TO "DO THE NEXT THING"

AND DO IT FAITHFULLY, THIS VOLUME IS GRATEFULLY

INSCRIBED BY HIS FORMER PUPIL,

THE AUTHOR.

Mrs. Nelson Smith, Aug. 6, 1918

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Studies in Eschatology.

I.

A STUDY OF DEATH.

*“For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”—*Gen. 2: 17.*

“Therefore, as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; and so death passed unto all men, for that all sinned.”—*Rom. 5: 12.*

IN entering upon this series of discourses a few words by way of preface are in order. It should be borne in mind that these are admittedly difficult subjects, because of the obscurity necessarily surrounding them. The wise investigator will therefore speak in more guarded tones than would be necessary to employ in other departments of theological research. On many of the topics relating to eschatology, or existence after death and the end of the world, no consensus of opinion exists. In fact, this

* Quotations of the Bible text are invariably made from the Revised Version.

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has been, generally speaking, the least discussed of all the great divisions of religious inquiry.

And yet none is, in its very nature, more interesting. If death ended all, there would be no room for such investigation as we have proposed. But our gospel according to Jesus Christ affirms and insists that death is not the end of human existence, however much it seems to be. Our Saviour clearly taught, if it be admitted that He clearly taught anything, that it is possible to live after death. Hence two questions immediately arise: 1. Who will live after death? 2. What will be the essential nature and the attendant conditions of that existence? The natural desire which we have to live, coupled with the belief, apparently innate also, that something of us persists as immortal, invests these questions with the deepest and profoundest interest. Therefore, even though little can be certainly known on these matters, we all want to know whatever can be ascertained.

Evidently the starting-point must be that change which sooner or later comes over a human being which we call death. From that

point we date the "hereafter." But we cannot pass on to discuss what follows death until we know what death itself is. If death is annihilation, nothing follows it. On the other hand, if it is not annihilation, neither is it continuance of present existence; and what, then, is it? This is the preliminary question to the two already mentioned; and to its answer we now address ourselves.

Because in death there is a cessation of this present existence which we call life, it is evident that death stands in direct contrast to life. This contrast is especially manifested in two respects to the beholder. In life there is motion, in death there is none; in life there is word- or sign-language; that is, communication of thought; in death this is impossible. Now, in these two elements of self-motion and communication of thought resides the fundamental conception of human life. Self-motion shows an object to have life, and the power of thought-expression indicates that the life is human.

But it must be borne in mind that these indications have reference to the beholder, and not to the living being himself. We know

very well, each one for himself, that there may be thought without communication of it. You look upon a sleeping person, and the only evidence of life there to you is the breathing and the blood-color. Yet you are assured that the mind still exists and acts, because you have risen from sleep with the consciousness of thought exercised by your own mind. Therefore you know that it is possible for the mind to act, even though no evidence of such acting could possibly be found by another person. In other words, there may be a mind consciously acting independently of any external evidence of it, either in voice or eye or gesture.

We thus distinguish between the *fact* of life and the *motion* of life which attests the fact to another. This will appear more clearly by the use of an illustration. A man may be so paralyzed that neither with hand nor with foot could he make a gesture—not the slightest movement in response to his will. Yet his personality is just as clearly in existence as ever, for he can converse as usual. But suddenly that paralysis might overtake the muscles of his throat, and his voice would be hushed. Still his life would be manifest through his

eyes. He could not convey all his thought and feeling that way, it is true, but you would not for a moment doubt that he still had as much as ever. But suppose that his eyelids, too, closed down with that paralysis: can that one thing, which seems like death to you, any more end the existence of that mind than either of the preceding strokes? It is unreasonable to suppose so.

What then is that which we term human death? Simply the destruction of all the external evidences of the power of thought. There is no reason to believe that that power itself becomes extinct or ceases to act, but rather every reason to believe otherwise. The avenues of its communication with the material world are simply closed; that is all. It receives no knowledge from it and can give none to it. But it can work on within itself, just as it does during sleep, or while in a trance. Death is simply breaking the connection of the mind with the outer world by the dissolution of this organism, the body, by which the connection was made. The mind itself remains, capable of its own essential processes.

But why must this connection be broken?

Since our minds delight in taking knowledge of and communicating with things apart from themselves—as evidenced by our dread of death—what unwelcome necessity makes the separation inevitable? In brief, why must the body wear out and be dissolved? Some have thought that it was mortal from the first. They point to the death of all plant life, and all animal life below man, and claim that he was never meant to be an exception. But this view does not harmonize with Gen. 2: 17: “In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die”—unless the word “die” be taken to refer only to spiritual death. That physical death is included, however, is shown in the curse pronounced upon Adam, “Till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return.”

We conclude from this that mortality began to work in Adam and Eve from the very day they sinned. And because it wrought in them it continued to work in all their descendants, and still continues. As Paul says, in Rom. 5: 12, “Therefore, as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; and so death passed unto all men, for that all

sinned." Our bodies go to the grave because sin made them mortal. Had sin never been fastened upon us, we should have been exempt from death. How disease and accident and wearing out would have been avoided we do not know, and need not try to guess.

We have spoken of spiritual death. There is such a thing, and it was undoubtedly also in consequence of sin. But its real import is apt to be much mistaken. Let us bear in mind that physical death is simply the cessation of correspondence between the mind and the material world, by no means involving the annihilation of the mind itself. Then must spiritual death be simply the cessation of correspondence between that mind and the Spirit of God, but again by no means involving the annihilation of the mind. Hence a human being may go to both physical and spiritual death at the same time, and yet be as truly a personal, living being as when he was in the flesh. He is as far from annihilation, from ceasing to exist, as ever he was. Eternity is before him as really and consciously as if he were not spiritually dead.

In striking confirmation of this view of

death, as we take it, is the remarkable saying of our Saviour on the occasion of His raising the daughter of Jairus. You remember that He rebuked the hired mourners by the statement, "The child is not dead, but sleepeth." The skeptic now would fain have us believe that the body was still alive, but those unbelievers knew better than that. But not perceiving the parabolic meaning, they laughed Jesus to scorn for His declaration. And what was that hidden meaning? That the child was still a living, personal, conscious being, though communication through her body with the world had ceased. And how did He prove it? By calling to her as a person, "Damsel!" and by appealing to her conscious thought and memory, "Rise up." He treated her, in other words, just as if she had been lying sleeping and He wished to rouse her.

So also He did Lazarus, having used a similar expression in regard to his death. When He said, "Lazarus!" He addressed a self-conscious personality. When He cried "Come forth," He appealed to that person's sense of position, and his memory of muscular action, and his will. All that was necessary was first

to stir the sleeping mind into full consciousness, and then it was ready to act as it had always acted when in the body.

Therefore death is a sleep in that the mind, when no longer associated with the body, is in that peculiar state of consciousness which characterizes a dream. It is not clear, definite, full, as it is in waking hours. But what it can do in a dream it can do after death. There is only this difference: that then it cannot receive knowledge from the outside world, for the cable is cut. It is shut up to its own acquired contents of memory to work upon. And so it must remain until an Omnipotent voice shall summon it back to its tenement and put it once more in communication with the world of objective realities.

And so our beloved dead would better be termed our beloved sleepers. Those minds which we have come into loving, pleasure-giving contact with are still acting. Verily, verily they have not ceased to exist—they cannot cease. They are but asleep, they dream. What occupies their thoughts, their dreams, must depend on what they thought of here in the flesh. We, too, shall sleep and dream.

Having begun to exist, we can never stop. The power of thought is indestructible. Then what shall be our attitude toward that which we call death? If our theory is correct, a single sentence will answer the question: what we are ever afraid to think of here, we shall be afraid to think of hereafter; if by the grace, the mercy, and the blessing of God there is nothing we are afraid to think of here, afraid to take account of before conscience, we need not dread the dreaming which inevitably awaits us.

Let us then, in the words of the poet Bryant,

*“So live, that when thy summons comes to
 join
 The innumerable caravan, that moves
 To the pale realms of shade, where each shall
 take
 His chamber in the silent halls of death,
 Thou go not, like the quarry slave, at night
 Scourged to his dungeon; but, sustained and
 soothed
 By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave,
 Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
 About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.”*

II.

IMMORTALITY, IN THE BIBLE AND OUT.

“ Who abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.”
—2 *Tim.* 1 : 10.

IT will be remembered that at the outset of our study upon these subjects we found ourselves confronted with these two questions: 1. Who will live after death? 2. What will be the essential nature and the attendant conditions of that existence? It was remarked that in order to answer these questions we must first have some definite understanding of what death itself is. The conclusion arrived at was that death is simply the breaking of the connection between the mind and the outer world by the dissolution of the body, by which that connection was kept up; or, in other words, death is simply the destruction of all the external evidences of the power of thought. That power itself, however, is indestructible and

abides—though in a modified form apparently resembling its activity during sleep.

It is of course evident that he who accepts this definition of death stands already committed to a doctrine of immortality. But the question is, What evidence is there that the mind is indestructible? What is there in the nature of the case which makes it reasonable to assume that it abides after death, and unreasonable to believe that it is annihilated? Since the Almighty permits the *body* to come to an end, is not that an indication that the whole being has served its end, and forever disappears? Why should it not be with man as it is with the lower orders of animals and with plants, viz., that the genus, or race, alone is immortal, and the individual is not? In brief, what adequate purpose can be found for believing that every human intelligence ever created is imperishable, and must therefore forever continue to exist in some form or state?

We refer first of all to the almost, if not altogether, universal belief in immortality, the world over and the ages through. Two striking examples of this as to time and place must suffice here. In our own hemisphere and

for modern times take the North American Indian. He placed upon the grave of his departed friend the tools and utensils which were supposed to be necessary for the dead brave's comfort in the happy hunting-grounds of the hereafter. Rude as was his conception, yet it as definitely meant to him, as ours does to us, that death does not end all. However indistinct and incomplete was his idea of immortality, yet it was there. *How did it get there?*

Turn now to the opposite side of the earth and to several thousand years ago, and, to emphasize the contrast, from modern savagery to primitive civilization. The ancient Egyptian did two most remarkable things: he built pyramids, and he embalmed his dead. He looked upon the seed in its progress from germination to decay and then back to life again, and he looked upon the cycle of the rise and fall of the Nile; and he thought that everything must have its cycle. And so he set the soul's cycle at three thousand years, after which it will return to the body again. Therefore he prepared that body for that event by embalming it to preserve it from decay. As a further evidence of his faith he built the pyramid to endure till that

time, and which would thus serve also as a special tomb for kings. Time has proved the Egyptian's cycle incorrect, and yet the belief in immortality still persists, and prevails everywhere. *What gives it this persisting power?*

To this question we shall join the preceding one, How did this idea of immortality come to be in even the savage mind, and consider the two together. We know that we have a natural horror of being annihilated, a natural desire to live on forever. The instances adduced show this to be true of men of widely different intelligence and widely separated localities. Both this fact and our own consciousness go to show that the idea and the desire of immortality are native to the mind, and not simply imposed upon it by training. Then shall we imagine the mind to be self-deceived? Would a God of love have created it so? Why should He have implanted this desire for immortality if it were destined not to be realized? Supposing there were no existence after death, would it not be to us a pitiful sight to see the poor savage laying the utensils of his dead companion on the grave for future use? And if pitiful to us, surely more so to the Divine Heart!

Would the most Merciful One thus have deluded the simple mind of the untutored savage?

In harmony with what we have been saying are the words which Addison puts into the mouth of Cato :

*“It must be so, Plato, thou reasonest well!—
Else whence this pleasing hope, this fond
 desire,
This longing after immortality?
Or whence this secret dread, and inward
 horror
Of falling into naught? Why shrinks the
 soul
Back on herself, and startles at destruction?
'Tis the divinity that stirs within us,
'Tis heaven itself that points out an here-
 after,
And intimates eternity to man.”*

But this is by no means the only argument for personal immortality. Another has its root in the sense of incompleteness which constantly accompanies our life in its onward course. Reason tells us that the human mind never

reaches its full capacity in this life. Every genuine thinker has at times a most tantalizing sense of things ahead for which somehow he is not yet prepared and cannot grasp; and the farther on his mental development proceeds, the more frequent and the more pressing this sense becomes. Reason therefore demands that the opportunity for further acquisition shall not cease as long as such a desire continues. Reason asserts that it is contrary both to the course of nature and the Divine character to endow a being with capacities never to be developed. Unless there is existence after death, it is evident that they never will be.

To this idea James Freeman Clarke thus gives expression: "One of the most convincing arguments for immortality is the undying appetite of the soul for knowledge, love, progress. As we approach the turn of life it never occurs to us that it is time to fold our arms, close our eyes, and bid farewell to nature, poetry, art, friendship, business. . . . We build houses, begin books, undertake operations, just as if we were to live forever, which shows, I think, that the sense of immortality destroys all sense of

death as we grow old." This is confirmed by the words of the great poet Goethe. "To me," said he, "the eternal existence of my soul is proved from my idea of activity. If I work incessantly till my death, nature is bound to give me another form of existence when the present can no longer sustain my spirit."

Most beautiful, also, are the words of our own Longfellow to the same effect: "All the great and wise and good among mankind, all the benefactors of the human race, whose names I read in the world's history, and the still greater number of those whose good deeds have outlived their names—all those have labored for me. I have entered into their harvest. I walk the green earth which they inhabited. I tread in their footsteps, from which blessings grow. I can undertake the sublime task which they once undertook, the task of making our common brotherhood wiser and happier. I can build forward, where they were forced to leave off; and bring nearer to perfection the great edifice which they left uncompleted. And at length I, too, must leave it, and go hence. Oh, this is the sublimest thought of all! I can never finish the noble

task; therefore, so sure as this task is my destiny, I can never cease to work, and consequently never cease to be. What men call death cannot break off this task which is never-ending."

A still more potent argument in favor of personal immortality has to do with the fact that perfect justice is not meted out in this life. And at this point we turn to distinctively Bible teaching on this great subject. To any observant student of the Book it is evident that its writers treat of immortality almost exclusively from this point of view. Jesus' parable of the rich man and Lazarus fairly illustrates the prevailing tendency. According to the teaching involved in it, rewards and punishments, at least in their completeness, do not pertain to this life, but to the hereafter. And certainly to this corresponds our own observation. The good often suffer—nay, we are taught to expect it: the wicked are frequently left to prosper. Death brings no redress, for it levels both alike.

God's righteous government is therefore left unjustified and under suspicion, unless hereafter there is opportunity and promise of

vindication. This can only take place in case present intelligences are so continued that they will be conscious of the difference between their state then and what it had been on earth. Hence, in order that the Divine government be accepted by us now as just and equitable, it seems absolutely necessary to keep before the mind a future world whose distinctive features morally are recompense on the one hand and retribution on the other. Otherwise, what incentive is there for us to live righteously in this age? Only by belying his own consciousness can any one assert his belief in adequate reward and punishment on this side of the grave.

As before suggested, our Lord's teaching is to a marked extent along this line. It was through that teaching, as Paul informs us, that Christ "brought life and immortality to light." Before His day immortality was but an obscure hope, a thing guessed at, rather than definitely believed in. It was as if a blind man had felt it—it was real, but its form could not be ascertained. Under the Saviour's enlightening influence, however, personal, conscious immortality stood revealed; revealed in His argument concerning the God of Abraham, Isaac and

Jacob ; revealed in His meeting with Moses and Elijah ; revealed in the dead He restored to life, and revealed finally and fully in His own resurrection from the dead. He abolished death, in that He abolished the power of death, and He abolished its power by proving that it does not end all ; that the mind of man, or his soul, if you please, is immortal.

As the result of this inquiry—all too imperfect and fragmentary—we are prepared to answer the first of our two questions. Who will live after death? All who have ever lived at all, everybody. We have no room for the theory of conditional immortality ; that is, of future existence only for the good. It is opposed by each of the arguments we have advanced, and by others which might be given. It is true that only the righteous shall inherit eternal life ; but eternal life means vastly more than mere continued and unending existence. The soul is one thing, and its inheritance, or possessions, is a different, a separate thing. Of the latter it shall be in order to speak later on. We close our study for the present by asserting that history, science and religion unite in proclaiming the essential immortality of the human soul.

III.

WHAT DO WE KNOW OF THE INTERMEDIATE STATE?

"But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they beheld a spirit."—*Luke 24: 37.*

"Then said the woman, Whom shall I bring up unto thee? And he said, Bring me up Samuel. . . . And Samuel said to Saul, Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up? "—*I Sam. 28: 11, 15.*

LET it be recalled again that at the outset of this inquiry into existence hereafter two questions were presented for answer: 1. Who will live after death? 2. What will be the essential nature and the attendant conditions of that existence? Assuming that death is simply the destruction of all the external evidences of the power of thought, and not the annihilation of that power itself, and that therefore a human being once brought into existence must forever continue to exist, we answered the first question by saying that all mankind will live after death. We are now ready to discuss the

second question. What do we know of that life hereafter?

The first thing to be noticed is that that life must be treated of under two distinct aspects and two separate periods. That which causes this distinction and separation is a fact of revelation under the New Covenant, viz., the resurrection from the dead. When that event occurs, another change will be made in the conditions of human existence, a change resulting in a reunion of the soul with a body as its final, everlasting tenement. As we shall see in a succeeding article, this will not be a resumption of this present earthly life, but an essentially different one in many respects. Before passing to consider it, however, we are logically called to study what will be our condition in the period between death and this second change. What do we know of spirit-existence? Has Science or Revelation anything to tell us regarding the interval between death and the resurrection as respects the state of a human being?

For convenience, we shall speak of this as the intermediate state. It is probable that to most Protestant Christians the phrase has an un-

welcome sound, because it suggests that fictitious product of Roman Catholicism which passes under the name of "purgatory." But it is quite possible to deny purgatory and yet affirm the intermediate state. Purgatory, according to Roman Catholic definition, "is a temporary middle state in which those who depart this life in the grace of God are detained to expiate, by suffering, the slighter offenses not forgiven before death, or to complete the expiation of grievous sins which had been forgiven." No such doctrine is taught in the Bible, and therefore we utterly reject and condemn it. Probation, we believe, ends at death. Repentance then must be either complete or not begun; and if it is complete, God's forgiveness of sin cannot be any the less complete.

We decline, therefore, to associate any purgatorial idea with the soul after death and while awaiting the resurrection. The question then confronts us, Does the soul immediately enter heaven upon its departure from earth?—that is, in the case of a believer. This question cannot be conclusively answered until we have reached a decision as to what and where heaven is. Without assuming to decide as to that at

present—leaving it for a future discussion—we proceed to examine the evidence, if there be any, in regard to a separate aspect of existence during the period between a person's death and the resurrection. This will include a consideration of certain biblical terms, the bearing of the passages quoted from Luke and 1 Samuel upon these, and some deductions of the general arguments already advanced in regard to death and immortality.

Of the former the first to be noticed is a Hebrew word in the Old Testament—Sheol. It is commonly derived from a verb meaning "to be hollow," and denotes the vast, hollow subterranean resting-place which is the common receptacle of the dead. The Hebrew original occurs fifty-eight times in the Old Testament. In the Authorized Version it is translated thirty-one times "grave," twenty-four times "hell," and three times "pit." In the Revised Version it is rendered fifteen times "grave," fifteen times "hell," and twenty-five times "Sheol." A comparison of usage in the different parts shows that, speaking generally, the earlier use of the word had reference to the grave, while in later use it denoted the

subterranean abode of departed spirits—without distinction for a time, however, as to moral character.

Observe here the bearing which the passage quoted above, from 1 Samuel, has on this ancient belief. King Saul had gone to consult a woman who was reputed to have a “familiar spirit.” He couched his request in these words, “Bring me up whomsoever I shall name unto thee.” Recognizing the propriety of the language, the woman asks, “Whom shall I bring up unto thee?” The King’s reply is, “Bring me up Samuel.” The latter having apparently made his appearance, he uses this language to Saul: “Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me *up?*” also endorsing the idea of ascent from some subterranean place. If we regard this as a real voice from Samuel, it is certainly necessary to regard it also as proving the existence of Sheol. On the other hand, even if this was not a genuine message, it none the less shows the prevailing belief in regard to the state of the departed—and incidentally, in the use of the word *disquieted*, the calm, peaceful condition of those who had lived righteously on earth.

At this stage of Hebrew thought on immortality, it does not appear that this under-world was conceived of as having any division in it. The dead all went to the same place. In process of time, however, Sheol began to be thought of as having two divisions, or departments, caused by the separation of the righteous from the wicked. By the time of Christ this usage was clearly established, since we find the Greek word *Hades* substituted for it. This word in its ancient Greek usage signified, like the Roman Orcus or Inferna, "a place for all the dead in the depth of the earth, dark, dreary, cheerless, and shut up, inaccessible to prayers and sacrifices, ruled over by Pluto. But a distinction was made between Elysium and Tartarus in this subterranean world of shadows." One was the abode of the blessed and the other of the lost.

Hades thus became an approximate equivalent for Sheol, which also had come to be thought of as containing two departments, viz., Paradise and Gehenna. But inasmuch as Judaism had come to expect a future and final judgment, Sheol was accordingly regarded as only a temporary abode until that judgment

should take place. With this modification, the Greek conception of Hades was adopted by the Greek translators of the Hebrew Scriptures; and thus the term reached Christ. He himself adopted and made use of it in His teaching. This is notably the case in His parable of the rich man and Lazarus, where the latter is located in "Abraham's bosom," while the former is in "torments." It would seem, however, that both were "in Hades"; that is, the under-world of departed spirits.

This conception enables us to interpret satisfactorily several otherwise difficult points. Thus the article of the Apostles' Creed respecting Christ's descent "into hell" gives no trouble when the word hell is taken to mean, not Gehenna, but Hades. Then also we can understand the Saviour's meaning when He said to the penitent and believing robber on the cross: "This day shalt thou be with me in paradise." Paradise cannot mean heaven, for Jesus told Mary not to touch Him, because He had not yet *ascended* to the *Father in heaven*. But He and His convert from the cross had descended into that spirit-world whither all must go who die. Of course, they would be in

the Paradise-part of it—if we *must* think of it as a place. The other robber, impenitent and unbelieving, would also go to his own place.

But after all, why need we think of a *place* in this connection? The mind in sleep has always a sense of position, to be sure, but yet we know it is not confined to any one place, nor can it be. It is only the consciousness of the body which ties us down to a fixed place for a definite time. When, in the resurrection, the mind is once more united to its body, then the correlative ideas of time and place will resume their part in the soul's processes; and then heaven and hell must become fixed, unchangeable quantities. Till then, we shall be in the intermediate state—not in purgatory—not in either Elysium or Tartarus—not even in Paradise or Gehenna, as the Jews conceived of them. The believer will be happier far than any wanderer over the Elysian fields or through the vale of Paradise was ever imagined to be. Christ, for him, has robbed Death and Hades of their terrors. In calm restfulness and unutterable peace he waits that supreme moment when the happy dream shall

be changed, and changed forever, into the glorious reality of the resurrection-life.

Some there will be who will never enter this intermediate state; for, as Paul teaches, some will be living at that last great Day, and they will not need to die; they will be instantaneously changed. It may seem to us that our departed friends will have long to wait, and that perhaps we too will share the stress. But how long is an hour to a sleeper? Happy dreams pass all too soon. A wretched dreamer lives an age in a few minutes. It all depends upon whether Jesus Christ as a personal Saviour goes out with you, as you start into spirit-land. Tennyson understood it, when he said:

*“Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar,
When I put out to sea;
But such a tide as moving seems asleep
Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the bound-
less deep
Turns again home.*

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*“Twilight and evening bell,
 And after that the dark!
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
 When I embark;
For though from out our bourne of time and
 place
 The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
 When I have crossed the bar.”*

IV.

THE RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD.

“Marvel not at this: for the hour cometh, in which all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done ill, unto the resurrection of judgment.”—*John* 5: 28, 29.

“THE Bible . . . knows nothing of an abstract immortality of the soul, as the schools speak of it; nor is its Redemption a Redemption of the soul only, but of the body as well. It is a Redemption of man in his whole complex personality—body and soul together. It was in the body that Christ rose from the dead; in the body that He ascended to heaven; in the body that He lives and reigns there for evermore. It is His promise that, if He lives, we shall live also; and this promise includes a pledge of the resurrection of the body. The truth which underlies this is, that death for man is an effect of sin. It did not lie in the Creator’s original design for man that he

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should die,—that these two component parts of his nature, body and soul, should ever be violently disrupted and severed, as death now severs them. Death is an abnormal fact in the history of the race; and Redemption is, among other things, the undoing of this evil, and the restoration of man to his normal completeness as a personal being.”—*James Orr, D.D.*

It has been argued that inasmuch as the term *resurrection of the body* is not found in the Bible, there is no warrant for expecting or believing that such a thing will occur. Thus Dr. Lyman Abbott writes: “If the New Testament means to teach the resurrection of the body, if Paul means to teach that doctrine, it is very strange that the phrase itself never occurs in the New Testament. The notion that the body which is laid in the grave must rise again in order to preserve personal immortality is the relic of a paganism which ought long since to have been forgotten. The body that lies in the grave will rise in grass and flowers.” He also declares elsewhere that we “must also distinguish *resuscitation*, restoring one to life in this world, as in the case of Lazarus, from

resurrection, the rising of the spirit into the life of the world to come. No educated person now believes that the buried body, or any part of it, is to be raised again. The New Testament nowhere teaches any such fiction."

But in spite of the fact that the phrase *resurrection of the body* is not in the New Testament, we cannot admit that Dr. Abbott's position is correct. His first error is in supposing that any one makes personal immortality dependent upon the rising of the buried body from the grave.

As we have tried to show in a preceding article, personality is immortal in spite of fleshly embodiment, and not in consequence of it, and therefore is in no need of a body to preserve it. Spirit can exist independently of a body of flesh, and does so exist after death. But the point which Dr. Abbott misses is that a human spirit in that state is in an imperfect and, as it were, mutilated condition. God's gracious scheme of redemption has simply provided that human life should be restored to its wholeness, that its parts separated by sin should be reunited when that sin has been fully removed. As Dr. Orr puts it, "It is a Re-

demption of man in his whole complex personality—body and soul together.”

But Dr. Abbott falls into another error, not less serious, though of a different kind. When he considers it strange that the term resurrection of the body is absent from the New Testament in case it teaches that kind of rising from the dead, he forgets the force of the word resurrection itself and alone. The truth is that the added phrase, “of the body,” is wholly unnecessary. The single word resurrection tells it all. It literally means to rise again. But *what* rises again? Dr. Abbott says the spirit. Then was the spirit buried under ground? The word resurrection means—unless you make language utterly lawless—it means that what has been put down comes up again, the same thing, and not something else. Now nobody believes that after death anything is put in the grave except the body; and hence it must be the body, the identical thing placed there, which rises. No wonder the phrase “of the body” is not placed after the word resurrection in the New Testament! You might as well expect to find the expression, the teeth *of his mouth!*

When therefore the New Testament speaks of a resurrection of or from the dead, the very phrase itself must naturally indicate to the reader the reanimation of a once dead body. As we saw at the outset, such a conception naturally follows from the biblical doctrine of human nature, the effects of sin upon it, and the purpose of redemption with regard to it. As the writer first quoted further says: "The soul in separation from the body is in a state of imperfection and mutilation. When a human being loses one of his limbs, we regard him as a mutilated being. Were he to lose all his limbs, we would regard him as worse mutilated still. So when the soul is entirely denuded of its body, though consciousness and memory yet remain, it must still be regarded—and in the Bible is regarded—as subsisting in an imperfect condition, a condition of enfeebled life, diminished powers, restricted capacities of action—a state, in short, of deprivation. The man whose life is hid with Christ in God will no doubt with that life retain the blessedness that belongs to it, even in the state of separation from the body—he will 'be with Christ, which is far better'; but

it is still true that so long as he remains in that disembodied state, he wants part of himself, and cannot be perfectly blessed, as he will be after his body, in renewed and glorified form, is restored to him."

But we have more direct and stronger evidence even than this. We turn to the teaching of our Saviour, and we find these words: "The hour cometh, in which all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice, and shall come forth." Notice the use of the word "all." The argument stated a moment ago holds good for the resurrection of those who are redeemed from the power and curse of sin, but affords no basis for expecting the resurrection of others. We might have supposed that the latter would be left in their disembodied condition, were it not for this clear statement of Christ's. There will come a time when at the voice of the mighty King every spirit disembodied by death shall be re-embodied; and re-embodied in such sense that it will constitute a real rising from the tomb.

Yet an apparent difficulty comes in here. It is true, as Dr. Abbott says, that the body which lies in the grave rises in grass and

flowers. That it returns to dust, in the vast majority of instances, is undeniable; and from thence its chemical forces must pass into vegetable matter. How then can that body deposited in the grave ever be brought together again? To reconcile this difficulty with the theory of a bodily rising again several solutions have been offered. It must be the same body, or else the term resurrection becomes meaningless. But what constitutes sameness, or identity? Have you the same body you had when you were born? Common sense says, yes; it never belonged to any one else! Science answers, no; it has been entirely changed in every particular since that time. Which is right? And the enlightened thinker replies, both are right. But he recognizes that the common-sense idea and the scientific idea of sameness do not exactly correspond.

Now under the scientific conception it seems improbable that the resurrection-body should be identical with the one laid in the tomb. Observe, we do not say *impossible*; for God *could* collect the scattered atoms and bring them into precisely the same combination they had when the breath left the body. But would that be

desirable? Then would a one-armed man be raised with a missing member! But that idea fails to harmonize with our conception of Christ's work on behalf of His people, however appropriate it might seem with regard to those who reject His healing on their behalf. Under the scientific conception of bodily identity, all malformations and mutilations would have to be reproduced in the resurrection-body.

Under what we have termed the common-sense conception, however, this difficulty is avoided. The actual particles of flesh and bone, of blood and lymph, are constantly changing, as the water of a river is changing, the new oncomer displacing the old particle. Yet both the river and the body are the same that they were before. So the actual material of the resurrection-body may be wholly different from the constituent elements of the natural body at death, and yet it may be the same body, because recognizable to the eye as such—or rather, recognizable by the spirit inhabiting it as such.

Perhaps an illustration will make this plainer. You have a pocket knife of one blade.

Constant use has so worn the blade away that you resolve to replace it with a new one. Having done so, you still consider yourself to possess the same knife. By and by the rivet wears out, and you insert a new one. Presently the spring fails to act, and it too is replaced. Later on, one side of the frame gets broken, and you replace it with a new one. And so on, until every individual part has had a successor; and yet you still have the same knife—for you never had another one; you never had two! Something there has persisted all this time, call it what you will. So we recognize the identity of these bodies of ours, though they are in a constant process of change. And so we shall recognize them in the resurrection, though the greatest change of all shall have come over them.

We deny, therefore, that the resurrection of which Christ spoke is a spiritual resurrection. Certainly His own was no spiritual resurrection, but most emphatically a bodily one. He showed the prints of the nails in His hands and feet; He insisted that a spirit had not flesh and bones, as they could prove for themselves He had; and He partook of ordinary food in

their sight. These were in order to prove to His followers, first, that His body was real, and not visionary; and second, that it was the same body which had suffered death on the cross and had been shut up in Joseph's sepulcher. Yet withal it was a changed body, in that it was no longer subject to certain laws of nature, neither was it any more corruptible. It was a body which the Saviour could take and did take to heaven with Him, whereas mere "flesh and blood," as Paul tells us, "cannot inherit the kingdom of God."

We conclude, therefore, that in the Bible immortality and the resurrection of the dead go hand in hand; that is, that the human spirit does not cease to exist at death, simply because its Creator designs that it shall one day be re-embodied, thus to remain forever. This we conceive to be the essential difference between the human spirit and other spirits. We shall never be angels, neither can an angel ever be human. It is to be feared that a great deal of false teaching is founded on a failure to grasp this distinction. We are led to think that existence out of the body would be far preferable to that in the body. We even find ref-

erences to these "vile" bodies of ours! just as if God had put a worthy spirit into an unworthy tenement! What we want to get rid of is not the body itself, but its corruptibility, its liability to putrefaction and decay. Death is a thing to be welcomed, not because the spirit is "set free," as the phrase unfortunately runs, but because it is the occasion for getting rid once and forever of bodily corruption. Of all the false doctrines, that of reincarnation is the most abominably foolish, as well as un-Christian. God has provided something infinitely better for us than to have to return to another body with the germs of corruption within it.

But we can look forward, every one of us, to a return to a body free from all elements of decay. This much has Christ done for every human being. In this sense He is the Saviour of "all men." (1 Tim. 4: 10.) To this extent His redemption is world-wide, as the race. This is the true universalism, and this is also its limit. When we speak of the future state of the *mind*, a distinction must be made, on the ground, among others, of our Saviour's words in the text, "They that have

done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done ill, unto the resurrection of judgment." Whether this re-embodiment at the last great Day shall be to us "life"—that is, the knowledge, peace, and everlasting favor of God; or whether it shall be to us "judgment"—that is, His condemnation, wrath, and the torment of perpetual regret, depends upon our attitude in this world to God's will as expressed in and through Christ.

V.

THE SECOND COMING—THE JUDGMENT—THE
MILLENNIUM.

“And inasmuch as it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this cometh judgment.”—*Heb. 9: 27.*

“But each in his own order; Christ the first fruits; then they that are Christ’s at his coming.”—*1 Cor. 15: 23.*

“The rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years should be finished. This is the first resurrection.”
—*Rev. 20: 5.*

IN our previous discourses we have discussed the subject of existence hereafter, in what seem to be the logical steps, from the moment that death occurs up to the time when death is robbed of its victory by the resurrection from the dead; that is, the re-embodiment of the spirit. We have thus given answer to the first question, as to the fact of such existence, and also to the first part of the second question, What is the essential nature of that existence? There remains now the further inquiry, What will be the attendant conditions—that is, the outward circumstances—of that ex-

istence? This brings us to Eschatology proper, or the doctrine of the "last things," and joined with this, the *moral issues* of human life.

The discussion upon which we thus enter is one of even greater difficulty than attaches to those preceding. No known scheme of interpretation claims to be flawless; difficulties confessedly beset every one of them. We shall not expect to escape from this common fate, and are willing to make our confession in advance. Nevertheless, we do not consider it idle or profitless to take up the theme, for Scripture has *something* to say on the subject, and that something is necessarily of the greatest importance to us. Besides, mysteries have a use peculiarly their own, in leading us on to investigate; and the very existence of one is a challenge to set forward in search for new truth. The very fact that *all* is not revealed, shows that something has been left for us to do.

First, then, what has been revealed concerning the "last things"? Without overlooking others, three main facts call for notice. As set forth in the various passages cited, they are

Christ's second coming, the judgment, and what has been called the "Millennium." In this enumeration we do not yet pronounce anything as to the order of these things, either as to time of revelation or as to the sequence of their actual occurrence. This is the very problem before us for our study. To begin with, we simply assert, on the authority of the New Testament, that Jesus Christ will sometime come to earth again—1 Cor. 15:23, and numerous other places—that there will some day be a judgment of the world—Heb. 9:27, and elsewhere—and that before the final summing up of all things at the close of this Revelation-age, there will be a specific period in it which John the Revelator terms "the thousand years."

The first question which confronts us, if we take these facts in the order of their mention by Christ and His Apostles, pertains to the day of judgment. This is our Saviour's own expression, first used in His warnings to the scribes and Pharisees, as recorded in Matt. 12, as follows: "And I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judg-

ment"—v. 36. Later on He used the same expression, first of any city which might reject His Apostles, saying that "in the day of judgment" it would be "more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah" than for that city; and again of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum, where a similar comparison is made. Here there is evidently an advance over the earlier use of the term, from judgment of an individual to that of whole communities. A further extension of the idea is found in Paul's speech to the Athenians, where he says—Acts 17: 31—"Inasmuch as he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." Here the reference is to a judgment world-wide, evidently including all men.

To the same effect, are the words already quoted, "And inasmuch as it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this cometh judgment." As one writer says, "From a teleological view of the world, also, as well as from a survey of its existing imperfections, it is felt

that there is an inherent fitness, if not a moral necessity, in the supposition of a last judgment which shall form, as it were, the *denouement* of the great drama of universal history." With this conception harmonizes that of Paul, as expressed in 2 Cor. 5: 10: "For we must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

Thus, as the writer before quoted further says, "the representations which Christ Himself gives us of a gradual ripening of both good and evil to the harvest, then of a final and decisive separation—joined with the similar representations of the Apostles—compel us, it seems to me, to speak of a day of reckoning, when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ; which shall be at once a vindication of God's action in the government of the world, and a decision upon the issues of the individual life." On this latter point, Scripture distinctly teaches a division into two classes. Christ Himself, as quoted in John 5: 24, describes the first class as follows: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth

my word, and believeth him that sent me, hath eternal life, and cometh not into judgment, but hath passed out of death into life." For all such the day of judgment will have no terrors.

The other class, for whom that Day will have terrible significance, is described by the Apostle Peter as composed of "unrighteous" and "ungodly men." Thus he says—2 Peter 2:9—"The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment unto the day of judgment"; and further, 2 Peter 3:7—"The heavens that now are, and the earth, by the same word have been stored up for fire, being reserved against the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men." These, according to our Saviour's classification, must be such as reject His divine mission and refuse to hear His word.

Having thus settled upon the fact and the purpose of judgment, the question of time now comes forward. This necessarily connects with another event, revealed by Christ and frequently referred to by New Testament writers, viz., the second coming. Since the Father

has given all judgment into the hands of the Son—John 5: 22—the latter, in his capacity as world-King and world-Judge, must render the final decision. This He represents as the object of a second coming of Himself to earth, as in the following words—Matt. 25: 31, 32—“But when the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the angels with him, then shall he sit on the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all the nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats.”

This will be a bodily presence of the Lord on earth, as the words of the angels at His ascension denote: “This Jesus, which was received up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye beheld him going into heaven.” The time of His appearing has not been revealed, as Christ Himself declared. Hence all schemes of calculation as to that time must continue to be, as the past has proved some to be, utterly unreliable and useless. But much effort has been devoted toward determining what the *order* of events will be with reference to Christ’s coming and the judgment, in connection with the resurrection of the dead.

There are two systems of interpretation in general, viz., premillennial and postmillennial. The difference between them is based, mainly, upon the twentieth chapter of John's Apocalypse. The keynote of the passage may be taken from the fifth verse, viz., "The rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years should be finished. This is the first resurrection."

From this it is claimed that there are two resurrections, separated by an interval of one thousand years. Then it is said that the first resurrection is referred to in 1 Cor. 15:23,

"But each in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; then they that are Christ's, at his coming." According to this theory, Christ's second coming will be immediately followed by the resurrection of the righteous dead, who will then be made partakers with him in world-judgment. That judgment will continue for a thousand years, at the end of which will occur the resurrection and judgment of the wicked and the full establishment of the new heavens and the new earth. Thus will be ushered in, we are told, the final, the endless age, when "the earth, renewed by fire, deliv-

ered now forever from sin and the curse, becomes the eternal home of a holy humanity, over whom the Son of man, subject to the Father, shall rule forever as the head of a redeemed people."

This is the general outline of the premillennial doctrine. Its central idea is the setting up by Christ of a visible kingdom on earth and His personal reign over it. Connected with this is the national conversion and restoration of the Jews, a consequent outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the Gentile peoples, and the filling of the whole earth with righteousness and glory. Near the close of a thousand years of these conditions, Satan, who during that time has been bound, will be loosed for a little season, and will make one last desperate attempt to regain his lost control, but in vain. Then the wicked dead will be raised, and together with Satan and his angels will be cast into the lake of fire. Then Christ will deliver up the kingdom to the Father, in such sense that God will be "all in all"—though the priestly co-regency of Christ and His saints still exists (West).

Against this system of interpretation as to

the "last things," the following objections, among others, have been offered: First, there is no sufficient warrant for understanding the term "thousand years" in Rev. 20, in its literal sense. Where everything else is admittedly symbolical, as plainly so in this Book, we would expect to find the same true in this instance, particularly as there is a universally recognized symbolism of numbers. Furthermore, this interpretation is confessedly based upon the ninth chapter of Daniel, where each day is taken to represent a year; and therefore it would be more natural to take "thousand years" as representing 365,000 years. This, however, premillennialists decline to accept, for to take the language of Rev. 20 figuratively, would destroy the theory of two resurrections, and thus be fatal to the whole scheme of interpretation.

A further objection is grounded upon the use of the word "souls" in verse 4. The Apostle in vision "saw the souls of them that had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus," and of these it is said that "they lived, and reigned with Christ a thousand years." This is then declared to have been the "first resurrection."

But if the language is literal, it was not a resurrection of the *body* which John saw; and so the case falls to the ground; while on the other hand, if the language is figurative in one place, it would naturally be throughout the whole passage. Besides, a "second death" is spoken of, and if the resurrection is literal, the second death must also be; and in that case we have the wicked raised from the dead only to be almost immediately disembodied again—a very unnecessary proceeding, surely!

It is further objected that "In Christ's own words there is no statement of a separation of the resurrection of the unrighteous from that of the righteous, as if they were events belonging to different times."—S. D. F. Salmond. This objection is clearly sustained by reference to our Saviour's utterances. Not only does He say nothing of a thousand years, but there is no hint of an interval at all. To a mind unprepossessed of such an idea, His statements would never suggest such an interval. He speaks of an "*hour*," "in which all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice, and shall come forth," and to conceive of His speaking thus with the knowledge of a thou-

sand years' interval between parts of that going forth, is to do violence to the appropriateness of His language.

But what appears to be the most decisive argument against the premillennial order of events is derived from Paul's statements in 1 Cor. 15: 25, 26, reading as follows: "For he must reign, till he hath put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be abolished is death." With the abolition of death Christ's kingship comes to an end. This can only refer to physical death, inasmuch as spiritual death is not abolished. Then Satan and all other enemies of Christ, including wicked men, must be deprived of their power and placed under condemnation at that time, else death would not be the *last*. But when is death abolished? Evidently, at the resurrection. Christ's personal victory by His own resurrection will be supplemented by His kingly triumph in the raising of all men,—even as the writer of Hebrews tells us that Christ tasted death "for every man."

And this will be the basis of the judgment which will immediately follow upon the rejecters of Christ, that in spite of what He has

thus done for them they refused to ally themselves with Him, to obey Him, to become united to Him. Standing in the presence both of Him and His holy angels and all the saints who have ever lived, they shall receive their sentence of condemnation, viz., "eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might."—2 Thess. 1:9. Everlasting and hopeless regret for wasted opportunity will be their awful portion. They too shall live, endlessly live; but it will be a living to which death would be preferable, yea, welcome.

This then is our conception of the last things: that when the gospel has been preached for a testimony unto the whole world, completing the symbolically termed Millennial Age, Christ will personally, visibly return to this earth, change living saints into incorruptible bodies, call forth all the dead from their graves, separate between the sheep and the goats, pronounce upon the latter and their Satanic leader and allies their consciously merited doom, and hand over into eternal sonship to God with Himself those who, having been called in time, had remained faithful unto the end.

VI.

HEAVEN: WHERE IS IT, AND WHAT WILL ITS
OCCUPATIONS BE? RECOGNITION OF
FRIENDS.

“For our citizenship is in heaven.”—*Phil.* 3: 20.

“But, according to his promise, we look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.”—2 *Peter* 3: 13.

IN the preceding article we took a brief general survey of Eschatology, or the doctrine of the last things; that is, the events directly leading up to and immediately preceding the end of this Revelation-age. Three of these it is important to keep in mind as the basis of our remaining study, viz., Christ's visible, personal return to earth, the resurrection of the dead, and the general or world-judgment. Our Saviour's second coming is *in order* to call forth the dead, and the resurrection of the dead is *in order* to universal judgment, and the judgment is *in order* to the everlasting settle-

ment of human destiny. We are now to inquire concerning the character and the place of that destiny.

In our Lord's description of His coming to judgment, as recorded in Matt. 25, He represents Himself as separating mankind into two classes, which are simply termed those "on his right hand" and those "on the left hand." To the former He says, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." That statement clearly has in it every indication of final award and everlasting reward. When a father bequeaths to his children his property, it is his final award to them, and is called their inheritance. So this inheritance of which Christ speaks must be God the Father's final award to His children. And since it was prepared for that express purpose from "the foundation of the world," it is evidently intended as a reward, and one that shall last as long as the world itself lasts.

Now the supreme question is, What is that inheritance? Its most common name in popular usage is "Heaven." Christian people talk much about "going to heaven." It is often

put as a sort of test question, whether one "wants to go to heaven," or expects "to get to heaven." This may be all right—but it may be all wrong. It is a noteworthy fact that Jesus Christ never used the phrase *go to heaven*. His characteristic phrase is "into," or "in," "the kingdom of heaven." If you are desirous of entering into the *kingdom* of heaven, all right, for that means entering into the kingship of Christ, who is its ruler. If you are willing to be His subject, you will assuredly inherit His kingdom and share in its blessings. But if you simply want to go "to heaven," without having made up your mind to obey Christ and follow Him, to think His thoughts and share His affections, I am ready to affirm that you are wanting to go to a place which has no existence save in your own imagination.

But you will ask, 'Are not heaven and the kingdom of heaven the same? The answer is, no, not in the same sense in which Christ used the terms. As we have said, He never speaks of believers going to heaven, nor on the other hand does He speak of the Father who is in the kingdom of heaven; but He does reverse the

phrases continually. The truth is that heaven is the place of Christ's pre-existence—see John 6:38: "For I am come down from heaven," and hence the abode of the Father and the holy angels, as the Saviour's own language also teaches with regard to them. But when Christ speaks of the kingdom of heaven, His thought is not directed toward that place.

For example, in the parable of the pounds He taught His disciples that after He had gone to the Father to be invested with kingly authority, He would return to earth to take possession of His kingdom. Here also He would distribute the various rewards according to different degrees of faithfulness, and here He would likewise punish His enemies.

And so instances might be multiplied to show that in Christ's conception, the kingdom over which He was to rule would have its full establishment upon the earth. But then why did He call it the kingdom of *heaven*? Why did He not say the kingdom of earth? Doubtless for precisely the same reason that led Paul to say, "For our citizenship is in heaven." The Christian, though living in this world, must yet live apart from it. Like an exile,

he disavows the country in which he is compelled to live, because its conditions are not congenial to him, and he repudiates the authority of its government, because it is responsible for those conditions. It is not his country, though he is in it. It may exact taxes and service from him, yet his real citizenship is elsewhere. There is another state which he prefers, because it is freer from obnoxious influences and is ruled more in accordance with the principles of righteousness and equity.

But where is there such a country for the Christian? Not on this earth, for it is under the dominion of Satan. There is a place, however, where God's will reigns supreme, and where the pursuit of righteousness is not beset by disturbing influences. To that government the Christian professes his allegiance, and in such a place as that he would fain dwell. Since that place is not on earth, the only location he can give it is in the heavens. Therefore he says his citizenship is in heaven, meaning by that that it is of a higher character than citizenship here on earth is; and meaning also that he hopes some day to have this ideal citizenship made real to him, when the

days of his exile are over. But the question is, Will the Christian need to go to heaven to accomplish that result? And we answer, by no means. Heaven can be taken to him—that is, heaven not as a place but as a state. In other words, he can enter into the *kingdom* of heaven, without departing from his present habitation.

But you may ask, How can he? The Apostle Peter explains it. He says, “But, according to his promise, we look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.” The change from the old to the new will take place at the coming of the “day of God,” which will itself be ushered in by the coming of Christ. By this latter coming Christ will bring the kingdom fully upon earth, and so fit it morally for the habitation of the blessed, while its renovation by fire will make it the fit abode of the resurrected and glorified dead. In short, heaven will simply extend its borders so as to take in a redeemed earth and its redeemed people. The Apostle Paul must have had this in mind when he said: “For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God. For the

creation was subjected to vanity, not of its own will, but by reason of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God."

But it may be further objected that this conception of the Christian's heritage is in conflict with our Saviour's beautiful promise in John 14: 2, 3: "In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." Christ, we know, went to heaven. It is argued that He called it His Father's house, that He in it prepares a place for believers, and that when He comes again He will take them with Him back to heaven. But in these statements there are two errors. First, our Lord says nothing of leaving again after He has returned to earth. His language clearly implies that He will stay with His people, in order that they and He may be together. What need for Him to come to earth at all, if He did not intend to

abide here? Why not represent believers as translated to heaven to meet Him?

The other error lies in interpreting the words, "Father's house," as meaning heaven. The term necessarily includes the whole universe, or both heaven and earth. This is God's building. And when He located His human children He chose to put them not in heaven but on earth. In fact, He called this earth into being for that express purpose. He gave the angels their habitation in heaven, but earth He set apart for the home of men. It is *one* of the many abiding-places, or "mansions," throughout the universe. Renewed in the last day and purified from all corruption and corruptibility, it will afford a beautiful and blessed home for the redeemed of Christ forever.

But perhaps you say, Didn't Christ say, "I go to prepare a place for you," and didn't He go to heaven? Yes, but did heaven need any preparation? It was *earthly* preparation which He had to go to complete. It was the individual inheritances which He had to make ready; but it had to be done from heaven, the holy of holies, into which He must enter as a

High-priest ere He could return to earth as its King. When the Jewish high-priest went into the holy of holies in the Tabernacle, it was not to prepare a place *there* for the Israelites, but to preserve them in their own dwelling-places, lest God should cut them off from the earth, like He had done with other nations. So Christ went into heaven in order to intercede on our behalf, that we might inherit the title to this beautiful home of ours on earth.

If, then, we conclude that the kingdom of heaven will be consummated on earth, the question becomes doubly interesting, What will the occupations of the redeemed be? It would be natural to infer that they will bear some resemblance to those which interest us now. Indeed, what do we know of any other kind? If the pursuits we have followed here are to be exchanged for others of which we are absolutely ignorant, what purpose have the former served us here? To use a single illustration, why should we spend years and years in muscular skill, how to use our fingers, if they are to remain idle hereafter? And if they are to be employed, what will they be

doing, if not the very things they do here? Imagine, if you can, anything else they could do!

True, we must make some qualification. Life in the consummated kingdom must be different in some way from what it is now. To go on working as we work under present conditions would be neither rest nor reward, both of which are promised to the redeemed. The conditions must somehow be changed. That change appears to be hinted at in these words, "But, according to his promise, we look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." The earth, as well as man, is to be purged and purified. Righteousness, or rightness, will characterize both. Things will be in their right relation, of quality, quantity, motion, and value. This simply means that all hardship, danger and temptation will be removed.

And with such removal what could be more desirable than to be occupied just as we are now? Readjustments would follow, of course; for who of us is not deprived of some favorite occupation or pursuit? But in the aggregate there will doubtless be the same

mechanical and fine arts as the world now knows, the same constructions in patterns and models and moulds and pictures in all their thousand forms and varieties. There will be the same studies and investigations into the secrets of nature, the curiosities of numbers, the phenomena of light, and the qualities of sound. There will be also, doubtless, the same inquiries into the workings of the human mind, and the same study of the laws and modes of its expression. Why not? If we were to come into possession of unlimited power and knowledge in an instant, what incentive would there be ahead of us? We can interpret the delights of the other world only as we link them with the things that delight us here.

And this suggests our closing inquiry on this theme: Shall we recognize our friends here as such in the state of the redeemed? I have heard it argued that neither religious philosophy nor the Bible gives any warrant for answering in the affirmative. It is claimed that what we term friendships are based after all on considerations more or less selfish, which will vanish hereafter in that wider and

nobler love which will comprehend all in equal intensity and ardor. And this would seem to be a very reasonable view—were it not for a single consideration, which we proceed to state. In the resurrection we are to be re-embodied in the same bodies which we possess now. As we have previously seen, the identity must lie in the form and appearance of the body, in spite of differences in the chemical or constituent elements thereof. So that, like Christ's resurrection-body, it will be recognized in spite of the change which has come over it. How then could we help but recognize our friends? Unless we retain no memory of this life! But in that case we could neither be rewarded nor punished for the deeds done here, which is contrary to Scripture.

Besides, on the theory that we shall re-inhabit this earth, it would seem eminently fit that we should link the old friendships with the new life. In the very nature of the case some people would be nearer to us than others, for all could not occupy the same spot. Then why should we not be permitted to know those who had been our friends here, so that they

might be first at our side? How better could we be made thoroughly happy from the very first moment of the new life? What joy it is to meet a loved one after a long separation, and fall to conversing about the common ties and interests which extend from the past into the present! So shall there be, we believe, many a glad reunion on that joyous resurrection-day, when friend shall clasp friend in thrilling embrace, and with one accord raise heart and voice in golden strains of harmony as they worship at the feet of King Jesus.

VII.

HELL: WHY IS IT, AND WHAT MAKES IT?

“And be not afraid of them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.”

—*Matt.* 10: 28.

PERMIT me to recall a statement made at the opening of our last article: “Our Saviour’s second coming is in order to call forth the dead, and the resurrection of the dead is in order to universal judgment, and the judgment is in order to the everlasting settlement of human destiny. We are now to inquire concerning the character and the place of that destiny.” We found that in Christ’s own representation there will be a separation between men in this respect, part to be “on his right hand,” and the others “on the left hand.” Having then discussed the destiny of the former as to its character and place, there re-

mains, as our concluding study of the series, an inquiry into the destiny of those whom the King will assign to the "left hand."

Concerning these we read as follows: "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels."—Matt. 25:41. A moment later, speaking of these same persons, Christ used these words, "And these shall go away into eternal punishment." Here, then, we have set forth the everlasting destiny of this portion of mankind. They will be punished, with a punishment originally designed for the devil and his angels, and in consequence will suffer the loss of all that good which would result from the presence and favor of Christ. Perhaps some would think that with this general statement we might be content, without seeking to know more of a subject necessarily unpleasant. But just as we are not satisfied with the general statement that the righteous will "inherit the kingdom"—we want to know the character and place of that kingdom, so we naturally want to know all we can about the place and nature of the opposite state. In-

deed, as in every other case of opposites, each is needed to make the other clear.

First, then, is there a "hell," or is this only a purely figurative expression? Shall we say, "The mind is its own place, and in itself can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven," and stop at that? or is this only part of the truth? The passage of Scripture at the head of this article ought to settle this question beyond all doubt. "And be not afraid of them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." A body must have position, place. It is impossible to conceive of its existence otherwise. It must be surrounded by material conditions of some kind. Hence the very expression, "body in hell," shows hell to be a real place, just as real as the body is. If Christ had attributed "hell" only of the soul, we might say hell means only a state, the mental condition of the soul itself; but since He explicitly associates the body with this condition, there is no avoiding the conclusion that hell is an actual place.

For we must remember that we are discussing the final destiny of *resurrected* per-

sons, in whom soul and body are once more united. Our thought is not now directed to the place of departed spirits, but to where those spirits re-embodied at Christ's coming shall dwell. If the redeemed of Christ are raised from the dead to inhabit a place—a place likened to heaven—as the reward of their faithfulness, it is clear that those not so redeemed must also be raised from the dead to inhabit a place—a place likened to the Valley of Gehinnom—as the punishment for their unfaithfulness. In other words, if those whom Christ termed “blessed of my Father” are to have a *place* of existence, and this is the purpose of their re-embodiment, then those whom He termed “cursed” must likewise have a place, else why were they raised from the dead? Or, to put it differently, if the wicked go right to hell at death, because hell is nothing more than their own mental state, what would they ever be re-embodied for?

Concluding, then, that there will be a real place called hell, we are ready to inquire more specifically, Why is there such a place? What apparent necessity is there for it? The original Greek term, “Gehenna,” derived from the

Hebrew Ge-Hinnom, has reference to a deep gorge lying south of Jerusalem, where anciently children were burned as offerings to Moloch. "To break up this detestable practice, Josiah defiled the place, and subsequently it became the receptacle of the dead bodies of criminals and of brute beasts, and of all sorts of filth." Perpetual fires were kept up to destroy this offal; and from this combination of waste, corruption, and constant fire was derived the horrible significance which attached to the term Gehenna in Christ's time.

That term our Saviour simply adapted, as in many other cases, to a new and enlarged meaning. In representing the act of final judgment He had already assigned the saved to a place called the "kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world," where He himself as King was to be in the midst. He then assigns the lost to their place, which, however, He does not say was prepared for them, but was prepared for the devil and his angels. Here, then, we have the answer to the question, Why is there a hell? There must be one as the only and fit abode of Satan and his co-workers, the opponents and enemies of God. If

Christ is to be rewarded for His work, the devil, as Christ's antagonist, must be punished for his. For the purpose of that punishment a place has been prepared, and to that place our Saviour has given the name Gehenna, as suggesting the best idea of its character at present possible to the human mind.

The question then arises, Are we to understand the fire of hell as being real flaming heat, such as we now denominate by that term? Certain it is that the natural sense of Christ's words seems to bear out this interpretation; as for example when He says, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels." And yet other considerations seem to require a modification. Thus fire to us means two certain results of contact with it, viz., terrible pain, followed by bodily destruction. Then to an embodied being eternal fire might mean awful punishment by suffering for a *time*, but not for eternity, since the body would soon be destroyed. But Christ speaks of "eternal punishment" for those who in His judgment are condemned; and since they will be then once more in the body, it appears impossible

that they should be enveloped with actual flaming heat, for they would soon be consumed.

Then shall we interpret our Lord's language as purely figurative, and say, with many, that hell is nothing more than the mental torment of self-regret on the part of the lost? Truly, in this conception there is much of truth; but it is not wide enough to cover all the necessary features of the case. We must not forget that the object of fatal and final judgment, the resurrection-man, will have a body to be punished as well as a mind. We are therefore under the necessity of conceiving some condition which will give pain to that body—and yet not destroy it. Christ calls that condition "unquenchable fire." Can we picture such a state? Yes. We have only to imagine the heat of our sun increased to such a degree that the sensation produced upon us would be absolutely destructive of comfort, and yet not fatal to life itself. True, in these weakened bodies of ours these two conditions cannot coexist; but that is far from proving that the same will be true of the resurrection-body, which, as we believe, will be essentially immortal.

Suppose, then, that the unsaved should, at the Righteous Judge's command, be driven from His presence—which will be on earth—to a place of incessant heat as their final abode: the conditions set forth by Christ will then seem to be met, without either explaining away or doing violence to His language. If it be asked, Where could that place be? we answer, it cannot be on earth, for that will be the heritage of the redeemed; but for aught we know it might well be on some other planet. If the kingdom of heaven will so extend its limits as to take in a redeemed earth with its redeemed people, why should not the present sphere of evil be so extended as to include some other material creation set apart for the existence of the wicked? Or, since there will doubtless be different degrees of punishment, why should there not be several such exiled abodes, varying as to the intensity of painful conditions?

You may characterize this as mere speculation concerning the location of hell and the manner of its torments—and so it is. But, while admitting that little has been revealed directly on this subject, and that the *fact* of

a hell is of far greater consequence to us than the mode of existence in it, yet it is to be insisted that the fact can have its due influence upon us only in proportion as its dread consequences are made vivid before our minds. We believe that this was what influenced our Saviour to use the descriptive terms He did. Wherever and whatever hell is, it is at least a terrible, and an everlastingly terrible, reality. Therefore we ought to form and keep in our minds the most vivid conception of it possible. If some other conception of what constitutes hell can be made to explain more teachings of the Bible and leave fewer unsolved problems of philosophy and science, we shall be glad to substitute it for the one here presented.

Before concluding, just a word regarding the oft-repeated attempt to explain hell and its eternal punishment out of existence. This has been done in the interests either of ultimate universal salvation, or final annihilation of the hopelessly wicked. Of the two theories the latter is confronted with fewer difficulties in the teaching of Christ, the Apostolic doctrine, and the general faith of the Church ever

since, than the former. But they both break down under Christ's use of the term *eternal punishment*. He uses it as the exact opposite of "eternal life," into which the righteous are to go after the judgment. Everyone accepts this as meaning endless bliss; but if eternal means endless in the one instance, it must mean the same in the other—else all certainty in language is denied. If eternal means only age-long as to the condition of the impenitent, that is all we dare make it mean to the saved—then what will follow for them at the end of that age? Let those who advocate limited punishment for the unsaved explain wherein the saved would gain anything by denying themselves in this world, if their happiness hereafter were only "age-long"!

Thus we bring our study of existence after death to a close. Not a little research and much thought have been given to this study. The first aim has been to set forth what the Word of God teaches in regard to the facts themselves; and then we have sought to bring these facts into their proper relations both to one another and to other facts commonly accepted in the Christian faith. It is confidently

believed that a sufficient degree of unity and consistency in reasoning has been attained to make the view harmonious throughout. Each discussion is linked with the preceding one, so that all must either stand or fall together. If our view of death is correct, there must be immortality of the soul; if there is immortality, first, without the body, and then finally in the body, the former must constitute an intermediate state between death and the resurrection; if the personality persists in this state, it can only be in waiting for its completion, and hence there must be a return to bodily life; that return can only be accomplished by the second coming of Christ, which He Himself represents as a coming to judgment; that judgment fixes final destiny for men, and presupposes on the one hand a heavenly kingdom for the rewarding abode of the righteous, and on the other hand a hellish anarchy for the penal abode of the wicked.

Such studies as these may well claim our attention, if, as we believe, this life is but the vestibule of a never-ending existence for weal or woe beyond the grave. It is right to give our attention to the things of this world; but

only as they connect themselves with the unseen things of the next world. To so give our attention is to use this life, to withhold it is to abuse it. For using, some shall be rewarded: for abusing, the rest shall be punished. This is the philosophy of the here and the hereafter, in a nutshell. And this, my reader, may well make you pause long enough just now, and at the close of every twenty-four hours of your life, to ask yourself, Am I using this world, or abusing it? Am I traveling toward weal, or toward woe, as my footsteps approach the eternity of existence beyond the grave?

THE END.

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