Where Are The Dead?

An Address by

JOHN EDGAR,

M.A. U.S., M.B., C.M., F.F.P.S.G.

(SPECIAL LARGE SIZE EDITION.)

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This is a question which has exercised the minds of thinking people in all ages. Doctor John Edgar answers it in a logical and convincing manner from the Scriptural standpoint. Many truth-seekers have testified to the spiritual benefit they have obtained from their perusal of this address.

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By

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Fellow of the Royal Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons, Glasgow; Professor of Midwifery and Diseases of Women, Anderson's College Medical School; Senior Surgeon, Royal Samaritan Hospital for Women, Glasgow.

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Where are the Dead?

THIS is a question which has exercised the minds of thinking people in all ages. In our day the answers are many and conflicting. Amid the din of all the clashing creeds few indeed know what to believe. Lord Tennyson voiced the universal longing when he said:

> "Ah! Christ! That it were possible
> For one short hour to see
> The souls we loved, that they might tell us
> What and where they be!" (*Maud.*)

But, dear friends, we do not need to enquire of the souls who have departed from us; we have the Word of God, and that is sufficient. I hope to prove to you that the Bible gives a complete and satisfactory answer to our question.

Before considering the Scriptural answer, however, let us see what human reasoning unaided by Holy Writ can tell us. We shall find that the answer from this source is incomplete. Whatever information we do derive from Science and Philosophy, however, will so far as they go be found to agree perfectly with the Word of God; and this is only what we should expect, for God is the author of the laws of nature and reason, as well as of the Bible. Those who claim that Science and Religion contradict each other simply to not understand the one or the other.

What can Science Tell Us?

What has Science to say with regard to the body, soul, and spirit? Science tells us that the human body is composed of seventeen elements. None of these elements is peculiar to the body, they are found everywhere

in the earth around us. This is in exact agreement with the Bible, which states that God "formed man of the dust of the ground"—Genesis II, 7. The dust of the ground is merely another way of saying "the elements of the earth."

But what about the soul, the real person, the "Ego," the thinking part of man? What can Science tell us about it? The popular conception is that the soul is a being or person residing within and independent of our organism, and that at death it is set free from the body and continues to exist for ever. Science knows nothing of such a being; it has never been discovered in the dissecting-room nor in the laboratory. Science can prove that it is not true that the thinking part of man is independent of his organism. The lower animals can reason to some extent, and the more complex and finer the structure of their brain the better their reasoning power. Man, whose brain is the most complex and has the finest structure,—is possessed of the highest degree of reasoning power. As the child grows into maturity and its brain develops, the reasoning power increases; and by and by, when old age creeps in and the brain begins to decay, the reasoning power steadily diminishes. It is clear, then, that the soul, the thinking part of man, is not independent of his organism.

I have frequently seen persons brought into hospital unconscious through an injury to the head, who recovered when operated upon. In some cases a part of the patient's skull had been fractured and a small portion of bone was found pressing on the brain. On removing the pressure by raising this piece of bone into *its place, consciousness returned. Now, on questioning* the patient regarding the details of his accident, we always found that the *last* thing he remembered was what occurred immediately before the accident. All

through the intervening time till he regained consciousness had been days and sometimes even weeks, yet to him it had been a perfect blank. Why is this? Where was the man's soul during the interval. Why could it not recollect events after the accident if it is independent of the body? Surely it is quite evident that the soul is dependent on organism.

But what about the spirit? Is it a being inside of us? Science has not found any such being. The only spirit that Science recognises is the spirit or power of life. Formerly it was thought that life resided in some particular part of the body, but now, thanks to Professor Virchow, we know that the body is composed of innumerable cells, and that the spirit or power of life animates every one of them. We know, also, that this power of life is dependent on certain continual processes of waste and repair.

My finger, for example, is composed of many cells in each of which is the spirit or power of life, and this life is dependent on processes of waste and repair. If these processes become deranged there is disease, if they cease there is death. My finger is dead, and in course of time shrivels up and drops off. When my finger dies, what becomes of the spirit of life? Does anyone think that it wings its flight somewhere to wait till the rest of my spirit joins it? Surely not? Rather we understand that the death of my finger and also of my whole body simply means the cessation of the life-processes of waste and repair. It is the same in the case of the lower animals and of plants. They also are composed of innumerable cells in each of which is the spirit or power of life, and this power of life is dependent on similar processes of waste and repair. We do not understand that their spirit of life is a being which continues to have an independent existence after death.

After life has gone, man is unable to give it back. God alone possesses that power. And so we read in Ecclesiastes XII, 7: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit [or power of life] shall return unto God who gave it." God alone can restore the spirit or power of life. No physician in this world can give life to the dead.

That, briefly put, is what Science can tell us regarding our question. Science knows nothing of a future state.

The Answer of Philosophy.

This is where Philosophy steps in. We human beings have considerable reasoning power, and also a conscience or moral sense, that is to say, the faculty of discerning between right and wrong. Philosophy tells us that if we follow the right course we are good or virtuous and should expect a corresponding reward, and that if we follow the wrong course we are bad or vicious and should expect a corresponding punishment. Yet we find in reality that these reasonable consequences frequently do not follow. In fact, the very reverse is generally the rule. Malachi (III, 15) truly says: "Now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered." Many who lead wicked lives prosper, and escape merited punishment. On the other hand, as the Apostle Paul declares: "Yea, all that will live godly in Jesus Christ shall suffer persecution"—2 Timothy III, 12. Is it true that all the great ones of the earth, the kings, nobles, and capitalists are the most righteous, and that the lower the scale of position and honour the more vicious we find men to be? You all know that this is by no means the case. Is it not chiefly from among the poor of this world, rich in faith, that God is choosing the heirs of the Kingdom which he has promised to them that love him?—James II, 5.

Philosophy, therefore, reasons that there must be a future state where the virtuous will be rewarded, and the vicious punished. But Philosophy cannot tells us what and where this future state will be, nor whether it is attained at the moment of death or after an interval. It is mere assumption to declare, as many do, that there cannot possibly be an interval between death and the beginning of the future condition. This error is based upon another assumption, that God has not sufficient wisdom and power to *re-create* those who have lived and died.

Revelation by Spirits Unworthy of Credence.

There are thus many questions left unanswered by unaided human reasoning. If we cannot get the complete answer from Science or from Philosophy, where should we expect to obtain it? As we cannot get it from ourselves, evidently we must expect a revelation from without.

Some profess to receive this revelation through Spiritism. I have not time to discuss this subject at present, but I am convinced that Spiritism, where it is not fraud or trickery, as much of it is, is a manifestation of evil spirits, the fallen angels. The Lord warns us very strongly against consulting those who have familiar spirits, and declares that all who do these things are an abomination to him—Deuteronomy XVIII, 9-12; Leviticus XIX, 31; Isaiah VIII, 19, 20.

The Answer from the Word of God.

Where, then, must we look for this revelation? We must look to God himself, and expect to get our answer not through visions or peculiar manifestations, but through the Bible, the Word of God, "the faith once for all delivered to the saints"—Jude 3, R.V.

Formerly most Christians believed that the heathen, who are dying at the appalling rate of about 70,000 every day, could be saved from eternal torment only by sending out missionaries that the name of Jesus might be brought to them before they died. But very few now believe in this. Very few believe that God would mercilessly torment people forever simply because they never had an opportunity to hear the name of Jesus. Who could believe such a thing of God? But most content themselves with quoting: "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" Like the Pharisees in our Lord's time they refuse to investigate the matter further, preferring to believe and teach the traditions of men. Others, rejecting the terrible doctrine of eternal torment, and believing that the Bible teaches it, reject the Bible also. This is one of the saddest and most fruitful sources of infidelity in our day.

I hope that none of us will be of either of these two classes. Let us go to the Bible, humbly seeking God's guidance in our search for information upon this and other subjects connected with the plan of salvation. If we do so, if we go to the Bible in the proper spirit, not out of mere curiosity nor in a spirit of pride and prejudice, but meekly, reverently and prayerfully, seeking to know what God has to tell us, not putting ideas of our own into the Bible, and not making up our mind that the Bible must teach certain things, but with unbiassed mind saying to ourselves: "I will believe what God has to tell me, no matter what man may say on the subject," —if we go to the Bible in this attitude, we shall sooner or later receive the truth. "The meek will he guide in judgment, the meek will he teach his way." "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him." We must always bear in mind that no man can be wise above the Bible. However much we may and should

honour our parents and our teachers, we must never be betrayed into placing their word before the infallible Word of God. When we search the Scriptures in this meek and reverent spirit, we find that they give a complete and satisfactory answer to our question, an answer, moreover, which shows how great and how harmonious are the love, the justice, the wisdom, and the power of God.

What is the Soul?

To get a proper understanding of our subject we must begin with the question: "What is the soul?" For the answer we naturally turn to the description of the creation of the first human soul, Adam, which we find in the 7th verse of the the 2nd chapter of Genesis: "The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul."

Let us study this a little. We should not read the Bible without thinking over what God has to tell us. "God formed man of the dust of the ground." Adam's body was formed of the elements of the earth. He had eyes, ears, and a mouth, but so far no ability to see, hear or speak. Then God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. Notice, the Bible does not say that God breathed into his nostrils a soul. What the Word says is that God "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life," the spirit or power of life. And what was the result? Do we find the intimation that Adam had now a soul in him? No, we find that the result of the breath of life having been breathed into Adam was that he "became a living soul." In other words, the soul is not the body, nor is it the spirit of life, but in order to be a living soul it must possess both a body and the spirit of life. This is in agreement with what we have seen Science to

teach, namely, that the "Ego," the real person, the thinking part of man, is not independent of his organism.

Adam was now able to see and hear and speak, to think and walk and work. He was now a sentient being, a being endowed with sense-perception; and thus the best definition of a living soul that one could give is that it is a sentient being. It may be objected that such a definition would include the lower animals, and that the Scriptures do not teach that the lower animals are souls. But the Word of God does speak of the lower animals in this way, although it is somewhat obscured in our English version. When the Hebrew words *nephesh chayah* (living soul) are used with reference to the lower animals, they are never (with one exception, namely, Numbers XXXI, 28) translated "soul" but always "life" or "living creature" or some such expression; whereas the same words when they occur in relation to human beings, are invariably translated "soul" or "living soul." Two illustrations of this may be seen in the first chapter of Genesis, verses 20 and 30. In the 20th verse we read: "God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life." Those of you who have reference Bibles will see in the margin against the word "creature" the words: "Hebrew, soul." Then in the 30th verse of the same chapter we read: "To every beast of the earth and to every fowl of the air and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth wherein there is life." Notice here also that in the margin against the word "life" appear the words: "Hebrew, a living soul." Clearly, then, the Bible agrees with Science in declaring that the lower animals *are living souls.*

It is thus evident that man will not be granted a future state because he is or possesses a soul, but because alone of earthly creatures was made in the image of

God; that is, with the mental powers of reason, memory, judgment and will, and with the moral qualities of justice, benevolence, love, etc., similar to those possessed by God, though inferior in degree. Man alone is morally responsible for his actions; and none but an insane person would think of bringing one of the lower animals before a court of justice.

Is the Soul Immortal?

The next part of our subject is a very important one. It is the answer to the question: Is the soul immortal? A great deal depends upon this. Since the Bible tells us that some will be saved, it follows if the soul is immortal that there are only two alternatives possible. Either all will ultimately attain eternal bliss with God, or some are doomed to an eternity of woe, whatever may be the form of that woe. On the other hand, if our loving heavenly Father can destroy the soul, he will not be restricted to either of these alternatives. He will not require to ignore the freedom of man's will as the doctrine of "Universalism" would demand, nor will he be compelled to condemn the wilfully wicked to eternal woe.

It was in the summer of 1899 that this question was first brought prominently before my notice. At that time I was visited by two or three of my friends who enquired: "Is the soul immortal?" I replied: "Of course it is!" "Why," they asked, do you say: 'Of course it is!'" "Oh!" I answered, "because nearly everybody believes it." "But surely," my friends argued, "you would not give that as a reason; what the majority of people believe cannot be a proof that what they believe is true. Why, if that is the case we ought all to be heathen, because the majority of people are heathen." I agreed. "But," I said, "such an important doctrine must be

taught in the Scriptures?" "Show us a verse then," they said. I was at a loss, dear friends, when they asked me to do that. I could not recall one, but exclaimed: "Surely, though I cannot remember any, there must be many verses in the Scriptures which speak of our immortal souls?" Judge of my astonishment when these friends told me, and not only told me but proved to me that there is not such a verse in the whole Bible.

Yet it is easily proved. All you require to do is to get a complete Concordance, look up first the word "soul," and every word that means "soul" and then the word "immortal," and every word that means "immortal," and you will find that there is not a single verse from Genesis to Revelation which states that the soul is immortal.

The late Dr. Thomas Clark, the author of a book called: *A Life's Thought on Christ*, offered one thousand pounds to anyone who could find the expression: "immortal," "never-dying," or "ever-living soul," in the Hebrew, Greek, or English Scriptures. Dr. Thomas Clark was quite safe in making that offer. No one ever earned the money. The late W. E. Gladstone wrote with regard to this question: "The natural immortality of the soul is a doctrine wholly unknown to the Holy Scriptures, and standing on no higher plane than that of an ingeniously sustained, but gravely and formidably contested philosophical opinion..... It crept into the church by a back door as it were"—*Studies subsidiary to the works of Bishop Butler*, pp. 197-198. That is it, dear friends. The doctrine of the natural immortality of the soul is not taught in the Scriptures at all; it crept into the church through the back door of Greek philosophy.

It may be asked: If the Scriptures do not affirm that man has inherent in him an "immortal," "never-dying" or "ever-living" soul, does the Word of God

state that the soul is mortal, that the soul can die. Those who believe that it is immortal generally think that God has so constituted the soul that He Himself cannot possibly destroy it. Is that true? In Matthew X. 28, we read that God is able to destroy not only the body but also the soul in Gehenna. (We shall see later what is meant by "Gehenna.") Now turn to Ezekiel XVIII, 4. There we read: "Behold all souls are mine; as the soul of the father so also the soul of the son is mine; the soul that sinneth it shall die." Does the Bible say: "The soul that sinneth, its body shall die; but the soul itself, being immortal, will continue to live forever"? Is that what the Lord tells us? No, dear friends. God states: "The soul that sinneth, IT shall die." It is the soul, the sentient being, which is responsible for sin, and it is the soul, therefore, which is to bear the penalty of sin, and that penalty is distinctly stated to be *death*. The soul which sins will die; "for the wages of sin is death,"—not eternal torment—Romans VI, 23.

When once we understand this, the whole Bible becomes luminous. Many passages formerly obscure now become clear. In 1 Timothy VI, 15, 16, we read: "The King of kings and Lord of lords..... *only* hath immortality." Do not let any of us after this say that we have immortality when the Bible so distinctly states that the King of kings *only* has it.

In Romans II, 7, the Apostle refers to those who seek for glory, honour and immortality. Let me illustrate: I hold a watch in my hand. Now if I should say: "I am seeking for my watch," you would think there was something wrong with my mind. Why? Because I would be seeking for something I have already. But many Christians say they are immortal, and yet they seek for immortality! In 1 Corinthians XV, 53, 54, the

Apostle says: "This mortal must put on immortality." But we cannot put on anything if we have it on already!

No, dear friends, the Word of God is consistent. It does not teach that immortality is the natural possession of man. What it does say is: "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." We do not have eternal life inherent in us, but it is offered to us as a gift through Jesus Christ, who gave himself a propitiation for our sins. If we have the necessary faith toward God we shall be rewarded with the gift of eternal life in His due time. That is what the Psalmist tells us: "The Lord preserveth all them that love him; but all the wicked will he destroy"—Psalm CXLV, 20. He will not preserve the wicked in any condition whatsoever.

Some imagine that if the doctrine of the natural immortality of the soul be disproved, the foundation is removed from the Christian faith. But this is by no means the case. Everywhere in the Scriptures we are assured that our hope of a future life depends, not on any supposed inherent immortality, but on the resurrection from the dead—Acts XXIV, 14, 15; I Corinthians XV.

It must seem strange to many that this idea of the immortality of the soul has become so prevalent when it is so opposed to the teaching of the Scriptures. It was during the time when people thought it their duty to torture others who differed from them in religious belief that the Church adopted this teaching of the Greek philosophers; and they did so because it helped to support the doctrine of eternal torment.

The usual argument put forward to support the theory that the soul is immortal is that it is a little part of God breathed into Adam. If those who theorize in this way would only reason out their argument to its

legitimate conclusion, they would see that it could not possibly be true. They ought to remember that it is not the body but the soul which is responsible for sin. If the soul is a little part of God, then this little part of God in man is responsible for sin, and may come under the sentence of eternal condemnation.

Some, having noticed that the statement in Genesis II, 7, that God breathed the breath (spirit) of life into man's nostrils, differs from the description of the creation of the lower animals, think that it is not the soul but the spirit which is a little part of God, and that it is not the soul but the spirit which is, on this account, immortal. These fail to notice that in the seventh chapter of Genesis, verse 22, the lower animals are also said to have the spirit of life in their nostrils. Those, therefore, who thus seek to prove that man is immortal, would prove also that the lower animals are immortal. The same argument applies to those who seek to prove man's natural immortality from the indestructibility of matter, and the conservation of energy. If these were proofs of the immortality of man, they would also be proofs of the immortality of every animal and every plant. Surely no reasonable man believes that the lower animals and plants are immortal!

We have learned that the best definition of the soul is that it is the whole sentient being. The dominant part of the being is the mind, the will; but this cannot exist without organism. Accordingly, while in a restricted sense the soul may be described as the mind, the will, the conscious Ego, nevertheless, in order to exist, the Ego must have a body of some kind, whether this body be that of a fish or fowl, man or angel. We have learned also that there is no verse in the Bible which states that the soul is immortal, but that, on the contrary, the Word of God teaches distinctly that the soul which sins shall die.

When is the Just Recompense of Reward?

The popular idea, derived from that little book which contains so many precious truths, the "Shorter Catechism," is that "The souls of believers are at death made perfect in holiness and do immediately pass into glory." Is this true? Here comes a test for us. Shall we believe the Shorter Catechism, or shall we believe the Word of God? Most people prefer the word of man to the Word of God, because it suits their sentiments and prejudices to do so. It was the same in the time of Martin Luther when he pointed out that the Bible, contrary to the teachings of the Church at that time, states: "The just shall live by faith." The majority of the people preferred to believe what the Church taught rather than accept what Martin Luther pointed out from the Scriptures. That was a test for the people living at that time, and we have a similar test to-day. I trust that everyone here will see to it that he will never be betrayed into placing the word of man before the Word of God. Remember, no one can be wiser than the Bible.

Is it true that all the dead who have had faith in God are now in heaven? Let us take an example. What about David, who, with all his faults, was a man beloved of the Lord, a man after God's heart? Is David in heaven? I suppose many in this audience would answer: "Yes." Let us read what the Word of God says. See Acts II, 34: "David is not ascended into the heavens." Nothing could be plainer than that. The question is: Are you going to believe it? Some of you may say: "That is strange, I did think that David would be in heaven, but evidently I am mistaken. He was not as good as I thought he was." But wait a little! See what Jesus said. In John III, 13, we find it recorded: "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but

he that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man." (The words "which is in heaven," should be omitted—see marginal note in Revised Version.) "No man"! There is no exception, save Jesus Himself, who came from heaven to be made flesh and dwell among men. What words could be plainer than these? Dear friends, let us beware lest the traditions of men lead us to deny the words of Christ.

In Acts XXVI, 23, we are told that Jesus was the first to rise from the dead. He was "the first-fruits of them that slept," "the first born from the dead"—1 Corinthians XV, 20; Colossians I, 18. Some of you may say: "Does not this contradict the other Scriptural statements regarding the raising of Lazarus and others? The explanation is that Jesus was the first to rise to perfection of life. The others were simply awakened from the death-state to their former dying condition, and after a few years at most returned to the tomb once more. Their awakening from the dead was not a resurrection in the true meaning of that word, namely, a raising to perfection of life.

What about the time since Christ died and rose again? Has each one during this Gospel Age entered into his just recompense of reward at the moment of death? The Scriptural answer to this question is not the one usually accepted. 2 Peter II, 9, informs us regarding the wicked. Do we find the Apostle there saying that God knows how to punish the wicked at the moment of their death? No, dear friends, Peter tells us clearly that God "knoweth how to *reserve* the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished." Notice! The time when the wicked are to be punished is at the day of judgment when Christ returns. Our Lord, in Matthew XVI, 27, distinctly states: "The Son of Man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; —

then he shall reward every man according to his works." How does that square with the statement of the Shorter Catechism that the souls of believers are at death made perfect in holiness and do immediately pass into glory? Let us believe the Word of God. It will not be until the time when Jesus will return in the glory of His Father with His angels, that he will reward every man according to his works.

Current Theology teaches that every believer goes immediately at death to be with Jesus, but the Lord did not give this thought to His disciples, those whom He loved so well. He did not say to them: "I will receive you unto myself the moment you die." What He did say was: "In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also"—John XIV, 2, 3. Again, Paul, speaking to the Colossians, said: "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life shall appear, *then* shall ye also appear with him in glory"—Colossians III, 3, 4. Lastly, in Revelation XI, 18, we read: "And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great." The preceding verses show that the time indicated here is the same as in the passages already quoted, namely, the return of Christ, the time when He will take His great power and reign, and the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdom of our Lord and His Christ. Many more verses could be quoted supporting the same truth. The Scriptures, properly understood, are unanimous on this question.

The Thief on the Cross.

The objection which is most frequently put forward is the reply of Jesus to the thief on the cross—Luke XXIII, 43. According to the usual thought, the repentent thief went, the moment he died, to join the Lord in heaven. But we have seen that the testimony of the Scriptures is that all the Apostles, martyrs, and other saints who have died are waiting till the return of Christ to get their reward. It follows, if the usual idea with regard to our Lord's reply is correct, that this thief must have had the precedence of the Apostles and all the holy martyrs. But our Lord Himself said to Mary on the *third* day after his promise to the thief: "I am not yet ascended to my Father." Again, Peter, in Acts II, 27, draws attention to the words of David in the 16th Psalm: "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell," and shows that David was not here speaking of himself; but, as the prophetic mouthpiece of our Lord Jesus, he was foretelling that Jesus' soul went to hell, not to Paradise, but would not remain there. I shall refer to this later.

When we enquire into the matter, we find the explanation very simple. Rotherham's translation of the passage does away with all difficulties. It is this: "Verily I say unto thee to-day, with me shalt thou be in Paradise." He put the comma after "to-day," instead of before it. Has Rotherham any justification for making this alteration? Yes, because when the Bible was written there were no commas. Punctuation was not invented till some four centuries ago, shortly after the invention of the art of printing. It is merely a modern convenience to indicate that the writer wishes the reader to pause shortly at these places, and so help the understanding of what is written. If you would like to prove that there is no punctuation in the ancient

manuscripts of the Bible, I advise you to visit the British Museum, and there you will find, laid open for inspection in a glass case, one of the three most ancient manuscripts of the Bible. Like the other two it is in Greek. It is called the "Alexandrian Manuscript." Whether you understand Greek or not you will see that all the words and sentences run together: there is no separation between them, and there is not a comma in the whole manuscript. This means, then, that the comma and other marks of punctuation which appear in our English versions are not inspired, but were merely inserted by the translators to bring out what they thought was the meaning of the Scriptures.

Those who translated the New Testament into English believed that the "souls of believers do immediately pass into glory," and accordingly put a comma after "thee." We have found, however, that Jesus and His Apostles said that it would be at the time of His return in the glory of His Father with His holy angels that believers would be rewarded and the wicked punished. Accordingly, the comma should have been placed after "to-day." What Jesus actually said was: "Verily I say unto thee to-day, thou shalt be with me in paradise." (The Greek word *este* can be equally well translated: "thou shalt be," or "shalt thou be.") Thus we see that Jesus was not contradicting what He had said on every other occasion, nor making any exception in the case of the repentent thief.

An instance of a similar use of the word "to-day" is found in Deuteronomy XXX. 16: "I command thee this day to love the Lord thy God." When Jesus uttered the words of our text, it must have seemed the most unlikely thing possible that He would ever become a King. Hanging on a cross, dying the death of a criminal, and with the title: "King of the Jews," inscribed in mockery above His head, it must on that day have seemed beyond all the bounds of probability that He would ever receive a kingdom; but when the thief asked to be remembered by Jesus when he came into His Kingdom, Jesus honoured his faith and said: "Verily I say unto thee to-day,—this dark day when I am dying a felon's death, and it seems as though I was an impostor,—thou shalt be with me in paradise." Another important reason why our Lord used the word "to-day" is that it was on that day that the great sacrifice for the sin of the world was to be finished, which would render it possible for His Kingdom to be established.

The Intermediate State.

We have seen that the Scriptures teach an intermediate state, a time of waiting between death and the reward. A great many students of the Bible have come to this conclusion, but unfortunately most of them still cling to the erroneous idea of the natural immortality of the soul. Therefore they believe that the soul during this intermediate state is conscious, that it can think and feel, and that it knows even more after death than it knew before. Let us enquire into this also.

Do the Scriptures declare that after death the soul knows more than it did before its death? Look at Ecclesiastes IX, 5: "The dead know not anything"; also the 10th verse: "There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest." Then you remember the prayer of Hezekiah: "The grave cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth. The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day"—Isaiah XXXVIII, 18, 19. Again, the Psalmist tells us in the 146th Psalm, 4th verse, that

when a man dies, "he returneth to his earth, and in that very day his thoughts perish." Does that look as if he knew more than he did before? In the 6th Psalm, 4th verse, we read: "Return, O Lord, deliver my soul: O save me for thy mercies' sake." Then the 5th verse: "For in death there is no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks?" Is it not clear then, dear friends, that the soul during this intermediate state is in a condition of unconsciousness, waiting for the resurrection awakening?

It is only when we understand what death is that we can realise the beauty of that figure which is so often used throughout the Old and New Testaments, the *sleep* of death. You remember how the Lord said: "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth," and when His disciples did not understand Him, "then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead"—John XI. 11-14. Death is likened to sleep because it is a state of unconsciousness to be followed by an awakening. If I entered a room where someone was sleeping, I could do and say many things, and the person would be totally unaware of my presence so long as he remained asleep. That is why death is likened to sleep.

I suppose you know, dear friends, that I am a medical man. Like most medical men I am sometimes called out during the night. Occasionally I require to work all night, and as a consequence I am very tired and sleepy next day. Being a busy man, I seldom have time to rest during the day, but on one occasion I remember lying on a couch, and shutting my eyes then opening them again, said to myself: "I was very nearly asleep that time." On looking at the clock, however, I was surprised to see that I had been asleep for an hour! I thought I had simply closed my eyes for a moment, and could hardly believe that any interval had elapsed. Why was that? Because the interval was a state of unconsciousness. I was asleep, and my sleep was a sound sleep because I was so tired. It was as sound as death.

That is the condition of the dead. When a person dies he closes his eyes, passes into a state of unconsciousness, and an interval elapses; it may be weeks, years or centuries, but no matter how long, to that person the period is a complete blank. It is just like that hour when I was asleep. In other words, to each one who is awakened on the resurrection morn, it will be as if he had simply closed his eyes and the next moment opened them. That is the condition of the dead. They are completely unconscious. They "know not anything."

But "the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth"—John V. 28, 29. Notice that Jesus did not say: "all that are in eternal bliss and in eternal torment," but, "all that are in the graves," the death-state. "Ah, yes," some say, "that means the bodies of the dead, it does not refer to their souls; it means that when Jesus calls, the souls of the saved and of the lost will fly back and re-inhabit their bodies. It is the bodies which are to rise, for it is only the bodies which pass into the death-state." But that was not what Jesus said. We have the united testimony of both Science and the Scriptures that the bodies will not be resurrected. Science shows that the bodies are at death disintegrated, and go, many of them, to fertilise plants. Some, again, are eaten by wild beasts or cannibals, and go to form the tissues of these beasts or cannibals. It is thus manifestly impossible for the same body to rise.

But we do not need to rely on the testimony of Science alone. The Apostle Paul in answering this question: "How are the dead raised up? And with

what body do they come?" did not say: "That is a peculiar question! Why do you ask: 'How are the dead to be raised, and with what *body* do they come'? Do you not know that the soul never dies, and that it is only the body which dies and requires to be resurrected?" No! What Paul did say was: "Thou fool, ...thou sowest not that body that shall be be..... but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body"—1 Corinthians XV, 35-38. What could be plainer than that? It is not the body but the soul which dies, as we read in Isaiah LIII, 12, of Christ: "he hath poured out his soul unto death." It is not the body, therefore, but the soul which is to be resurrected; and God shall give to each soul a body as it pleases Him, according to the character sown in this life-time.

Where are the Dead?

From what I have said it will be plain to you that the Scriptural answer to our question is simply this: The dead are all, good and bad alike, in one place, the grave—not the literal grave, but the death-state. "All go into one place. All are of the dust, and all turn to dust again"—Ecclesiastes III, 20. "There the wicked cease from troubling; and there the weary [including the weary in well-doing] be at rest. There the prisoners [of death] rest together. They hear not the voice of the oppressor. The small and great are there"—Job III, 17-19

The teaching of the Scriptures is, therefore, that *the dead are dead*. It seems strange that it should be necessary to come before an intelligent audience in order to prove what is so clearly set forth in the Word of God. The reason is that the minds of the majority of Christians have been so confused by the theological

teaching of the past, that they cannot discern the plain testimony of the Bible on this subject.

In the Hebrew Old Testament the word which is used to name the grave or death-state, in which all the dead are at rest, is "Sheol" This word occurs 65 times altogether in the Hebrew Scriptures. It is not, however, translated uniformly "grave." Three times it is translated "pit," 31 times "grave," and 31 times "hell." The word "hell" occurs in the English version of the Old Testament exactly 31 times: *i.e.*, the *only* Hebrew word in the Old Testament which is translated "hell" is this word "Sheol." The Hebrew "Sheol" corresponds to the Greek "Hades," a word which appears in the New Testament to designate the same condition, the death-state. This is proved by the fact that the Apostles Peter and Paul, in two quotations from the Old Testament in which the word "Sheol" occurs, have translated it by the Greek word "Hades." Compare Psalm XVI, 10, with Acts II, 27; and Hosea XIII, 14, with 1 Corinthians XV, 55, and in the last named text note that in reference Bibles the word "grave" has opposite to it in the margin the word "hell."

The doctrine of eternal torment, which crept into the Church with the falling away from Apostolic teaching, gained much force from the time when men tortured others for what they called heresies. The word "hell" became associated with this terrible theory as the place of torment, where fire-proof demons were supposed to torture for ever and ever those who were consigned thither by God. This is by no means, however, the original meaning of the word "hell." Originally it meant a "hidden" or "covered" place and was, therefore, quite a proper translation of "Sheol" and "Hades." Even now the word is used in its original sense in certain agricultural districts. "Helling potatoes" does

not mean "roasting" them, as would be implied by the orthodox signification of the word "hell"; it means pitting them, burying them, covering them up till the proper time for raising them.

It is very important that we should realise that there is no thought of eternal torment in the Bible use of the words "Sheol" and "Hades." Let us see what Job said: "O that thou wouldest hide me in Sheol,"—that would be a strange desire if Sheol was a place or condition of eternal torment!—"that thou wouldest keep me secret"—Ah, yes! That is the true thought; Sheol is the hidden state—"until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me! If a man die, shall he live again? All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee; thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands"—Job XIV, 13-15.

In Hosea XIII, 14, we are assured that Sheol (hell, the death-state) is to be destroyed. It cannot, therefore, be an *eternal* place or condition of any kind whatever. This verse shows that it is by the resurrection that the death-state is to be destroyed. The words of the Prophet are: "I will ransom them from the power of the grave [Sheol]; I will redeem them from death. O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave [Sheol] I will be thy destruction." The Apostle Paul, quoting this, exclaimed at the end of that wonderful chapter on the resurrection of the dead, I Corinthians XV, 55: "O death where is thy sting? O grave [Hades; marginal reading: "hell"] where is thy victory?"

The very best of men, Jesus Himself, went to hell,—not His body merely, but His soul. We learn this from the verse which has already been mentioned, Acts II, 27, quoted from Psalm XVI, 10: "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell." Seeing that Jesus' soul went to hell, it is manifest that hell does not signify a place or condition of eternal torment, but the death-state. This agrees with the statement of the Prophet (Isaiah LIII, 12): "He [Jesus] hath poured out his soul unto death."

The popular theory that the dead are not dead is supposed to receive support from three passages of the Scriptures. These are (1) the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, (2) the appearance of Moses and Elias on the Mount of Transfiguration, and (3) Jesus' statement regarding Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, that God is not the God of the dead but of the living. Let us examine these three passages.

The Rich Man and Lazarus.

It is evident from the whole setting of this passage that it is a parable. Otherwise the logical lesson to be drawn from it is that unless we are poor beggars, full of sores, we shall never enter eternal bliss; and that future torment will be our portion if we happen to wear fine linen and purple and fare sumptuously every day. Christ in this parable was teaching a great dispensational truth, namely, the overthrow of Israel and the acceptance of the Gentiles into God's favour. If you read carefully the 32nd chapter of Deuteronomy you will see that Jesus was merely repeating in vivid language what Moses had already said. See particularly verses 20 to 29; and also Paul's quotation of the 21st verse in Romans X, 19, where he shows that Moses' prophecy referred to the overthrow of Israel consequent upon the Lord Jesus' rejection of the nation.

The rich man represented the Nation of Israel, which at the time when Christ was speaking was faring sumptuously every day on God's favours and promises. The "purple" represented the fact that the Jews were the Children of the Kingdom, the nation to which the

Messiah belonged. The "fine linen" symbolised the righteousness imputed to them through the typical sacrifices of the Law.

Lazarus represented those of the Gentiles who feared God, but were "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world"—Ephesians II, 12. The only favours they could receive were the crumbs which fell from Israel's table of bounties. When the woman of Canaan asked our Lord to heal her daughter, Jesus replied: "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs. And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table." As a reward for her faith Jesus gave her the desired crumb of favour—Matthew XV, 21-28.

Owing to Israel's rejection of Jesus as the Messiah, a change came to both these classes. The "Lazarus" class "died," *i.e.*, ceased to exist as outcasts, and were received into God's favour. Cornelius was the first of these. Accepting Christ they were thenceforth received into Abraham's bosom as the true children of faithful Abraham, and heirs of the promise which God had made to Abraham—Galatians III, 7, 26-29; Romans XI, 7-9, 12-25.

Subsequently, in the year 70 A.D., the "rich man" "died," *i.e.*, ceased to exist as a Nation and as the national representatives of God's favours. From then till now the Jews, no longer a nation, have been in torment, and the great gulf of their Law prejudices has hindered them from accepting Christ and returning to the favour of God. Other Scriptures, however, assure us that this will not always be so, but that "blindness in part is happened to Israel until the fulness of the

Gentiles be come in," and that then "all Israel shall be saved"—Romans XI, 25, 26.

Moses and Elias on the Mount.

It is thought by many that Moses and Elias here appeared in person to the disciples and Jesus. Such have omitted to notice that Jesus told his disciples expressly that what they had seen was a *vision*—Matthew XVII, 9. Peter in his second Epistle explains that the vision foreshadowed the glorious kingdom of Christ.

The word rendered "vision" is in the Greek *horama*. This word occurs altogether twelve times in the New Testament, and in each instance it is properly rendered "vision." To take two examples: in Acts IX, 11, 12, we read: "The Lord said unto him [Ananias], Arise and go into the street which is called Straight and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul of Tarsus, for behold he prayeth and hath seen in a vision [*horama*] a man named Ananias coming in and putting his hand on him that he might receive his sight." The man seen by the blind Saul of Tarsus was evidently not a reality, but a vision. In Acts XII, 7, 9, we read: "Behold an angel of the Lord came upon him and a light shined in the prison, and he smote Peter on the side and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly.....And he went out and followed him and wist not that it was true which was done by the angel, but thought he saw a vision"—*horama*. Peter thought that what he had seen was a vision, and did not know that it was a reality. These examples make it evident that the word *horama* used by Christ indicated that Moses and Elias were not really present on the Mount, but only appeared to be there. The whole scene was a vision.

To say that Moses and Elias actually stood with Christ on the Mount would be to contradict the teaching

of the Scriptures that Jesus was the first to rise from the dead—Acts XXVI, 23; 1 Corinthians XV, 20.

God is not the God of the Dead but of the Living—Matthew XXII, 32.

This text is frequently quoted as a proof that the dead are not dead. A study of the context will show that Christ has here the resurrection in view, and that the passage teaches exactly the opposite of the commonly received meaning. His words in the preceding verse are: "As touching the resurrection of the dead." He did not say: "the resurrection of the living," for that would have been nonsense. It was in view of the *resurrection* that Jesus could truly say that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is not the God of the dead but of the living. This agrees with what the Apostle says in Romans IV, 17: "God quickeneth the dead and calleth those things which be not as though they were."

Two other texts frequently brought forward to support the theory that believers at death "do immediately pass into glory," are 2 Corinthians V, 8, where the Apostle Paul says he is "willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord," and Philippians I, 23, where he expresses a "desire to depart and to be with Christ." It is evident, however, from other Scriptures (See 2 Timothy IV, 8), that the Apostle did not expect to be *immediately* ushered into the presence of the Lord the moment he laid aside his "earthly tabernacle." He knew he must remain asleep in death until the return of Christ at the last trump, when he would be awakened in the first resurrection, and so be ever with the Lord.

The word "depart" in the latter text is not a correct translation of the Greek word *analuein*. In Luke XII, 36, the same Greek word is rendered "return." But

neither does "return" accurately express the meaning of *analuein*; the literal translation is "to be loosed again." Paul was in a "strait betwixt two" things—whether to live, or to die. Both had advantages, and he did not know which he would rather choose; but "to be loosed again" from the prison-house of death by the Lord at His second coming, was indeed far better than either of these other two things, and this is what the Apostle earnestly desired above all else

Two Main Classes in the Death-State.

There are two main classes in the death-state: the dead in Adam and the dead in Christ. When Adam sinned, the sentence of death was passed not only upon him but also upon the whole human race yet unborn. Many deny this, and say that God would not condemn the whole race because of one man's sin; but we see this law in operation every day. They overlook the fact that through the law of heredity children suffer because of the sins of their fathers. As the Prophet expresses it: "The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge"—Jeremiah XXXI, 29. It was a dying life that the dying Adam gave to the race. The stream was contaminated at its source. Accordingly, "there is none righteous, no, not one." All are guilty before God, and all therefore, have been justly condemned to death.

This is known as the doctrine of original sin. It is exactly what Paul tells us in Romans V, 12: "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned"; also in the 18th verse: "By the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation." Again, in 1 Corinthians XV, 22: "In Adam all die." There is nothing more plainly taught

in the Scriptures than this doctrine of original sin.

Those who are dead in Adam have been condemned to death because of innate sin. God, the righteous Judge, is holy. He hates sin, and could not allow any imperfect sinful being to have eternal life. In this is seen the *justice* of God; but now, "God commendeth his *love* toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us"—Romans V, 8. He "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.

By belief in Christ is not meant merely that mental form of belief which says: "I believe that there was such a man as Christ Jesus, and that He was crucified by the Romans," not that kind of belief, but the kind which is a living faith, which trusts in God and says: "I believe that God so loved the world that He gave His Son to be the Saviour of mankind, and I believe God's promise that I am justified by my faith and have peace with Him; and now I desire to do God's will in everything."

We who exercise this living faith in Jesus pass from death unto life—See John V, 24. Not that we have actual life; but God reckons it to us *because His justice has been satisfied by the death of Christ, and we have accepted the provision which He has made for us in Christ.*

Does this mean that those of us who believe are now never to die? No, dear friends, if that were the case none of the Apostles would have died. There is something more. When we have escaped the condemnation which rests upon the world and are now seeking to do God's will, we find in His Holy Word that we have obtained our reprieve from condemnation for a special purpose, and if we do not use it for this purpose we have received the grace of God in vain—2 Cor. VI, 1.

What is this special purpose for which we receive the grace of justification? Let us see in the 9th chapter of Luke what Jesus says with regard to it. In the 22nd verse He explains to His disciples that He is about to suffer: "The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day." And then in the next two verses He adds: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me: for whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever will lose his life for my sake the same shall save it." In other words, *we are justified, that is, we are reprieved from the sentence of condemnation which still rests on the world and are passed from death unto life, only for the special purpose of doing what Jesus did, laying down our lives as He did.*

That is what the Apostle Paul tells us in Romans XII, 1: "I beseech you therefore, brethren,"—you who are of the household of faith—"by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Could that have been said to the world? Could Paul have said to those who were enemies of God through evil works: "I beseech you, ye enemies of God, to present your bodies living sacrifice"? No. One who has not been justified, and is not, therefore, at peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, cannot present his body a living sacrifice, for the simple reason that he has no life of his own to give; it has been forfeited at the hands of justice. He is dead in Adam.

When we follow Christ's example, we are reckoned as members of His body. Remember how Paul presents the matter in the 12th chapter of First Corinthians: Jesus is the "head," and we, the Church, the followers of Christ, are His "body" and members in

articular. All who are members of Christ's body, are also sharers of the sufferings and death of Christ. In the 6th chapter of Romans, the 3rd verse, Paul says: "Know ye not, that so many of us [the household of faith] as were baptised [immersed] into Jesus Christ [becoming members of his body], were baptised [immersed] into his death?"

Thus, the world in general are *dead in Adam*, but those who have exercised saving faith and have presented their bodies a living sacrifice, are *dead in Christ*. The dead in Adam died at the hands of justice; but the dead in Christ died a sacrificial death. Justice, though it accepted Christ's death, could not demand it, for He was sinless and His death was voluntary; neither can justice demand the death of Christ's followers, for there is "now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus"—Romans VIII, 1. It was love which constrained Jesus to lay down His life for the satisfaction of justice, and it is love which constrains the members of His body to follow in His footsteps of self-sacrifice unto death.

The First Resurrection.

Here we have, then, the two main classes in the grave or death-state; the dead in Adam, and the dead in Christ. Now, in 1 Thessalonians IV, 16, we read: "The dead in Christ shall rise *first*." And in Revelation XX, 6: "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the *first* resurrection; on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." In Romans VIII, 17, we are told that we must suffer with Christ before we can be glorified with him, but the Apostle adds: "The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in

us." "It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him [Christ], we shall also live with him. If we suffer, we shall also reign with him"—2 Timothy II, 11, 12.

I hope that everyone in this audience will be of this class. The offer is free to all who have ears to hear the Glad Tidings, and who will take up their cross daily and follow in the footsteps of the Master. If you are faithful unto death, you will get the crown of life, and then, when you are reigning with Christ, you will be like Him, for you will be raised in the likeness of His glorious spiritual body—Revelation II, 10; 1 John III, 2; Philippians III, 21.

The Resurrection of the Unjust.

But what about the rest of mankind? The term "First Resurrection" implies that there will be another, and that is exactly what we are told in the Scriptures. There is to be a resurrection of the unjust as well as of the just—See Acts XXIV, 15. Why are they to be raised? Orthodoxy says they are to be raised simply to be condemned again. That is why the translators of the Authorised Version of the Scriptures translated the Greek word *krisis* in John V, 29, by the word "damnation," whereas the proper rendering is "judgment" as in the Revised Version. What Jesus said was: "Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth: they that have done good [the Old Testament Saints, as well as the followers of Christ] unto the resurrection of life [their trial is past; they have proved themselves worthy of life]; and they that have done evil [the unjust], unto the resurrection of judgment." *Krisis* means a trial or testing followed by a sentence, which sentence will depend on the person's innocence or guilt. The English word "crisis" is

derived from the Greek *Krisis*. It is used in reference to any condition of affairs in which the issue is as yet undecided; and those who are interested are in anxious suspense, watching whether the result will be success or failure, life or death.

After a judicial sentence has been passed, the person is no longer on his trial; his judgment is over. The world in general, the unjust, have never been on trial *as individuals*. The trial of their federal head took place at the beginning in the Garden of Eden, and the sentence of condemnation was passed then. The whole race has been born under the sentence of condemnation, "born in sin and shapen in iniquity," and the vast majority have died without having escaped from that condemnation, and, therefore, without any individual trial. Unlike those who have died in Christ, of whom Paul wrote: "there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus" (Romans VIII, 1), these died without any real faith, or without any faith at all "in that only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." That is why they are called the unjust; they have not been justified.

Comparatively few of earth's inhabitants have ever even heard of Christ. Think of the millions upon millions who died before the Son of God came to give himself "a ransom for all," and concerning whom Paul wrote that they had "no hope," and were "without God in the world"!—Ephesians II, 12. Think of the millions upon millions of people living in heathen lands to-day, who, without having heard the name of Jesus, are dying at the rate of about 70,000 every day! Then again, think of the vast multitude who, though they have heard, have never understood the Glad Tidings of great joy which the angel said would be to all people!

None of these have had an individual trial, because the condemnation to death was passed upon them on account of Adam's disobedience, not their own.

They are all coming forth from the death-state in order to be judged, to be tried for life or death. We are assured of this, because we are told that Jesus "by the grace of God tasted death for every man" (Hebrews II, 9), that "He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for our's [the Church's] only, but also for the sins of the whole world"—1 John II, 2.

The teaching of the Scriptures is clear that Adam sold the whole race under sin to death (Romans VII, 14), and that Christ bought the whole race with His precious blood, and that "to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living"—Romans XIV, 9. It is clear, also, that the only way by which any can get eternal life, is through faith in the death and resurrection of Christ. We are told by Jesus himself: "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me" (John XIV, 6); and again, Paul tells us that neither Jews nor Gentiles could justify themselves by works, and that it was for this reason that God set forth His Son Christ Jesus "to be a propitiation through faith in his blood [death]"—Romans II, 14, 15; III, 9, 10, 25.

It is because of all this that God our Saviour has arranged that all shall come to a knowledge of the truth—1 Timothy II, 4. That which enables Him to do this, to be "just and [still] the justifier," is the fact that the man Christ Jesus, the mediator between God and men, "gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified [to all] in due time"—1 Timothy II, 5, 6.

Remember that we are not the judges as to who have had, and who have not had a full opportunity for salvation in the present lifetime. It is a good thing

for men are prone to be severe in their judgment of others. You would think that if any have had an opportunity for salvation, the Jews who crucified Christ surely had. They did not merely go to a church and hear a minister preach about Christ; instead they actually saw Christ himself, they heard the gracious message from His own mouth, and they saw the wonderful works which He did, and yet they crucified Him! Why, you will say, if anyone had responsibility those Jews had, and if any suffer eternal condemnation those Jews must. Yet what did the Apostle Peter say? "I wot that through ignorance ye did it." And Paul said: "Had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory." No, dear friends, the "god of this world," Satan, as we read in the 4th chapter of 2 Corinthians, 4th verse, "hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." The Lord is the Judge. He knows who is and who is not responsible, and we can leave the matter quite safely in His hands.

If He sees that anyone has full knowledge of his responsibilities now but will not obey the gospel, He will not give such a man a further opportunity. What would be the use? We must remember, however, that God is full of loving-kindness, "for his mercy endureth forever." In Hebrews VI, 4-6, He has given an indication as to what He regards as a full opportunity.

On the other hand, if the Lord sees that an individual has never heard or never sufficiently understood the glad message of salvation, that individual will get an opportunity.

This does not mean, however, a license for sin or indifference in this lifetime, for we are told that there will be a measure of future punishment according to

the measure of present responsibility. As a man sows, so shall he also reap—Galatians VI, 7. In the last day it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah than for the people of Palestine, for the Sodomites sinned in much greater ignorance than the Jews—Matthew XI, 23, 24. We can leave the matter quite safely with the Lord.

We have, however, this assurance, that as all men were condemned in the one man, Adam, and not one of them was asked whether he wanted to be condemned in Adam or not, so all men, either in this lifetime or in the resurrection, will get the free gift of justification to life because of the one Saviour, Jesus Christ. "As by the offence of one judgment came upon ALL men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon ALL men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous"—Romans V, 18, 19.

The Lord's Plan.

God's ways and God's thoughts are not our ways and our thoughts. They are as much higher than ours as the heavens are higher than the earth—Isaiah LV, 8, 9. He is long-suffering. His plan is to allow mankind to pass through a dreadful night of sorrow and death as a consequence of sin, and He is waiting till that lesson has been fully learned. In the meantime He is selecting those who are blameless and harmless, the Sons of God, without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom they shine as lights in the world (Philippians II, 15)—a little flock in all. It is the Father's good pleasure to give these the kingdom (Luke XII, 32), that they may share in blessing the world.

We have seen, then, that the world in general was condemned in Adam, and that the people will come forth from the death-state to their first individual trial. That is the purpose for which Christ is coming to reign, "Because he [God] hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead"—Acts XVII, 31. There is great comfort in that word "assurance"; and notice that the assurance is not to some, but "unto all men." What an assurance it is to know that the world is to be judged by the meek and gentle Jesus! The followers of Christ are to be associated with Him in this glorious work, as we read: "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?"—1 Corinthians VI, 2. That is the reason why the followers of Christ must develop the graces of the spirit.

Those who claim that faith without works is sufficient, are shutting their eyes to the plain statements of the Scriptures, that faith without works is dead. In 1 Corinthians XIII, 1-3, it is solemnly declared that we may have all knowledge and such great faith that we could move mountains, and yet, if we have not love, it profits us nothing. No one will be a joint-heir with Christ unless by the help of God he builds on the foundation of faith and knowledge the superstructure of love. Before we can be entrusted with the work of judging the world with Christ, we must prove that "love" is the great motive power of all our words and actions. Not that God expects of us perfection in the flesh, but we must grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, "and become conformed to his image" to the best of our ability.

If we do this, trusting in the blood of Christ, we shall be accepted, not because of our own merit, but because

of the merit of Christ. As Paul says: "we are accepted in the Beloved"—Ephesians I, 6. Those who are faithful unto death will hear the Lord say to them: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord"—Matthew XXV, 21.

We all know that very few take up their cross daily, and learn to be meek and lowly and loving as Jesus was, and so we are not astonished when we read in the Word of God that "many are called but few are chosen," and "strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." These few are the saints who will be privileged to sit with Christ on His throne—Revelation III, 21. Hear the Good Shepherd's tender words to us who love Him and do our best to obey Him: "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom"—Luke XII, 32.

The World's Day of Judgment.

This is usually thought to be a day of twenty-four hours: but Peter, speaking of the day of judgment, says: "Beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day"—2 Peter III, 8.

In the "Day" of the world's judgment, the thousand-year reign of Christ, conditions will be in most respects the very reverse of what they are now. The present time is a dark night of sorrow, suffering, and death. That will be the perfect day when "sorrow and sighing shall flee away." A false theology has taught the people to dread the day of judgment, whereas the Scriptures speak of it as a gladsome time—"O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness: fear before him all the earth

Say among the heathen [nations] that the Lord reigneth: the world also shall be established that it shall not be moved: he shall judge the people righteously. Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof. Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord: for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth"—Psalm XCVI, 9-13.

In that day the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea, and it will no longer be necessary for anyone to mount a pulpit or platform to tell the people about the Lord, for everyone will know the Lord from the least of them unto the greatest of them—Isaiah XI, 9; Jeremiah XXXI, 34. That will indeed be a glorious time. It will be a marked contrast to the present time when "darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the people"—Isaiah LX, 2. Very few indeed know God at this time. There is a vail over their eyes and hearts, the vail of unbelief. Many think God is a being who, in His vengeance, tortures people for ever and ever. One minister, the Rev. Jonathan Edwards, believed that after death he would be so changed, that he would be able to look over the battlements of heaven and see his father, mother, and little children writhing in torment, and turn round and praise God the louder. What an awful conception of God this man must have had! Yet many still believe that the Bible teaches eternal torment. Not long ago, two men were sentenced in Glasgow for throwing a dog into a furnace and watching its agony till it died. The judge rightly characterised their conduct as brutal. Yet many who would shudder at the bare narrative of such brutality, profess to believe that God is torturing not dogs but human beings, not for a few moments till death ends the scene but for all eternity!

My heart rejoices to have the glad assurance of God's Word that in the glorious Millennial reign of Christ, the day of the world's judgment, all men's eyes will be opened to see that "GOD IS LOVE." See in the twenty-fifth chapter of Isaiah what the Prophet tells us of that glorious Millennial Day! "He will destroy in this mountain [kingdom] the face of the covering cast over *all people*, and the vail [of unbelief] that is spread over *all nations*. He will swallow up death in victory [by the resurrection of the dead]; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces.....And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, and we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation"—Isaiah XXV, 7-9. Notice, dear friends, that it is *after* the people come forth from their graves that God will save them!

But there are still more privileges for the world of mankind. In the present Age the way to life is narrow, and "few there be that find it." Satan still "walks about as a roaring lion," seeking whom he may devour. But in the Millennial Age a "highway of holiness" will be set up,—not a narrow difficult way, but a highway, an easy way, in which even fools will not err. And there will be no "lion" there, for Satan is to be bound during the thousands years—Isaiah XXXV, 8-10; Revelation XX, 2. Satan's evil influence will be restrained, and then the present aims of our temperance and other social reformers will be attained. Neither social evils nor any other kind of evil will be any longer permitted.

One important reason why men persist in doing evil in the present time, is because they are not always

punished at once for every sinful act and word. As the wise man said: "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the hearts of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil"—Ecclesiastes VIII, 11. Is not that true? Why are our jails always full of prisoners? Simply because men recognise that the chances of escaping punishment are great, and they are willing to run the risk of being convicted. When Christ is the reigning king, this evil condition will be abolished. In Isaiah XXVI, 9, we are told that when the judgments of the Lord are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness. In that day the Lord will no longer permit evil. There will be a just measure of punishment for every sinful act and word, and this punishment will bring about reformation of character.

On the other hand, according to the Psalmist: "In his [Christ's] day the righteous shall flourish"—Psalm LXXII, 7. In this respect also the conditions will be the reverse of those which now obtain. It will then be easier to do good than to do evil, whereas in the present time it is easier to do evil than to do good. When the judgments of the Lord are in the earth, when every sinful act and word is punished and every righteous act and word rewarded, men will soon come to recognise the love, justice, wisdom and power of God. Need we wonder, then, that at that time "the inhabitants of the world *will* learn righteousness"!

I believe that the Millennial reign of Christ is very near at hand, even at the door; but we are not to understand that perfect peace and righteousness will prevail from its very start. Many have false ideas with regard to the Millennium. They think that the moment the Millennium begins, everybody and everything will immediately be perfect. But this will not

be the case. Speaking of the new heavens and the new earth which will be established when Christ takes to Himself His great power and begins to reign, the Prophet says: "There shall no more come thence an infant of few days, nor an old man that shall not have the full length of his days; for as a lad shall one die a hundred years old; and as a sinner shall be accursed he who dieth at a hundred years old"—Isaiah LXV, 20, Leeser's translation. This shows that some will be sinners in that Millennial day, and that the incorrigible will get at least a hundred years' trial. The Apostle states plainly (1 Corinthians XV, 25), that Christ "must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet." In other words, the Millennium will not be a time of perfect peace and righteousness; it is the "day" appointed by God for the purpose of *establishing* perfect peace and righteousness—Acts XVII, 31.

As a preliminary, it is necessary that the kingdoms of this world be cast down, and the Kingdom of our Lord set up. This means that there will shortly be a time of great trouble. Daniel and Christ both called it a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation—Daniel XII, 1; Matthew XXIV, 21. We see signs of this trouble approaching even now. No doubt the trouble will be brought on principally through conflict between the classes and the masses, especially between labour and capital. It will be a time of trouble far greater than the French Revolution, because it will be world-wide. But there is a silver lining to the dark cloud, for on the ruins of the present kingdoms Christ's Kingdom will be set up; and then the people "shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more"—Isaiah II, 4.

By the end of the Millennium, all mankind will have had restored to them the perfection which was lost by Adam, the perfect human nature; and the whole earth will be restored to the former paradise condition—Acts III, 21; Isaiah XXXV. Then, the thousand years being finished, Satan is to be loosed for a little season—Revelation XX, 3. "Why!" some will say, "that will mar everything! Why should Satan be loosed after paradise is restored?"

When Adam and Eve in the beginning were placed in the Garden of Eden, they were perfect, but God permitted Satan to tempt them. Why? In order to test their loyalty to Him and to righteousness. They fell. Sin entered into the world and death through sin; hence all the present sighing, crying and pain, which have continued now for six thousand years, and by means of which men have been learning the bitter lesson of the sinfulness of sin—Romans VII, 13. Christ will soon begin his glorious reign. He will call, and all the dead will come forth from the death-state. Those who in the past shared Christ's sufferings and death will now share His glory, and will with Christ reign over and judge all those who have died in Adam. These will be gradually lifted up to the perfection lost by Adam, and then, when they have learned the blessings of righteousness and the value of submission to the Lord, Satan will be permitted to tempt them. Why? For the same reason that he was permitted to tempt Adam and Eve,—to test their loyalty to God and to righteousness. We do not know how many may fall, but surely after the long experiences of both sin and righteousness, comparatively few will follow Satan, for all will have had practical experience of the love as well as of the justice of God. Those who do fall will be destroyed in the second death.

The Second Death.

The first death is the death in Adam, but the second death will in no sense be due to Adam. "In those days they shall say no more, 'The fathers have eaten a sour grape [of sin] and the children's teeth are set on edge,' but everyone [who dies] shall die for his own iniquity"—Jeremiah XXXI, 29, 30. This means that in the Millennial Age each will receive an individual trial, and all who die will die as the result of their own sin, no longer because of Adam's sin. This will be their second death, their first being the death they suffered in the past on account of Adam's disobedience—Romans V, 12, 18.

The second death is pictured as a "Lake of fire and brimstone" (Revelation XXI, 8), a forceful figure of utter destruction—a death from which there will not be a resurrection: for "Christ dieth no more," there will not be a second ransom for sinners—Romans VI, 9. This second death is frequently referred to in the Greek version of the Bible as "Gehenna," one of the three words translated "hell" in the English New Testament. "Gehenna" is the Greek form of the name "Valley of Hinnom," the valley situated immediately outside Jerusalem below Mount Zion. It was the refuse destructor of the city. Fires were kept constantly burning in it and brimstone was added for the purpose of aiding the work of destruction. All the garbage of the city was cast into it; also the bodies of criminals, so as to signify that these were not worthy of a resurrection.

Thus we see that there is no idea of torment associated with Gehenna, the second death. It means a condition of everlasting destruction. This is just what the Psalmist said: "The Lord preserveth all them that love him: but all the wicked will he destroy," not preserve in any condition whatsoever—Psalm CXLV, 20.

The Reward of the Faithful.

Those, on the other hand, who resist Satan and who are loyal to God and to righteousness, who love the Lord their God with all their heart, and mind, and soul, and strength, and their neighbour as themselves, will pass on into the Ages to follow, when there will be "no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither will there be any more pain, for the former things will have passed away." Only those who worship God in spirit and in truth will attain to this condition of eternal bliss as perfect human beings on a perfect earth. Then, when the first dominion is restored, God's great plan of Salvation will be complete, and the prayer which our Lord taught his disciples to offer will be answered: "Thy Kingdom come! Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven!" The angel's message will be fulfilled: "Good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people"—Luke II, 10.

In conclusion, I hope that all here will recognise the fact that though this earthly *restitution* is a glorious reward for faithfulness, we in this Age can have a higher state to look forward to. I hope you see that it is your reasonable service to take up your cross now and follow Christ. If you do, and if you are faithful unto death, you will reign with him as a glorious spirit being of the divine nature—2 Peter I, 4. Your chief cause for rejoicing will be your ability to co-operate with the gentle loving Jesus in dispensing all those wonderful blessings to this poor sin-cursed earth; for is it not more blessed to give than to receive?

I trust that what I have said will enable you all to understand and appreciate the Word of God more than you ever did before, and that your love for God and for righteousness will thus be increased. *Amen.*

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