The Conditional Faith of Our Fathers

VOLUME I

The Conditional faith of Our fathers

The Conflict of the Ages Over the Nature and Destiny of Man by

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The Biblical Norm and the Origin, Development, and Penetration of Innate
Immortality (900 B.C. to A.D. 500) BIBLICAL RESEARCH LIBRARY REVIEW AND HERALD WASHINGTON, D.C.

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Moses Was the Inspired Chronicler of the Creation of Man, His Sinless State, His Fall, and His Restoration to Immortality Through a Divine Redeemer.

PREPARED UNDER assignment from the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, and approved by a representative group of more than sixty recognized scholars—theologians, Bible teachers, editors, historians, scientists, physicians, and librarians.

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Lasting obligation is here registered for the munificent support of one of the chief friends of this enterprise—a professional man who wishes to remain anonymous, but without whose gracious help many features could not have been included that have enhanced the attractiveness and effectiveness of these volumes and made their strategic placement possible in key places around the globe.

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It is but fair to add that scores of individuals in Europe, Australia, North, South, and Inter-America served as lookouts, ever on the alert for elusive items, especially spotting contemporary Conditionalist statements of men who have broken with the traditional positions, whose important utterances are included in volume 2.

Basic to all else, tribute is here paid to my sponsors, the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, for authorizing and budgetary provisions, and especially to President R. R. Figuhr, without whose firm faith in this enterprise the project would never have seen the light of day.

As nothing gives greater satisfaction to an author than to acknowledge publicly his indebtedness to those who have made his research-writing possible, that pleasure is now mine.

Acknowledgments

Acknowledgment is here made to the many helpers of my pen without whose skills and aid this volume could never have been produced. I take particular pleasure in recording indebtedness to numerous national, State, university, seminary, college, public, and private libraries and archives in both the Old World and the New. Special mention must be made of the Library of Congress and its matchless Union Catalog facilities, the New York Public Library, the Harvard University, Aurora College, and New England School of Theology libraries in the United States; and overseas of the British Museum and the universities of Oxford and Cambridge in Britain, together with the matchless F. W. Seats private library of Gloucester. Also, scores of less famous institutions in various lands have contributed priceless items to the sum total of rare materials now brought together in the Conditionalist Faith volumes.

The gracious cooperation of librarians on both sides of the Atlantic will never be forgotten—like that of Robert H. Haynes, of Harvard, and D. S. Porter, of Oxford—who rendered invaluable aid through making special materials and facilities available and for checking on items in my absence.

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Dedication

To All Who Seek the True Story of the Conflict of the Centuries Over the Nature and Destiny of Man as Revealed in the Unfolding Testimony of History, and Attested by the Unerring Witness of the Word, THESE VOLUMES ARE HUMBLY DEDICATED

From Author to Reader

A LITTLE more than a century ago the celebrated historian and theologian Dr. Philip Schaff predicted in his History of the Apostolic Church that eschatology would constitute the final area destined to engage the interest and concern of Christian scholars. The issues, he held, would revolve around the involvements of eschatology. It was a profound observation, for all the faults and errors of traditionalism, in the area of our concern, have sprung from false concepts of eschatology.

It is significant that the major periods of church history have been called upon to unfold and place in clear light particular aspects of Bible truth to counteract a corresponding error. For example, it was necessary for the Nicene age to assert the doctrine of the eternal deity of Christ and the personality of the Holy Spirit—the doctrine of the Trinity—to counter the deviations of Arianism. In the Augustinian period the call was ^vindicate the doctrine of human sinfulness and divine grace —as against the vagaries of Pelagianism.

The doctrinal task of the Protestant Reformation was to recover the inward appropriation of salvation, especially the truth of justification by faith, or salvation as effected by Jesus Christ—in opposition to the Roman concept of legal righteousness. In Wesley's day the summons was to the doctrine of Free Grace in contrast to rigid predestinarianism that was then prevalent. This process has gone on until the whole circle of Christian truth has been largely covered. And now in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the doctrine of the last things, or

eschatology—death, judgment, the Second Advent, resurrection, and immortality—is indeed having its vital turn. That is the area of our immediate concern and the justification for and burden of this work.

The time had clearly come for an examination in depth of the conflict of the ages over the nature and destiny of man. During the past

century there has been a rising crescendo of discussion over this issue. And a growing demand has come from men of many faiths in various lands for someone to go to the bottom of this vital question that has agitated the minds of countless numbers of earnest Christians across the centuries—as well as intriguing the philosophers of pagan times prior to the Christian Era. These current appeals have urged that the salient facts be sought out and spread before the reader for candid examination and evaluation, holding that such a definitive study is long past due.

This present work has been undertaken in response to that call. The search for the full facts has involved the combing of the greatest libraries of the Old World and the New, and the cooperation of librarians and other scholars in every quarter of the globe. The initial result of this combined endeavor has been the assemblage of an unprecedented Immortality Source Collection that has brought together the testimony of the key witnesses across the years. The portrayal here presented is based on these original sources. And the tangible results of this comprehensive search are here submitted to the scholars of all faiths. The role of the church historian in bringing forth a specialized history in a designated field—such as concerns the conflict of the centuries over the nature and destiny of man—is not an easy one. And his responsibility is great. The task calls for thoroughness of investigation, tenacity, candor, competence, and accuracy of conclusions. The historian must not be swayed by bias or prejudgment. He must get back of outward appearances to inner causes. He must uncover the underlying principles and basic issues. Only thus can a true delineation be produced.

This we have sought to do in these two volumes. We have ferreted out the original writings and secured reliable translations, for such constitute the imperatives for this portrayal. We have used the most competent authorities for checking, and for getting the biographical facts and historical setting for the presentation. We have traversed the centuries in order to compass the whole story. Any evasion or suppression of the facts of history in this great dialogue of the ages could only lead to biased concepts and faulty conclusions. That could not be tolerated. Fidelity to fact has been our guiding principle. We have been compelled to penetrate to the very heart of church history, and its inevitable clashes with the encroachments of philosophy, which have exerted such a powerful and often fateful influence upon the course of mankind. The subtleties of human philosophy have all too often had a sinister effect upon man's concept of divine truth. Thus the theological views of the early church were altered by Greek Platonism, and those of medieval schoolmen changed by the logic and dialectics of Aristotle.

Relatively few have been able to emancipate themselves from the dominant philosophy and public opinion of their own age. But always there have been some, and these have often been intellectual giants. So the dictates of philosophy and the mandates of Bible doctrine have moved forward warily, side by side, alternately attracting and repelling one another. But in the end the transcendence of divine revelation will prevail, and the wisdom of the world will be lost in the wisdom of God.

The pursuit of historical truth led back to the source of truth in divine revelation, in contrast to the vagaries of human reason. It led through the age long struggle between conflicting principles, and will terminate in the ultimate recovery and re-establishment of the original truth. That constitutes the battle line of the centuries over the nature and destiny of man, as unfolded in these pages. The tracement has been a fascinating and rewarding pursuit, bringing assurance and satisfaction to the seeker for truth.

Always, in every major epoch when truth is revived and comes to grips with error, there have arisen devout scholarly men who have championed unpopular truth and protested and unmasked error. This is the undeviating testimony of history.

God has had His witnesses and His warriors in every age, as He has today. And this principle embraces the conflict of the ages over the nature and destiny of man.

Many significant treatises of the past, having served their immediate purpose, were allowed to go out of circulation and sight. To recover them from the archives of the Old World and the New has been a tremendous task. Our first obligation was to retrieve these well-nigh lost witnesses that provide the vital testimony of their times, for they were the voices that represented their generation. And these men of the past prepared the way for the current widespread revolt against the traditional positions so long dominant. Those entrenched concepts sprang from Protestant retentions of papal errors, which in turn had been derived from the Platonic philosophy that penetrated the Christian Church in the third, fourth, and fifth centuries. That is the lineage.

But all the while, protesting against such grave digressions, there has ever been this line of stalwart dissentients—actually champions of positive Bible truth. This venerable procession, emerging from the past, constitutes the trek of the centuries in man's noble march toward the ultimate restoration of the Conditionalist faith. These stalwarts transmitted the protest of the centuries against entrenched error, along with the recovery of apostolic truth on the nature and destiny of man.

The Conditional Faith of Our Fathers

The search for the basic issues disclosed three conflicting views, or schools of though regarding the destiny of the wicked — (1) that of Eternal Torment for the wicked, (2) Ultimate Restoration for all men, and (3) Ultimate Utter Extinction of the incorrigibly evil. The ceaseless conflict between these views has occupied many of the finest minds of the centuries, because it is a question of both transcendent importance and deep personal concern.

Must it be either the eternal misery of the many or the enforced blessedness of all? Or does the true position lie between the two? Is there a position that harmonizes the justice, righteousness, and mercy of God? Is there a view that vindicates both the character and the government of God and meets the demands of reason? Is there a position that reconciles seemingly conflicting statements in Holy Writ? Yes, say the witnesses, there is. And this is borne out by the findings of history. This view has been held, then lost, and finally regained by the church during the passage of the centuries—and without impairing confidence in either God or man.

This is the story in a nutshell, as unfolded by the evidence. The fateful spark that set off the battle of the ages over the veracity of God as to the nature and destiny of man was ignited within the very gates of Eden. It was the sinister work of a malign tempter. Its success brought about the fall of man, changed his entire nature, and jeopardized his destiny. But this catastrophe resulted, in turn, in the provision of redemption through a divine Saviour-Substitute, who was pledged to restore man's lost righteousness and life, and ultimately to destroy the tempter and end the cruel experiment of sin and banish death forever.

The conflict between truth and error, personalized in Christ and Satan and involving all mankind, loyal and disloyal, has raged across the centuries. But it will end with the declared triumph of Christ, the utter overthrow of Satan, sin, and sinners, and the restoration of Paradise in the earth made new, where will dwell the immortalized saints forever. For this may be cited the pledge of God in His Word. It eventuates in a clean universe forever.

The first two of the four sections of volume 1 are devoted to the full Bible evidence—first that of the Old Testament, and then the fuller witness of the New. These have been covered in depth, as the Scriptures constitute the only norm by which to judge the historical departures that have developed. The remaining parts (III and IV) are historical. Part III portrays the telltale origin of the postulate of Immortal-Soulism, and its development into a devastating system under Greek Platonism, then its penetration into the Jewish faith with dire results. Part IV compasses the first five centuries of the Christian Era, depicting Platonism's subsequent infiltration into the Christian Church, though it did not appear therein until about A.D. 187. Then is traced the resultant split of the Christian faith, developing into three conflicting views, or schools, on man's nature and destiny. This permanent cleavage was consummated during the third, fourth, and fifth centuries, thus resulting in an irreconcilable theological trilemma. That epitomizes the scope of volume 1. The conflict characterizing the remaining centuries of the Christian Era has been among these three schools. And that, in a word, is the general scope of volume 2.

But it all leads to a climax in the triumph of truth. Washington, D.C.
November 16, 1965., LEROY EDWIN FROOM PROLOGUE

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4. Sleeping Dead Do Not Precede the Living
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G. The Resurrection Provision Pivotal in Christ's Teaching
1. Christ's Resurrection Prerequisite to Ours
2. Resurrection Is of the Whole Person
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6. Eternal Torment for Wicked After Judgment
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B. Literalism Violates Consistency; Vitiates Christ's Witness, Overturns Scripture Testimony
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2. Acquainted With Christ's Claims and Offers
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C. Penitent Neither in Kingdom Nor in Paradise That Day
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1. Two Terms Used by Christ
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5. Not Misery but "Destruction Is Eternal
D. "Hades"—True Understanding Based on NT Usage, Not Pagan-Romanist
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2. English Translations Moulded by Romanist Backgrounds
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E. Problem Text (Mark 9:43-48): "Their Worm Dies Not"
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A. "Christ Our Life" Is Post-Pentecostal Theme
1. Proclaimed First to Jews, Then to Gentiles
2. Paul Preaches With Futility to Platonic Athenians
3. Romans: Immortality a Gift Through Christ
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5. Corinthians: Central Theme. Christ Our Life
6. "Eternal Life" Theme Runs Through Remaining Epistles
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3. Opening Message Is on Eschatology
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1. Peril of Invoking the Isolated Verse
2. Contention: Death Only a "Transition"
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4. Unknown in Christian Church Until Nearly AD 200
B. Setting and Intent of Paul's Unusual Portrayal
1. Two Lives for Believers—Present and Future
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C. Full Text of Problem Passage With Definitions
D. Five Basic Considerations Involved
1. Three Consecutive States Impressively Portrayed
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3. Longs for Eternal State
4. Intermediate State the Basic Question
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6. Interim Death State Versus Eternal Resurrection State
7. Significance of Term "Not Made With Hands"
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A. (2 Corinthians 2:2-4): Paul's Vision—"In or Out of the Body"

1. Exact Specifications of Passage
2. Visions Produced by Agency of Holy Spirit
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4. Paul's Vision of Heaven Matched by Isaiah, Daniel, John
5. Absurdity of "Soul's Separation" Theory
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4. Historical Background for Philippian Epistle
5. The Twin Gateways to Glory
6. Paul's "So" Precludes Every Other Means

C. Paul' Baffling Dilemma — "Life"' or "Death"

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2. Involvements and Advantages of Death
3. Christ Will Call Forth From Dusty Beds
4. Only Two Designated Ways to Glory
5. Paul's Multiple Testimony as to "When"
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D. Paul's Great Third Choice— Translation

1. Translation Far Better Than Living or Dying
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B. Problem Text (1 Peter 3:19)— Preaching to "Spirits in Prison"

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C. Christ Truly "Died" According to Prediction, Fulfillment, Attestation
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1. Life Manifested, Promised, Possessed in Christ
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21. Revelation — Inspiration's Supreme Portrayal of Human Destiny

A. Tremendous Scope and Grand Finale of Book of Revelation
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2. Triumph of "Seed" and Crushing of Serpent
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2. "Immortality Is Immunity to Death or Destruction
3. Not Natural Endowment but Special Bestowment
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2. God's Immortality Absolute; Man's Always Contingent
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3. Figure of "Sleep" Used Only of First Death
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6. "Awakening" From Death-Sleep Is Inspired Terminology
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2. Resurrection Universal in Operation
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D. Many in Heaven Through Special Resurrection or Translation
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27. Terms and Usages: Final Disposition of the Wicked

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1. English Translations Signify Utter "Destruction"
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B. Greek Terms Affirm "Destroy, "Consume," "Perish," "Obliterate"
1. Leading Greek Terms Defined
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28. Summing Up the Case for Biblical Conditionalism

A. Conditionalism Accentuated and Enforced in New Testament
1. Complete Harmony Between Testaments
2. Immortalization Accentuated and Amplified in New Testament
3. Immortality an Acquisition, Not Inherent Possession
4. Contrasting Positions Succinctly Set Forth
5. Immortal-Soulism Is Immortality Without a Saviour
6. Conditionalism Is Positive, Not Negative
7. More Gained Through Christ Than Lost Through Adam

B. Issues Illuminated Through Significant Series of "Two's"
1. Two Worlds: Temporal and Eternal
2. Two Adams: The Natural, Then the Spiritual
3. Second Adam: Progenitor of Immortal Race
4. Two Births: First Fleshly, Second Spiritual and Eternal
5. Two Covenants: First of Works, Second of Faith
6. Two Classes: Carnal and Perishing, Heavenly and Abiding
7. Two Kingdoms: Of God and of Satan
8. Two Advents: In the Flesh, and in Power and Glory
9. Two Resurrections: To "Life" and to "Damnation"
10. Finality of Separation Occurs at Second Advent
11. Two Deaths: First Death for All Second Only for Wicked
12. Second Death Follows Second Resurrection
13. Second Death for Irreclaimably Wicked Only
14. The Two Ways: Way of Life, and Way of Death
15. Destined Endings of the Two Ways

C. Fundamental Fallacy of Immortal-Soulist Concept
1. Dualism Not Part of Divine Plan of the Ages

Conditionalism Versus Immortal-Soulism

I. Purpose and Scope of This Vital Quest

Life, death, and destiny! Here and hereafter! These are quandaries that have intrigued the mind of man ever since the dawn of history. Where did we actually come from? Why are we here? Where are we destined to go at the close of life? And what, especially, of this mystery of the hereafter? What actually is death—is it a beginning, or an end? These are some of the perennial and

insistent questions asked by millions of lips that clamour for a satisfying and authoritative answer.

1. FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS THAT DEMAND AN ANSWER.
Just what is the nature of man—is he mortal, or immortal? And what of death—is it a cessation of life, or an entrance upon a fuller existence? Above all, what is our condition during death—is it one of consciousness, or unconsciousness? And where are we during that mysterious intervening state? What about man's fate after death—is he suddenly transported to eternal bliss, or consigned to endless agony—or per chance to bleak obliteration—if his life has been evil? Is he actually to be summoned back from the dark unknown? If so, for what purpose and what end? Can we know? Does anyone know? Is there any source of trustworthy and authoritative in formation?

What are the answers to these haunting questions that have plagued the curious and the thoughtful across the years? To find the answers to these and related questions is the purpose of this quest, and the design of The Conditionalist Faith of Our Fathers. To what sources, then, shall we turn?

2. SOLE SOURCE OF RELIABLE INFORMATION.
Philosophy can only proffer educated guesses. Logic can only reason inplausible circles. History cannot supply the answer—it only records the gropings of man after the answers that he craves. Paganism has weird and wildly clashing notions. Even the Christian creeds are in conflict. And the eerie utterances of Spiritualism, both ancient and modern, are filled with contra dictions that neutralize one another. It is a bewildering cacophony of discordant voices. Where, then, and to whom can we turn?

There is only one dependable and inerrant source of enlightenment—God, who made man. We must turn from man to God. And there is only one reliable revelation, the inspired Word of God. To Holy Writ, then, we shall turn to seek the answers to these questions. But first, permit this personal word.

3. AUTHOR'S PERSONAL DECLARATION OF FAITH.
Before proceeding further, it is only fair and proper that at this point in the opening chapter the author make a declaration of his religious faith, so there will be no misunderstanding as to the basis of his presentation. He is a conservative, evangelical Protestant. He believes that the Bible is the inspired Word of God, is the sole and sufficient rule of faith and practice, and provides the answer to our questions.

He believes in the historicity and reliability of the Genesis recital of the origin of man on earth. The author is a creationist, not a believer in the postulates of evolution. And he is a literalist as regards the record in the opening chapters of the first book in the Sacred Canon. He accepts the episodes narrated in Genesis 1 to 3 as actualities, not as legendary myths. This will give point to the positions hereafter set forth, and avoid misunderstandings or ambiguity as to the basis of his statements.

4. SCOPE OF THE GROUND COVERED.
First, the Biblical evidence will be studied in depth, the Old Testament evidence, and then the New. Next, the historical origin and development and worldwide spread of Immortal-Soulism will be examined, and its penetrations into the Jewish and Christian faiths presented with documentation. And then the conflict of the centuries between the three schools of the theological trilemma that developed will be set forth with covering data —the conflict over the nature and destiny of man as it advanced across the Christian Era. And finally will come the revival of Conditionalism in increasing volume and tempo during the past three hundred years. Thus the sweep of the ages will be brought into view, and the over-all picture set before us. That is the conspectus of the Conditionalist Faith volumes. But before proceeding we should first define the key terms, "Conditionalism" and "Conditionalist," appearing in the title and thereafter throughout this work.

5. BASIC DEFINITION OF CONDITIONALISM.
Conditionalism is the Christian doctrine that immortality, or everlasting life, is offered to man only upon God's terms and conditions. Immortal-Soulism, on the other hand, holds that man was created with a soul, which has a separate existence from the body, and that it is innately and indefensibly immortal. Conditionalists believe that the man who does not accept God's conditions for life will be ultimately deprived of life, totally destroyed. Immortal-Soulists, on the other hand, believe that the man who disobeys God and persists in his rebellion will be cast into an eternally burning hell-fire, where he will be tormented forever, since his soul cannot die.

Conditionalists believe that at the death that meets all mankind, good and bad alike, man rests in the grave until the resurrection, when

all men will be raised, some to life everlasting and some to receive their punishment. During the interim they believe man is unconscious of the passing of time and knows nothing of events occurring on earth. Immortal-Soulists believe that at death man goes to some place of conscious existence. Some believe that all men go at once to their eternal reward or punishment, the good to Heaven and the bad to Hell.

Others believe that some at least go to Purgatory, because they are not yet good enough for Heaven or bad enough for Hell. Here they are allowed to suffer for a time to purge them of their remaining sins, and then they are admitted to Heaven. Still others believe that there is no Hell, and all men will eventually reach the abode of bliss.

Consistency and Obvious Soundness of Conditionalism
The key to the problem of life, death, and human destiny, as held by the conflicting schools of Conditionalism and Immortal-Soulism, is obviously to be found in the Biblical story of man's creation and fall, and his redemption provided in Christ. Adam and Eve went tragically astray. Yielding to the tempter's enticing promise, they stifled the voice of God. The allurement of superior wisdom, sensuous enjoyment, and the glamour of supposedly natural, inherent immortality to be enjoyed in disobedience) led them swiftly and inexorably into the way of death.

As a result all seemed hopelessly lost. But unexpectedly, hope was proffered to distraught man. All might yet be recovered. Men might still find their way back to God and their lost estate, with Paradise and life regained through a Redeemer. Confession, faith, obedience, and resistance to temptation marked out the road back to the way of life. God would completely save contrite sinners who love, serve, and obey Him.

A. Adam's Potential For Immortality Was Conditional.

Here is God's good news: Although man was not created unconditionally immortal, and is not today born immortal, yet he may become so—if he follows the provisions of God. According to the unfailing promise of the Almighty, he may require an immortality beyond the reach of death and time and destruction. That is the high privilege to be granted to the righteous—a favor conferred on the penitent believer.

But it is always conditional. The righteous will live again, forever; but the impenitent will finally be destroyed— likewise forever. Life is thereby conditional. These are the final endings of the two ways of life and death. That is the essence of Conditionalism, or Conditional Immortality. And such is the picture that grows increasingly clear and luminous in the dawning light of the Genesis introduction to the Old Testament.

So long as Adam remained in the Garden he was allowed to eat of the fruit of the tree of life. But, as mentioned, his potential for immortality was conditional. When once he made a breach in God's protective and enabling conditions, he became subject to the death penalty. The primal pair was created "very good"—with a view to immortality: But they were not imperishable! They did not have an inherent, natural, and indefeasible immortality—that is, incapable of being annulled or made void.

It was indeed possible for Adam not to die. The possibility of immortality was within his reach. But he forfeited it. And holiness still comes by an act of free choice or decision, with death as the sequel to willful transgression. So immortality for Adam was clearly relative, or conditional, and the sin of disobedience made him mortal— subject to death and destined to die.

2. CONDITIONALISM HARMONIZES DIVINE GOODNESS WITH HUMAN FREEDOM. Conditionalism provides a synthesis that coordinates the various doctrines of the gospel. The truth of Conditionalism is founded on positive Biblical declarations, not on negatives and inferences. Negations and inferences not to mention parables or figurative or symbolic expressions—can never be a safe or satisfying foundation for any doctrine, much less a system of fundamental doctrine. The Creator gave man existence and offered him immortality. Moral reasoning likewise favors the hypothesis of attainable or conditional immortality. And every moral being is subject to certain conditions of existence. Thus Moses said: "I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil" (Deuteronomy 30:15).

Again, this law "is your life: and through this thing ye shall prolong your days" (Deuteronomy 32:47). "But if thine heart turn away . . . ; ye shall surely perish, ... ye shall not prolong your days" (Deuteronomy 30:17, 18). **[1]**

Thus it is that the doctrine of Conditionalism reconciles and harmonizes divine goodness with human freedom. Compulsory immortalization of the wicked would be unworthy of the goodness and power of God, and tragic to the human recipient. Conditionalism is a return to the primitive gospel—the gospel of Eden. And it is making marked gains in advocates, as attested by the evidence set forth in volume 2.

The tremendous truth of "life only through the redemptive work of Christ" throws a flood of light upon the whole scope and system of revealed truth. It makes, as it were, a new book of the Bible. The gospel promise in Eden becomes luminous. The types and shadows of the Old Testament, and its sanctuary system and services, take on a meaning not before observable. And the moral law, which in its negative and prohibitory form failed to "make the comers thereunto perfect" (Hebrews 10:1), much less to give them spiritual life, takes in its higher spiritual meaning under the gospel. All is expressed in the one word "love"—love as the source and essence of spiritual recovery and everlasting life. That is the larger picture. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only be gotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). - That is the heart of the gospel, the essence of revelation, the hope of man.

1. Deuteronomy 4:40; 5:33; 6:2, 24; Psalm 21:4; 94:23; Proverbs 3:1, 2, 16; 9:11. "The fear of the Lord prolongs days; but the years of the wicked shall be shortened" (Proverbs 10:27).

3. CONDITIONALISM ATTESTED BIBLICALLY, LOGICALLY, HISTORICALLY.

This, then, is our statement of purpose: Evidence will be submitted to support the contention that Conditionalism is (1) sound Biblically, both in the English rendering and even more so in the original Hebrew and Greek phraseology. It is (2) sound according to the inexorable canons of logic. And it is (3) sound according to the unimpeachable testimony of history.

It was designed by God for man; lost through the historic deception visited on the race by Satan in Eden; and uniformly cherished by God's ancient chosen people until shortly before the time of Christ. And when Immortal- Soulism was adopted from Greek Platonism by the Alexandrian wing of the Jews, it was chiefly through Philo. But Conditionalism was maintained by Christ and the apostles, and sustained by the Apostolic Fathers and the earliest of the Ante-Nicene Fathers—and on with a continuing line for centuries, as we shall see.

On the contrary, Immortal-Soulism was not adopted in Christian thought until certain North African Platonic Church Father-philosophers espoused it after nearly two hundred years of the Christian Era had passed. But this segment, split in the subsequent century into two antagonistic schools, divided over Eternal Torment and Universal Restoration.

Thus by A.D. 400 the Christian Church was divided into three distinct schools of eschatology—creating an astonishing theological trilemma that has persisted ever since. Though not widely held, Conditionalism persisted through the Middle Ages and underwent a distinct revival, beginning with the sixteenth-century Protestant Reformation. From then on, despite the preponderant Catholic and majority Protestant views, Conditionalism has gained steadily. And now, as never before, it is receiving attention and winning adherents among scholars of all faiths. That, in a word, is a thumbnail historical preview of the ground to be traversed. No position could be better sustained, as the facts to be surveyed will disclose.

B. Eternal Torment Involves Pagan "Dualism" Postulate

There is yet another angle to this question that must not be overlooked. The postulate of an eternal Paradise and an eternally coexistent Hell—introduced from Platonism into the religious thinking of sections of Judaism and Christianity —presupposes the metaphysical Dualism of two eternal and in compatible principles (that always were and always will be), which notion sprang out of pagan ethnic religions, such as Persian Zoroastrianism. But such a concept is utterly foreign to Scripture, both Old Testament and New alike. Contingent evil may be explained by the positive exercise of liberty and will. But unless one accepts the dogma of an eternal Dualism, the presence of evil involves a beginning, and consequently and logically and inevitably calls for an end. Eternal sinning and eternal suffering are contrary to the testimony of Holy Writto hold that the final result of the wrong exercise of human freedom means the perpetual revolt and eternal suffering of a given number of creatures, automatically involves the notion of the eternal duration of an evil principle and a state of unending rebellion against God and good — and thus an infinity of evil as eternally opposed to the infinity of good.

But to hold such a theory is to inject an alien pagan Dualism into the true concept of the Supreme Being. According to Scripture there is only one Absolute, Infinite, Omnipotent One —God, the eternal I AM, "Who only hath immortality" (1 Tim. 6:16). And the day is verily coming, according to Holy Writ, when He will be "all in all" (1 Corinthians 15:28). Opposition will have ceased and passed forever.

The deducible conclusion from such an inspired postulate is that of the end, or ultimate extinction, of the devil and the principle of evil, and of all who persist in following him. When God is "all in all" sin and death will be no more, and there will be no place for any beings, celestial or human, who are without right moral relation to God. The concept of the Eternal Torment of the wicked involves a shocking calumny against both the justice and the very nature of God, as revolting upon mature thought as it is dangerous and un-Biblical. And the dogma of indefeasible immortality for man is to assign to the soul the impossibility of neither beginning nor end, such - as the Neoplatonic Christian philosopher, Origen of Alexandria, held, which is perilously akin to pantheism, the original source of this perverted concept. **[2]**

As might be assumed, Old Testament eschatology is simple, logical, and majestic, without a single element detrimental to the loftiest concepts of Deity and the divine philosophy of history, and with nothing to revolt the moral senses—nothing of the weird extravagances replete in pagan speculation and myth. And the New Testament evidence only intensifies this noble view.

2. See Historical Section, Part IV, pages 969-977.

Man Created in the Image of God

We begin our Biblical survey with Genesis. It is the bed rock upon which all subsequent revelation rests, and is foundational to all that follows thereafter. We shall therefore search into the all-inclusive declarations of Genesis 1 to 3 with considerable detail, for this is the core, yes, the throbbing heart of all that follows in the conflict over the destiny of man.

A. Introductory Survey of Record of Creation

According to the uniform testimony of Sacred Scripture, the heaven and the earth with its inhabitants, were brought into being by fiat creation: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Genesis 1:1). "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth" (Psalm 33:6). "For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast" (v. 9).

The first chapter of Genesis describes the creation of living creatures after the earth and the vegetation had been set in order:

"God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. And God created great whales, and every living creature that moves, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that it was good. . . . And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: arid it was so. And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, . . . and every thing that creeps upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that it was good. And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our like ness. ... So God created man in his own image . . . ; male and female created he them" (vs. 20-27).

Chapter two recapitulates the story of creation with additional details: "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" (v. 7). "And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food" (v. 9). "And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air" (v. 19).

In this recital three expressions call for special notice at the very beginning of our survey, "God created man in his own image," "man became a living soul," and "breath of life."

B. Creation in "image of God" Not a Valid Argument

1. "IMAGE OF GOD" DOES NOT CONNOTE "IMMORTALITY" FOR MAN.

The contention is frequently put forth that man possesses natural, innate, and really indefeasible immortality because of the phrase appearing in Genesis 1:27—"God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him." There are, in fact, five such declarations in the Inspired Chronicle:

"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness" (Genesis 1:26).

"And God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him" (v. 27, twice). "God created man, in the likeness of God made he him" (chap. 5:1).

"In the image of God made he man" (chap. 9:6).

These texts do not, of course, state in what respect God created man in His own image. That specification is left undefined. However, it is a recognized principle of sound exegesis that the certain must not be interpreted in terms of the uncertain. Nor should violence be done to the preponderant witness of Scripture or even to the logical demands of reason.

An inference might possibly be drawn here as to the immortality of man—if this one expression stood alone. But if Adam and all of his descendants are immortal by creation, and therefore by nature, then surely some hint to this effect should be found in this initial narrative, or at least somewhere within the entire range of Biblical writings, which are spread over some fifteen hundred years, and include prophets and apostles, and even embrace the witness of Jesus Christ Himself. But immortality, Scripture insists, is an attribute restricted to God

alone. He "is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality" (1 Tim. 6:15, 16).

2. NO VALID REASON FOR SINGLING OUT IMMORTALITY

But creation in the divine "likeness," or "image" (Genesis 1:26) —repeated in the record for emphasis—is no more an evidence of man's Innate Immortality than of his eternal pre-existence, omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence, or any other strictly divine attribute. And none of these other attributes have been ascribed to man, even in his pristine sinlessness in Eden. That God made man for immortality is clear. Beyond that sound and safe position we are not justified in going.

There is no valid reason, then, why immortality alone should be singled out as the one unique characteristic intended by the phrase "image of God." Genesis 1:26 and 5:1 also speak of man's being created in the "likeness" of God. This like ness to God included a moral character not shared by the brute creation over which man was given dominion. But whatever the precise nature of that original "likeness." it was marred by man's disobedience, during which tragic experience his original purity and position were marred or lost.

Man in his sinful condition cannot claim the full benefit of this original endowment, whatever it may have included. But, we repeat, the record nowhere states that this included immortality. We must therefore conclude that creation in the divine "image," or "likeness," no more proves man's immortality than it proves his eternal pre-existence, omniscience, omnipotence, or possession of any other exclusively divine attribute. God made man for immortality. That is beyond reason able challenge. Let us test this out by the same canons of logic invoked. Let us visualize it by putting it in syllogistic form.

3. FUNDAMENTAL FALLACY REVEALED BY PARALLEL SYLLOGISMS

As to the fundamental fallacy involved in this foray into logic, in the contention noted, the argument may be fairly set forth, in syllogistic form, thus: Major Premise: God is immortal (1 Tim. 1:17) Minor Premise: Man was created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27)

CONCLUSION:

Therefore man is immortal. But such a plausible yet specious deduction, based on this actually misleading syllogism, is completely quashed by a paralleling syllogism that exposes the inherent fallacy of such unsound reasoning. Note it:

1. God is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent:
2. Man was made in the image of God:
3. Therefore man is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent.

Obviously, the argument from logic breaks down under the impact of this logical parallelism, as well as the contravening testimony of Scripture. We consequently maintain that there is no sound logical basis, much less Biblical foundation, for asserting that in creating

man "in his own image" God bestowed on him the one distinctive attribute of immortality alone, but not the other prerogatives of Deity—unless God were to so state in His Word. This He has not done. One cannot logically insist, then, on singling out immortality, when by common consent it is recognized that man does not possess the other inseparable characteristics restricted to Deity. Personality, dominion over the animal creation, and free moral agency? Yes; for these are declared, but not natural immortality. (The technical arguments will be presented separately.) Man was driven out of the Garden, and cherubim and flaming sword were set up to prevent access to the indispensable tree of life—"lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever" (Genesis 3:22). Thus the "image of God" argument collapses by default.

C. "Living Soul" Does Not Connote Immortality

Another expression concerning man's creation, that is like wise often invoked to sustain Immortal-Soulism, is the intriguing term "living soul." Here is the familiar text cited: "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Genesis 2:7).

The fact that Scripture declares that man became a "living soul" is persistently cited by some as establishing man's possession of inherent immortality. But while man became a living soul, he did not thereby automatically become an immortal soul, or being. The same Hebrew term, "living soul," is applied to the lower animals. In fact, nephesh (soul) is four times applied to the lower animals before it is used of man—in Genesis 1:20, 21, 24. 30. And out of the first thirteen usages in Genesis, nephesh is nine times used of the lower animals.

Thus the expression "living soul," as applied to Adam, does not thereby prove that he was endowed with immortality when he was created. If it does, then the animals were like wise invested with immortality, for they were also called "living souls" (Genesis 1:20)—which all will admit unquestionably 'goes too far. The obvious difference between a "living soul" and a lifeless soul is, of course, that the one has life, whereas other does not. The term "living soul," then, actually implies mortality, for the word "soul" is also applied to men who are dead.

1. LIVING SOUL NOT A SEPARATE ENTITY

Further, God did not take a separately "living soul" and install it in a lifeless body—a tenant, as it were, a separate entity distinct from it. It was by the divine inbreathing of the "breath of life" into the lifeless body that
man became a living soul, a single entity, an inseparable unit, a unique individuals. The heart began to beat, the blood to circulate, the brain to think, and all the processes of life sprang into action. In death the process is simply reversed —the life-giving breath is withdrawn, the heart ceases to beat, the circulation of the blood stops, the(mind)ceases to function, and all the vital processes end. The organism begins to disintegrate, and the body returns to the dust—the same lifeless condition whence it came. The individual is dead.

2. INNATE DEATHLESSNESS NOT PART OF ORIGINAL ENDOW

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2. INNATE DEATHLESSNESS NOT PART OF ORIGINAL ENDOWMENT

Inasmuch as God declared that after his transgression man was destined to return unto dust (Genesis 3:19), it is crystal clear that not only was he not immortal then but that up to that point immortality had not been assured him. More over, that he was not as yet

immortal is likewise shown by his expulsion from the Garden—"lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever" (Genesis 3:22). The term "living soul" is therefore clearly not to be equated with immortal soul—an expression never once occur ring in Scripture. This fact is unassailable.

It must be obvious, then, that Genesis 2:7 does not countenance the assumption of innate deathlessness as an original endowment of man's nature, nor does the creation story as a whole. Adam was simply created a candidate for immortality, which was to be conferred upon him upon the fulfilment of conditions. Hundreds of outstanding Bible students of all faiths, spread over the centuries, attest that there is not a single passage in the Bible in which man, in his earthly life, is spoken of as immortal, either as a whole, or in any part of his being. (These are discussed in volume 2.)

But in addition to this negative aspect of omission, the inspired record of creation contains positive evidence of man's is significant to note that nephesh is used, in contrast, of man as actually dead and this in thirteen passages: "The dead, five times (Leviticus 19:28; 21:1; 22:4; Numbers 5:2; 6:11); “dead body” three times (Numbers
9:6 7, 10); and "body " five times (Leviticus 21:11; Numbers 6:6; 19:11, 13; Haggai 2:13) a total of thirteen of such significant usages.

But in addition to this negative aspect of omission, the inspired record of creation contains positive evidence of man's candidacy only for immortality in the original threat of death in case of disobedience, and finally in the doom of death subsequently pronounced in Eden. Man was not created immortal, but only a candidate for immortality.

D. “Breath of Life” Equated With "Spirit" and “Spirit of God"

The expression "breath of life," in Genesis 2:7—elsewhere called the "breath of the Lord" and "breath of the Almighty"—is frequently equated with "spirit," and "spirit of God." Thus in Job: "If he set his heart upon man, if he gather unto himself his SPIRIT [ruach] and his BREATH [neshamah]; all flesh shall perish [expire] together, and man shall turn again unto dust" (Job 34:14, 15).

1. "BREATH"—"BREATH OF GOD"—"SPIRIT"—"SPIRIT OF GOD."

The "breath of life" is elsewhere called God's gift: "Thus saith God the Lord, he that created the heavens . . . ; he
that spread forth the earth . . . ; he that gives BREATH [neshamah] unto the people upon it, and SPIRIT [ruach] to them that walk therein" (Isaiah 42:5). It is his "breath" that gives life to man: "The Spirit [ruach] of God hath made me, and the breath [neshamah] of the Almighty hath given me life" (Job Life is consequently dependent upon this "breath." "All the while my BREATH [neshamah] is in me, and the SPIRIT [ruach] of God is in my nostrils" (Job 27:3). But possession of the "breath of life" does not in itself confer immortality, for we read that at the Flood "all flesh died . . . , and every man: all in whose nostrils was the BREATH of life [Hebrews nishmath ruach chayyim, "breath of the spirit of life"]" (Genesis 7:21, 22).

In the Hebrew there are two words for breath—neshamah, and more commonly ruach.

2. "BREATH OF LIFE," "SPIRIT OF LIFE"—SAME PRINCIPLE OF LIFE.

That the "breath of life" of Genesis 2:7 that God In general, they are used interchangeably for "breath" and
"spirit." thus breathed into man's nostrils is identical with the "spirit" that God gave, is seen from the reversal of the creation process recorded in Ecclesiastes 12:7—"Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the SPIRIT [ruach] return unto God who gave it."

Breath and spirit obviously are one and the same principle of life. This fact is enforced by the striking principle of parallelism in Hebrew literature. Here verses comprising two clauses are constantly used, in which the second clause is the repetition of the thought of the first clause, only in different language. Thus: "All the while my BREATH [neshamah] is in me, and the SPIRIT [ruach] of God is in my nostrils" (Job 27:3).

And again, in describing death, Job says, "If he [God] gather unto himself his SPIRIT [ruach] and his BREATH [neshamah]; all flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again unto dust" (Job 34:14, 15). Similarly in Ezekiel's vision of the dry bones, the life that had vanished would be restored when God would "cause BREATH [spirit, ruach] to enter into you, and ye shall live" (Ezekiel 37:5). And He reiterates: "And I will . . . bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put BREATH [spirit, ruach] in you, and ye shall live" (v. 6). Then, repeating His promise that He would bring them out of their graves, He promises, "and shall put my SPIRIT [ruach] in you, and ye shall live" (v. 14).

3. "SPIRIT," OR "BREATH," NEVER IDENTIFIED WITH SOUL

In conformity with this, the psalmist David at the prospect of death committed his spirit into the safekeeping of God—"Into thine hand

I commit my SPIRIT [ruach]: thou hast redeemed me" (Psalm 31:5). And Jesus Himself used these very same words: "Father, into thy hands I commend my SPIRIT [Gr. pneuma]: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost" (Luke 23:46). And it should be noted that while Scripture identifies, or equates, "breath of life" with "spirit," spirit is not once identified with soul. That is significant, and should not be forgotten.

Thus God is called "the God of the SPIRITS [plural of Hebrews ruach] of all flesh" (Numbers 16:22: 27:16, Cf. Luke23:46 "Father, into thy hands I commend my SPIRIT [Greeek, pneuma]: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost [expired, or breathed His last]."

4. POSSESSORS OF "BREATH OF LIFE" SUBJECT TO DEATH

It is to be particularly observed that having the "breath of life" is never said to make its possessor deathless, or immortal. This is clearly seen from the following texts:

"And, behold, I [God], even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh [every kind of being], wherein is the BREATH [ruach] of life [chayyim, plural for all kinds and manifestations], from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die [cease to breathe, expire]" (Genesis 6:17).

"They [Noah and his family], and every beast after his kind, and all the cattle after their kind, and every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth after his kind, and every fowl after his kind, every bird of every sort.

And they went in unto Noah into the ark, two and two of all flesh, wherein is the BREATH [ruach] of life" (Genesis 7:14, 15).

This "breath of life," given by God to man at his formation, returns to God at death (Eccl. 12:7). Of the Flood, the record is:

"And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man: ALL in whose nostrils was the BREATH [neshamah] of life [R.V., "breath of the spirit of life of all that was in the dry land, died [ceased to breathe]" (Genesis 7:21, 22)

It therefore follows that man does not possess immortality because he possesses the breath, or spirit, of life—for it may be possessed by him for time only and not for eternity. It may be separated from man forever.

E. Clarifying Distinctions Between Soul and Spirit

The relationships, distinctions, and contrasts between "spirit" and "soul" can be seen from Genesis 2:7. The inbreathing of the "breath [or "spirit"] of life" into the first human body-organism, made or constituted it a "living soul." Prior thereto the soul, as regards Adam, had no existence. The "man" Adam was fully made and complete in bodily form before he began to live, for "God formed man of the dust of the ground" (v. 7). Nothing was wanting to make him a "living" man or being, or entity or "living soul" but the "breath of life." When God breathed this into him, he then became a "living soul."

To these should be added, "And every living substance that I have made will I destroy ["blot out," margin] from off the face of the earth" (Genesis 7:4).

1. "SOUL" DEPENDENT UPON PRESENCE OF "SPIRIT."

As long as the "breath of life," or spirit, remains in man, the "soul" continues to be or live. But when the "spirit" departs, he is no longer a living soul. Hence, the existence of the soul, as produced by the presence of the spirit,
must always depend upon the continuance of that presence. In other words, with the reception of the SPIRIT [ruach], the SOUL [nephesh] comes into being and remains in being. And when the spirit is withdrawn, man thereupon ceases to be a living, sentient being. Thus the psalmist says, "His [man's] BREATH [ruach, spirit] goes forth, he returns to his earth [Hebrews 'adamah, ground or soil]; in that very day his thoughts perish" (Psalm
146:4).

2. SPIRIT AND SOUL HAVE SERIES OF CONTRASTS

"Spirit" and "soul" are therefore distinct and distinguishable. They constitute, essentially, cause and effect—connected but separate and distinct, coordinated but contrasting. Thus the "spirit" produced "life" in man, making him a "living soul," capable of thinking, feeling, and acting—and with moral responsibility. The soul is the living person or being himself, not a separate, independent "something." And it must never be forgotten that spirit and soul are never confused in Scripture, nor are they used interchangeably.

At death the “soul" (the man himself) goes to she'ol (the grave, gravedom, or the state of death), while the spirit goes back to God, from whom it originally came. That is totally different. Further, the soul sins (Ezekiel 18:4, 20). But that is not 'said of the spirit. In death the two are dissevered, and it requires a resurrection from death to another life to re-establish the dissevered connection.

3. "SPIRIT" RETURNS TO GOD WHO "GAVE IT."

Of the final disposition of the ruach (spirit, or breath), the Old Testament writers record: "Thou takes away their BREATH [ruach], they die, and return to their dust. Thou sends forth thy SPIRIT [ruach], they are created: and thou renews the face of the earth" (Psalm 104:29, 30). "His BREATH [ruach] goes forth, he returns to his earth [Hebrews 'adamah, ground or soil]" (Psalm 146:4). "There is no man that hath power over the SPIRIT [ruach] to retain the SPIRIT [ruach]; neither hath he power in the day of death" (Eccl. 8:8).

After describing man in advanced age—with its characteristic deterioration, followed by death itself (Ecclesiastes 12)— such figures are employed as, "the silver cord [spinal cord] be loosed, or the golden bowl [head or skull] be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain [failure of the heart]" (vs. 6, 7). The sage of Ecclesiastes next says: "Then shall the dust [by metonymy, put for body, made of dust] return to the earth as it was: and the SPIRIT [ruach, not nephesh] shall return unto God who gave it" (Eccl. 12:7).

4. TO "SAVE A SOUL" IS TO SAVE A MAN

The question also arises as to the meaning of "save a soul." It is simply is save what is the equivalent of a soul— the man himself. Man was made to have eternal life, but lost it by sin. He was to have continued on perpetually had Adam not sinned. Man dies the first death because Adam sinned. But he may be saved from, and avoid, the second death by redemption. Saving a soul, then, is saving a person from death; or, in other words, it is saving him unto life. That is the wonder of the gospel in operation.

5. BIBLICAL PORTRAYAL OF DEATH

Of Abraham's death it is written: "Then Abraham gave up the ghost [yielded up his spirit], and died in a good old age . . . ; and was gathered to his people [idiomatic euphemism for death and burial]. And his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah" (Genesis 25:8, 9).

Of Jacob's death and burial this is the record: "He [Jacob] . . . yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people."

"For his sons carried him into the land of Canaan, and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah" (Genesis 49:33; 50:13).

And of David's death, and Solomon's, it is written, "So David slept with his fathers [laid down to sleep], and was buried in the city of David" (1 Kings 2:10); "And Solomon slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David" (1 Kings 11:43).

Prohibition, Probation, Temptation, and Fall

A. One Prohibition Placed Upon Man in Eden

God brought forth a perfect world and -placed perfect creatures upon it. The record is: "God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good" (Genesis 1:31). After the vegetable and animal life were created, man, "the crown of creation," was brought into existence. He was a being worthy of his Creator, for he was made "in the image of God" (v. 27). And God created a companion for Adam—a helpmeet corresponding to him, bone of his bone, flesh of his flesh. They were innocent and perfect, and were free moral agents, capable of understanding righteousness, wisdom, justice, and moral obligation. But before they could be made eternally secure, their loyalty must be tested. Here is the Bible story:

"The Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil" (Genesis 2:8, 9).

"And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shall not

eat of it: for in the day that you eat thereof you shall surely die" (vs. 15-17).

Everything on earth was placed under man's control except one tree. The eating or even the touching of the fruit of that tree (Genesis 3:3) was the one prohibition placed upon Adam and Eve. The sinless pair were thus placed in a perfect environment, subjected to a simple basic test, and duly warned o£ the consequence o£ disobedience. A subject of the divine government, man was placed under the law of obedience as an indispensable condition of continuing welfare and existence. If he transgressed here he incurred guilt, and disaster would follow.

Adam might have been created powerless to transgress—a mere automaton. But without freedom of choice, obedience would have been forced, not based voluntarily on sovereign choice. There would then have been no essential development of character. Hence, perfect perpetual obedience was the condition of eternal happiness. This was the condition of perpetual access to the indispensable vigor imparted by the tree of life.

FIRST PARENTS PLACED ON PROBATION

Our first parents, as dwellers in Eden, were thus placed on probation. Their holy estate, and life itself, could be retained only on condition. The issue was clearly drawn. There was the tree of life in the Garden and the unequivocal statement of God concerning the tree of knowledge of good and evil, "In the day that thou eats thereof thou shall surely die." In effect God said, You may choose to obey or to disobey. Continued life in My domain is conditioned upon obedience. If you disobey, death will be the result. Thus the choices were clearly set forth, and the results—life or death.

B. Freedom of Will Is Moral Accountability

It is commonly recognized that God alone is infinite and absolute in liberty of will, purpose, and action. But the moral creatures of His earthly creation—that is, mankind—were also endowed by their Creator with freedom of will. They were free moral agents. And no loftier conception of creative power and purpose can be conceived. Man, the crown of creation, was brought into being with a view to exercising that will with freedom, though the liberty of the creature is necessarily but relative as compared with that of the Creator.

Therein lies the explanation of the origin of good and evil. The contingency or possibility of a fall is, of course, inherent in such a creative provision. And the essence of the Fall is, in reality, the abuse of that vested liberty. So sin is the consequence of this collision between the will of man and the will of God—the assertion of self over against God.

1. FREEDOM OF WILL Is ESSENCE OF BEING

Adam was neither an automaton nor an undeveloped newborn babe, but a mature man—a completely responsible being. He must make his own choices. Though created sinless, he had to develop a righteous and holy character. And character is developed through right and sovereign choices. There could be no virtue if there were no possibility of becoming vicious. And virtue must be attained for continued life and fellowship with God.

The only course that man was not free to take was that of never choosing. In fact, refusal of a free moral agent to make choice is impossible. Sooner or later choice must be made between truth and error, obedience and transgression. The fall of the creature, then, is a determinate choice or exercise of his own will in a direction contrary to God's will—the infinite and absolute will of God. It is the rebellion of a free moral agent. If this attitude persists, and no remedy is found, the result must eventually be the destruction of the rebellious sinner, for "the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). This point is vital, and justifies reiteration: The natural and inevitable consequence of such a life-and-death collision between the two wills is that the creature's will must ultimately cease to be. He must "perish" (John 3:16). Otherwise the Creator's will would no longer be absolute, but limited and negated by the creature's persisting defiance.

But man as a creature was brought into being for the right and free exercise of his will. Liberty is therefore the very basis of his existence. Indeed, it constitutes the essence of his being. Therefore the removal of such liberty means the destruction of his very being and the termination of his existence as a moral entity. And it is, of course, the creature that will ultimately be obliterated in a fatal collision of the two wills. Any other outcome would be unthinkable—for the continuance of a moral creature without liberty, or with his freedom run amuck, would be the continuance of something without justifiable purpose. The creature would be no longer worthy either of God or of continuance.

2. ENDLESS DEFIANCE WOULD THWART GOD

The endless existence of such defiance would be a contradiction of the root concept of the omnipotence and wisdom of God. There fore the logical consequence of the Fall will be the ultimate total extinction of the defiant creature formed to live in liberty. But he had

now chosen to misuse that liberty. His essence of being will be taken away, and will revert to nothingness, as God becomes "all in all" (1 Corinthians 15:28).

It is absurd and unthinkable to maintain, as some do, that God, the almighty Creator, would start something He could not stop.

But that golden day when God is "all in all" has not yet come to pass. Defiant creatures still exist. And while the Fall occurred back in Eden, evil by choice still persists. Human and angelic beings, good and evil, still exist and flout and defy God—along with Satan himself, the personification of sin. While man still exercises his freedom, he does not have all of his original liberties and privileges. But he is still held inescapably accountable for his decisions. For these he must give answer, and accept responsibility at the judgment bar of God. That is the logic of the case, and the Biblical principle at stake.

3. ULTIMATE DESTRUCTION FOR INCORRIGIBLE DEFIANCE

The free creature that sets himself up in conflict with God's will, cannot conceivably continue to exist forever as a free creature. There is obviously a limit, because God's liberty and power are infinite, as well as His goodness and justice. God has restricted, or repressed, His own complete liberty for a time, and imposed upon Himself certain restraints so as to leave room for the sinful creature's liberty until the close of humanity's period of probation.

But if such creature-defiance were to be continued eternally, such rebellion would thwart God's absolute liberty, love, and justice, which must ultimately fill the universe and all existence for all eternity to come. Ultimate and utter destruction of the incorrigibly defiant is therefore the logical and unavoidable consequence of the Fall. Such is the verdict of logic.

C. Temptation at Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil

At the very beginning of life's pathway in Eden, temptation confronted the first pair. Here is the Bible account: "Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat" (Genesis 3:1-6).

Eve was evidently passing through "the midst of the garden" when a remarkable talking serpent in the fruit- laden branches of the forbidden tree attracted her attention. Her answer to the serpent's intriguing question shows that she clearly understood God's prohibition and the penalty for disobedience. But the serpent flatly denied God's threat, "Ye shall not surely die," and continued seductively, "God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil."

The forbidden fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good

Eve was evidently passing through "the midst of the garden" when a remarkable talking serpent in the fruit- laden branches of the forbidden tree attracted her attention. Her answer to the serpent's intriguing question shows that she clearly understood God's prohibition and the penalty for disobedience. But the serpent flatly denied God's threat, "Ye shall not surely die," and continued seductively, "God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." The forbidden fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was doubtless suitable for food, for there was no poison in Paradise. It appealed to Eve's sense of beauty. And it commended itself to the intellect as a tree that, if true to its name, should surely impart wisdom—just as the tree of life imparted life. And this wisdom, according to the allurement of the "serpent," would lift man's insight to a parity with that of God.

Eve was thus assured that they would attain a more exalted sphere of existence, and enter into a broader area of knowledge—if only they would partake. The serpent was evidently ensconced in the tree, and retribution had not been visited upon it. And the serpent promised an unconditional immortality, whereas God's promise was conditional on obedience. Would they indeed progress in knowledge, and be gainers by violating the command of God? Would they actually become like God Himself?—and the attributes of God would, of course, include immortality, omniscience, et cetera, with all that such characteristics involve. That was the basic issue. That was the life-and-death question. Man's destiny was involved in the out come.

Eve, alas, was led to believe the serpent's words, and thereby to disbelieve and deny the word of God. First, touching the fruit, she did not die. Then she ate of it without immediate death. Then she led Adam to accept and eat. That is the tragic record.

D. Satan Himself the Undercover Tempter in Eden

It is difficult to conceive of Eve's holding converse with a grovelling snake, as we know it today, or giving heed to it. But we can understand her fascination with a radiant creature, appearing like an "angel of light" (2 Corinthians 11:14)—and apparently possessing supernatural knowledge, along with its disconcerting questions. Tradition has come to portray a slithering snake and a shining apple in connection with the Fall—the former based on a misconception; the latter a pure fabrication. Thus this tragic episode is made the butt of the jeers and jokes of the infidel and the target of the critic's attacks. But let us turn from all such trivia, as we reverently seek the truth. - The scene of this artful and crafty temptation in Eden was laid amid the glories of the significant trees of the Garden.

And the undercover tempter was none other than Satan him self, working through the medium of an enchanting "serpent" (Hebrews Nachash)—the name implying fascination or enchantment—evidently on the order of a saraph. The enchanting serpent of Eden was clearly not the writhing snake of today, now slithering along on its belly. It was then a creature of glorious beauty, more "subtil" (Hebrews 'aram, wise) than any other creature in Eden, possessing powers and capacities no longer enjoyed.

So this most attractive and intelligent of all creatures, then doubtless having wings, like the saraph, was the dazzling medium that attracted the attention of Eve and to which she paid such deference. But back of it was none other than the old "serpent" (2 Corinthians 11:3), here operating under a guise. After its cruel achievement, Satan's tool was cursed by God and then made to glide and spiral along on its belly (Genesis 3:14), and has ever since been a loathsome, writhing reptile. That was one of the secondary results of the Fall.

1. Nachash may be translated enchant, fascinate, bewitch, or as having occult powers of knowledge, or divination. It was something glorious and scintillating. See Genesis 44:5, 15: Leviticus 19:26; Deuteronomy 18:10; 2 Kings 17:17; 21:6; 2 Chronicles 33:6.

2. The fiery serpents, or burning ones of Numbers 21:6, 9, were reminders of the glorious celestial beings of Isaiah 6:2, nachash being virtually synonymous with faraph, indicating brilliance and fascination [Bullinger], The Companion Bible, on Numbers 21:6, 9, notes; cf. Isaiah 6:2, note. See also App. 19, pp. 24, 25).

3. The annals of antiquity reveal that in ancient times the serpent was always regarded with awe. As it had no eyelids—a transparent membrane taking the place of those movable veils—it was seemingly a creature with eyes always open. Accordingly it was considered the most vigilant and intelligent of all animals. In fact, the name dragon, a kind of serpent, means the one that sees, and was believed to see at night. Another recognized characteristic was that under an inoffensive appearance it often concealed a deadly venom. The Greek heralds, for instance, were symbolized by two serpents facing each other, signifying wisdom on both sides. And back in Egypt the gods and kings were always represented as having the uraeus, or coiled serpent, upon the head. In Greece, Pallas Athena, goddess of wisdom, wore a necklace of entwined serpents, sometimes with one at her feet.

E. Lucifer's Rebellion in Heaven Transferred to Earth

1. PRIDE AND JEALOUSY FOMENTED REBELLION IN HEAVEN.

Here let us go back in time. Bible students widely recognize that Isaiah 14:12-18 and Ezekiel 28:12-18 are Inspiration's portrayals of the origin, nature, and destiny of Satan. These passages tell us how Lucifer, the exalted light bearer, degenerated through sin into one who came to be called the devil (literally, slanderer) and Satan (the adversary). Created to be one of the covering cherubs, the highest and wisest of the angelic beings, Lucifer became "lifted up" because of his beauty and wisdom (Ezekiel 28:17).

Jealousy of God gripped his heart, and he determined to exalt his throne above his fellows, and to be like the Most High (Isaiah 14:13, 14). The Bible is explicit in teaching the personality of Satan and his part in effecting the fall of man. He himself is presented as a created being, likewise with power of choice, who took advantage of his liberty in order to bring about evil and to lead others into his own estrangement and rebellion.

Moved by jealousy and ambition, Lucifer fomented rebel lion in heaven, a third of the angels joining his defection (Revelation 12:4; Jude 6). But he was defeated and cast out of heaven (Revelation 12:7-10; Luke 10:18), with the "angels that sinned" (2 Peter 2:4), who were cast into "pits of darkness" (A.S.V.). Satan was driven from his "first estate" and made the aerial regions and the earth the scene of his subsequent relentless warfare against God and man (Ephesians 6:11, 12).

Church writers as early as Tertullian and Jerome so held. And this has also been a common understanding ever since the Middle Ages.

He became the "prince of the power of the air" (Ephesians 2:2), and has assumed the prince-ship or godship of this world (2 Corinthians 4:4; John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11), with malign power to tempt mankind. His cohorts embrace the evil "principalities" and "powers" and spiritual hosts of wickedness in high places (Ephesians 6:12). Lies, deception, force, cruelty, disease, suffering, and death are his malign weapons. Here is the factual record in the Apocalypse:

"And there was war in heaven: Michael [Christ] and his angels fought against the dragon [Satan]; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceives the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his [fallen] angels were cast out with him" (Revelation 12:7-9).

So in the ultimate the great controversy is between Christ and Satan, and will continue on without respite until Christ gains an eternal, annihilating victory over Satan and his followers. That is the destined outcome.

2. EDEN BECOMES THE NEW BATTLEGROUND

After the creation of man and his placement in Eden, Satan in his epochal temptation of man used a captivating, winged serpent of dazzling beauty, speaking through it to deceive and beguile Eve through the subtlety of his arguments (Genesis 3:1). In this way Satan secured the downfall of Adam, and thus of the race. But the covenant- promise subsequently made to Adam assures the ultimate destruction of Satan through the Seed of the woman (Genesis 3:15).

Satan then began his long and relentless warfare against God and man, with resort to every foul means and evil device. Cast out of his first estate, the devil operates as head of a vast host of rebel fallen angels, otherwise called wicked spirits, or demons (Matthew 7:22). This device was later destined to be developed into a master system of deception, to be covered in volume two. But Satan's power will be broken. That was assured by

Christ's triumphant death on the cross (John 12:31; 16:11). At our Lord's second advent Satan will be bound for a thousand years (Revelation 20:3, 7). Then, at their close, the devil will make his supreme and final effort to overthrow the kingdom of God (vs. 7-9).

But Satan's rebellion will end in failure. He will be utterly defeated and destroyed, together with his fallen angels and all the human race who have followed him. They will be cast at last into the "lake of fire and brimstone" (v. 10). (The popular notion, it should be injected, that Satan, with horns and hoofs and pitchfork, now reigns in "hell" is utterly un-Biblical.) Because of the vital bearing of Satan, his evil angels, and his basic deceptions on the fate of man, let us scrutinize the inspired recital still more closely.

3. LUCIFER: HIGHEST ANGEL BECOMES LOWEST DEVIL

According to Holy Writ the original fall took place in Heaven (Revelation 12:7-9), whence Lucifer, "son of the morning" or "day star" (Isaiah 14:12, margin), author and instigator of sin, fell from Heaven. The true secret story is revealed by inspiration through the prophet Isaiah, who discloses what Lucifer had said in his "heart":

"I will ascend into heaven [the councils of Heaven], I will exalt my throne above the stars of God [the angels, Job 38:7]: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation . . . : I will ascend above the heights . . . ; I will be like the most High" (Isaiah 14:13, 14).

He thus aspired to be like God in power and glory, but not in character. And of his malign work after his fall the inspired record further states that he is the one who has "made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof," with his evil machinations. And further, significantly, he "opened not the house of his prisoners [or, "did not let his prisoners loose homewards," margin]" (v. 17), who lie (sleep) in the prison house of death, evidently the grave.

Ezekiel states that this fallen celestial being was created (Ezekiel 28:13, 15), and hence was not eternally pre- existent. He had been one of the "anointed," the glorious covering cherub (v. 16), standing in the very presence of God. Cherubim (mentioned many times as attending the throne of Deity) were assigned to guard the gates of Eden. And cherubim were placed upon the mercy seat of the ark in the symbolic provisions of redemption in Old Testament times. Lucifer was clearly a superterrestrial being, the mightiest of the angels. The portrayal further reveals that before his fall, Lucifer was perfect in all his ways (v. 15), as well as in beauty (v. 12). This, of course, was before "iniquity ["perversity"]" took possession of his heart.

Satan became lifted up because of his superlative beauty and wisdom, and the splendor of his brightness (v. 17). In appearance he scintillated like a crown of jewels (v. 13). He was likewise a mighty musician (v. 13). So in these tremendous passages we have the inspired depiction of the author of sin and its beginnings in the universe. Sin actually began when Lucifer said, "I will"—in determining to usurp the place and prerogatives of God, and thus placing his will over against the will and government of God (Isaiah 14:12, 13). Sin was thence later projected into the newly established Edenic circle on earth.

In this chapter God chose the earthly "prince of Tyrus"—who sought to assume the prerogatives of God (Ezekiel 28:1, 2), and whose heart was lifted up because of his "wisdom" and his "riches," but who would be overthrown (vs. 3, 10)—to symbolize none other than Satan himself, under the contrasting term "king of Tyrus" (vs. 12, 13).

Satan's identity and presence there are attested by inspiration's telltale disclosure, "Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God" (Ezekiel 28:13). There he was disclosed as the same "shining one," with power to enchant, fascinate, and bewitch. Thus it was actually Satan who, through the medium of the serpent, beguiled Eve and overwhelmed Adam.

4. SATAN'S DUAL LIE HAD BUT SINGLE POINT

Satan's first utterance in Eden, made through the medium of the serpent, was, "Yea, hath God said?" In other words, Can it be that God hath said? It was ostensibly the asking of a question. But it was actually designed to elicit a concurring answer. The tempter was here impugning the veracity of God. He was challenging the divine declaration of the fact of the mortality of man. "YE SHALL NOT SURELY DIE" (Genesis 3:4) ;was Satan's initial lie to man. And Christ expressly declared that Satan (the "old serpent," and "devil") is the "father" of lies—first uttered in Eden. It was an adroit, ingenious approach. Said Jesus, "He [the devil] . . . abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it" (John 8:44).

Whatever Satan says in contradiction to God's word of truth is manifestly a lie. So in Genesis 3:4, when he said to our first parents, "Ye shall not surely die," the father of lies was manifestly and historically telling his first lie on earth, for God had just said to Adam and Eve. "Thou shall surely die" (Genesis 2:17)—if you transgress. Satan's declaration was consequently a direct, bald, unmitigated contradiction. By the insertion of the single negatory word "not" into God's declaration of truth, Satan perverted an immutable verity into a diabolical falsehood that has reverberated throughout all subsequent time.

But that was not all. Satan immediately added a second lie, likewise on the same "immortality" aspect of man's nature. It was: "Ye shall be as gods [that is, "as God," 'Elohim' (chap. 3:5). But according to inspiration, absolute and inalienable immortality is characteristic of, and belongs only to, God (I Tim. 6:16; cf.; 1:17). Man's immortality can be but relative and conditional, for it will be conferred, acquired, received. In the very logic of the case, Innate Immortality cannot be an inherent quality in any created or derived being. And man, as a creature, is no exception. His life is not innate or inalienable, but only and always acquired. Hence it may be brought to an end. It cannot be overstressed that only God has, absolute, primordial, indefeasible immortality. Consequently, any creature's arrogant claim to equality with God and His exclusive immortality is as groundless as it is presumptuous.

There is, of course, something extremely flattering to the pride of man in the idea of possessing a Godlike nature that is absolutely indestructible. But immortality is one of the most "majestic jewels" in the unique and solitary "diadem of Deity," as it has been impressively phrased. It is exclusively God's, for God is the "blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto" (1 Tim. 6:15, 16). There fore mans attempt to place the crown of immortality upon his own head is effrontery and made only at gravest peril. Satan's presumption never had greater audacity, nor human gullibility a more tragic example. Indeed, it took the death of the Son of God to demonstrate the heinousness of that original dual lie in Eden.

F. Essence of Fall Was Believing Satan's Lie

It cannot be overstressed that Satan's basic attack was on the veracity of the word of God as to the nature of man. That is why this entire episode of the "fall" is basic to our study of the issue, and that is why we dwell upon it. And the very fact that Satan's contention has been perpetuated primarily through all the major pagan religions and philosophies, and not through the long line of Hebrew prophets, is likewise of utmost significance. It was through pagan channels that Immortal-Soulism found its fateful way into certain major sections of Judaism and Christianity.

So the acceptance of Satan's misrepresentation of the words of God, and his bold denial of the Creator's declaration as to the mortality of man, became the epochal turning point of the race at the very dawn of human history. And never was Satan's astuteness more crafty than when he secured the well-nigh universal acceptance, in the pagan circles of antiquity, of his original lie in substitution for God's

truth, for—let it be repeated—the essence of the Fall consisted in believing Satan's lie instead of God's truth. And the contention, "Ye shall not surely die," first whispered into the ears of Eve within the confines of Paradise, has continued to echo on through all the diversified corridors of time to this very day.

In due time, in pagan antiquity, Satan secured the well-nigh worldwide acceptance of his declaration of the universal Innate Immortality of the soul. Only among God's ancient people, the Hebrews, to whom were committed the protective "oracles of God" (Romans 3:2), was it not accepted until shortly before the time of Christ, in the inter-Testament period, a period marked by grave departures. And then it was adopted only by a section of Jewry, chiefly in Alexandria, as we shall see, and with disastrous consequences.

The Gospel of Genesis 3:15 Proclaimed

A. The Doom of Death and the Hope of Life

Let us return to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. We left them eating of the forbidden fruit, their eyes blinded by the deception of Satan. Doubtless by the time the last of the fruit had been consumed, they began to realize that they had disobeyed their Creator. Cut off from the tree of life and doomed to death, Adam and Eve faced a future bleak with despair. The Bible describes their disillusionment and awakening to their condition: "And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons" (Genesis 3:7).

1. THE TERRORS OF DISOBEDIENCE

They were not only naked, they were afraid. God had threatened them with death if they partook of the reserved tree. And almost as if in echo to their thoughts "they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in
the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden" (Genesis 3:8).

But they soon discovered that running from God was use less, for God seemed determined to find them. The story continues:

"And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? And the man said, The woman whom thou gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat" (Genesis 3:9-13).

As the guilty pair stood frightened and ashamed before their Creator, He turned to the serpent, and through it cursed the tempter who caused the fall of His first earth children. As Adam and Eve listened they heard Him say: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shall bruise his heel" (Genesis 3:15).

2. THE FIRST GLIMMER OF HOPE

"Her seed." Adam and Eve had been commanded by God to multiply and replenish the earth. But so short a time had elapsed since their creation that they had as yet no children. If the "seed" of Eve was to crush the head of the serpent, then God did not intend to carry out His threat of death for a time, at least. Here was the first glimmer of hope. Some one of Eve's descendants apparently was to win a victory over the serpent. The darkness began to lift. This promise, dimly understood at first, was gradually expanded until the full plan of God for restoring guilty man to holiness was revealed to Adam's descendants.

B. Glorious Gospel Provisions Begin at Gates of Eden

The proclamation of the gospel of salvation, with its revelation of substitutionary atonement and pardon, and promise of restored life, and assurance of immortality, brought the light of hope again to man. God does not annul His laws nor abrogate His commands. Neither does He work contrary to them. But He does contravene the havoc wrought by in through introducing a new provision of love-born grace. He thus transforms and restores, and through His grace He brings a blessing out of disaster. That was the Edenic covenant of life and salvation made that fateful day. Hope sprang anew.

1. BECOMES FATHER OF RACE UNDER NEW PROBATION

This new dispensation of grace and mercy provided the second chance for man. It extended Adam's earthly life, made provision for regaining his lost innocency, and gave assurance of ultimate immortality for man. It enabled Adam to become the father of the human

race. But the fact that the life of the sinner was temporarily extended does not set aside the possibility of punishment for subsequent sins. They must be met. The "wages of sin" still continue to be "death" (Romans 6:23). Grace does not nullify the law and will of God.

2. TREE OF CALVARY BECOMES THIRD TREE OF EDEN

Man's redemption revolves around the third (as it may be called) of these three epochal trees of Eden—the tree of life, established for sustaining man's life throughout eternity; the testing tree of the knowledge of good and evil, used by Satan to accomplish man's ruin; and now the tree of Calvary (1 Peter 2:24; Acts 5:30; 10:39)—as the cross was significantly called —planted as it were at the very gates of Eden for man's redemption and the restoration of his forfeited life, to assure access again in the earth made new to the withdrawn tree of life (Revelation 2:7; 22:2).

So it was that man's original sin became the starting point for all the subsequent disclosures of God's unfathomable love and grace. And as by sin the man Adam lost his potential, or provisional, immortality, so by the Man Christ Jesus full provision has been made for its restoration. Thus the dismal doom of the death sentence upon Adam was changed to a glorious assurance of life—conditioned on the acceptance of the gospel provisions set forth. But the plan of redemption and restored immortality meant the traversing of the path of Gethsemane and Golgotha, with the shadows of the tomb to follow, for the Divine Substitute and Saviour of men. That was the price to be paid for the rescue of man from the doom of death.

3. PLACED ON PROBATION, GIVEN SECOND CHANCE

So it was that instead of letting the law of transgression, with its dire death penalty, take its wonted course, the Lord God Himself (Jehovah the Creator—Genesis 2:4) invoked the provision of probation, devised in the love, mercy, and wisdom of God before ever the earth came into being. Through this plan the second person of the Godhead would become man, take man's place, receive his penalty, and die in his stead (John 1:29). Thus the principle of substitution and vicarious atonement through the death of another was instituted, that man might be forgiven and restored—for "without shedding of blood is no remission" (Hebrews 9:22).

In the mind and covenant and provision of God, Christ the "Lamb of God" was "slain from the foundation of the world" (Revelation 13:8), thus providing lost and estranged man with his second chance, not after death but during his earthly lifetime. Christ's death met every requirement of law and justice, blended with grace and mercy, and so offered pardon, restoration, and life to lost man.

C. Promised Seed Is Master Key to Atonement Mysteries

The promised Seed of Genesis 3:15 is the master key that unlocks the divine revelation of redemption of the race. Every thing centers in and around this assurance of the Seed (Genesis 3:15; 12:7; 22:18; Psalm 89:3, 4; 2 Samuel 7:12). And the promised Seed was Christ, to come in the flesh [John 7:40-42; Acts 3:25-26; Romans 1:3; Galatians 3:16; 2 Timothy 2:8]: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ" (Galatians 3:16).

The sacrifice of Christ was penal (Galatians 3:13; 2 Corinthians 5:21); substitutional (Leviticus 1:4; Galatians 3:13; 2 Corinthians 5:21); voluntary (John 10:18); redemptive (1 Corinthians 6:20: Galatians 3:13; Ephesians 1:7); propitiatory (Romans 3:25); recanciliatory (2 Corinthians 5:18. 19; Colossians 1:21, 22); and efficacious (John 12:32, 33; Romans 5:9, 10; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Ephesians 2:13; Hebrews 9:11, 12, 26; 10:10-17; 1 John 1:7: Revelation 1:5).

1. "HIGHWAY OF THE SEED" BEGINS

This initial promise of the Seed, the Redeemer, involves the deepest mysteries of the atonement—Christ "made" to be "sin for us" (2 Corinthians 5:21), vicariously bearing our judgment, typified by the up lifted brazen serpent, made in the symbolic likeness of the fiery serpents that had brought death to Israel (Numbers 21:5-9; John 3:14, 15), just like the serpent in Eden. Even so was Christ to be lifted up. And here begins what has aptly been called the "Highway of the Seed," 3 stretching magnificently across the centuries—a chain of promises and prophecies concerning Christ, fulfilled through Abel, Seth, Noah, Shem, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah, David—and reaching to Immanuel-Christ. [Genesis 6:8-10; 9:26, 27; 12:1-4; 17:19-21; 28:10-14; 49:10; 2 Samuel 7:15-17; Matthew 1:1, 20-23; 1 John 3:8; John 12:31.]

2. CONFLICT OF THE AGES BEGINS

The Seed of the woman, in the prediction, would bruise, or crush, the serpent's head—head in Hebrew symbolism signifying the essence of the being. This was a promise of the ultimate destruction of Satan, a prediction that the very root of all evil would finally be destroyed by Christ. There, back in Eden, began the grim conflict of the ages between Christ and Satan—Satan being the "prince of the power of the air" (Ephesians 2:2), at the head of a host of fallen angels (Matthew 25:41)—evil spirits seeking possession

of living men, and simulating the dead through impersonating people who have died. This last feature will be noted later.

3. PERSONAL APPLICATION OF THE FALL TO US

But that which is of paramount importance to us today is the actual, incontestable, and universal fact of sin. And the paralleling fact that until and unless one is "born again," or regenerated spiritually, he is today in a state of enmity and rebellion against God. As a consequence, everlasting life is forfeit to us as verily as to Adam. Likewise excluded from Paradise, we are born into a world smitten with a curse, born of fallen progenitors, born under the sentence of death.

The Old Testament provides a prophetic biography of Christ in the flesh, listed here for those desiring to follow this through: Genesis 3:15; 12:3; 49:8-10; Isaiah 7:14; 9:6; 11:1-5; 2 Samuel 7; Micah 5:2; Daniel 9; Hosea 11:1; Isaiah 40:9-11; Malachi 3:1; Isaiah 42 and 53; Zechariah 11:13; 12:10; 13:7; Psalm 41:9; Exodus 12:46; Psalm 22 and 16; 68:18; 110:1; 118:22, 23.

But from this bleak prospect the gates of eternal glory open to repenting sinners today because of the promised "seed." It was this gracious grant of probationary time and opportunity that opened the way to eternal life restored, to be received through Christ (John 3:16; 2 Tim. 1:10).

D. "Coats of Skins" Typified Righteousness of Christ

Adam's transgression in violating the stipulated and revealed will of God, and thus stepping over the boundary line from obedience to disobedience, was sin. And the wages of sin is always death (Romans 6:23). Man had disobeyed the express command of God, and had lost his innocence and purity. He was now in rebellion against God, which condition resulted in a consciousness of alienation and separation. If man was not to perish, sin must be punished and the sinner restored to purity, obedience, and fellowship with God.

But his sin could only be covered by the righteous obedience of another, who alone could provide the requisite righteousness that would enable man, polluted by sin and estranged from God, to stand without alienation in His presence again.

1. DIVINE PROPITIATION PROVIDED

The Divine Record simply states that the Lord God (Jehovah, their Creator— Genesis 2:4) made "coats of skins and clothed them" (Genesis 3:21), thus for the first time typifying Christ Jesus, who is "made unto us wisdom, and righteousness" (1 Corinthians 1:30). These divinely provided garments replaced the man-made covering of fig leaves (Genesis 3:7), and made it possible for earth's first sinners to stand in God's presence again. [See Isaiah 61:10— "For he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness." And in Revelation 19:8 the garment for the saints, symbolizing righteousness, is called the "fine linen, which is the righteousness of saints."] These skins were probably from the animals offered up in sacrifice, as part of the symbolic worship of the sacrificial system then established, and as a type of divine propitiation soon to be revealed in greater fullness.

Thus man's Creator became his Redeemer. And as Bunyan well phrased it, the sinner was "shrouded" under the provided righteousness of Christ. [] It is also essential to note that salvation apart from righteousness, obedience, and sacrifice is unknown either in the Old Testament or in the New. God thus provided the requisite righteousness by the sacrifice in Christ.

2. DEEPEST MYSTERIES OF ATONEMENT UNFOLDED

The deepest mysteries of the atonement thus begin to appear—Christ becoming man's sin-bearer and his sin- offering, taking man's place and punishment, and providing for man's restoration. And the righteousness provided is none other than Christ Himself, who fully met in our stead and behalf every demand of the law, and is Himself "made unto us wisdom, and righteousness" (1 Corinthians 1:30). Or as the apostle Paul graphically puts it: "He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him"
(2 Corinthians 5:21).

E. Christ's Central Place in Gospel of Eden

1. BECOMES SON OF MAN TO RESTORE LOST MAN

The headship of the human race was vested, through creation, in the first, and now fallen, Adam. And full redemption from the ruin of the fall of man is brought about by the sinless, spotless Christ (1 Peter 1:19), the "second," or "last Adam" (1 Corinthians 15:45, 47)—Himself truly human yet truly divine, the one and only God-man.

Christ Himself in His own person was the divine medium and method of salvation. Thus it was that the Word, or Son of God, was made flesh (John 1:1-3, 14) in order to redeem man. "See Romans 3:26; 4:6; 10:4; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Phil. 3:9.

The Pivotal Point of All Sacred History, the Atoning Death of Christ Followed by His Triumphant Resurrection, Was the Pledge of the Resurrection and Immortalization of All the Redeemed of All Ages.

He was made flesh in order that He might suffer and die in man's stead (Hebrews 10:5; Psalm 40:6; Isaiah 42:1; Phil. 2:7; Romans 8:3). In Biblical phrasing He took upon Himself human nature "that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Hebrews 2:14, 15).

Through this act of amnesty Christ then and there identified Himself with man, not only for the time that He lived here among men but for all eternity. And time may be defined as that portion of eternity marked off for the creation, probation, and redemption of the human race and the final disposition of sin. Or, it may be called the great parenthesis between the eternity of the past and the eternity of the future, with Christ the central figure of both time and all eternity.

Eighty-seven times in the New Testament, Christ designated Himself as the "Son of man"—the first time in Matthew 8:20. This was His racial name, His human appellation as the representative man and Redeemer of the race (Luke 19:10), just as in the Old Testament He is frequently called the Son of David, in the line of the Seed. In other words, "Son of man" is primarily His human title, just as "Son of God" is His divine name. But through His incarnation He so completely identified Himself with the human race, as its Redeemer, that when He returns to earth the second time in glory He comes as the Son of man (Matthew 24:27-31; Luke 12:40). (In the Old Testament He so appears in Daniel 7:13.)

So it was that in due time Christ died for the sinner—in his stead. He became a curse for him, became sin for him, gave Himself for him, was made an offering and a sacrifice to God for him, redeemed him, justified him, saved him from wrath, purchased him by His own blood, reconciled him by His own death, craved him by His own life—and thereby provided for his forfeited life a restored life forevermore. It was a case of true and complete substitution, that the recipients of His salvation might receive His righteousness and partake, of His endless life (Hebrews 7:16). That is the wonder and the glory of the gospel of Genesis 3:15, enfolded in embryo in that first simple promise and prophecy.

2. ASSUMES HIS TRUE AND CENTRAL PLACE

Here, then, the gospel of Genesis begins—the inspired account of the beginnings of human redemption, progressively unfolding throughout the Book of God. The Bible is therefore simply the wondrous record of God's provision to restore the divine "image" that fallen man had lost, and to recover for him the immortality that had been forfeited. This purpose became the supreme object of the incarnation of the Son of God, leading to His atoning death, triumphant resurrection, and assured return. It is a revelation of supreme love beyond comparison and human comprehension.

Our mortal condition as members of a sinful race necessitates a new birth in order that we may be fitted for the life that shall never end. And as God "only hath immortality" (1 Tim. 6:16), the Deity as well as the humanity of the Saviour, as the One through whom alone this new life is obtained, is therefore basic. Hence the salvation that He offers is not a casual matter, or even a heavenly boon, but a prime necessity to be sought for earnestly and accepted gratefully.

Redemption is an act of grace in which Christ assumes His true and central place in the plan and provision of salvation. Thus not only His first coming but His second advent—with its attendant resurrection of the dead, final judgment, and bestowal of everlasting life—all come to assume their vital place in, the belief of the church both of Old Testament and of New Testament times. And all this stems from Genesis 3:15.

3. PROCESSES AND PROVISIONS OF REDEMPTION AND RESTORATION

The uniform testimony of both the Old and the New Testament is that the supreme object of redemption is to change man's fallen nature, not only from sin to holiness but from mortality to ultimate immortality—from a nature now perishable in all its parts to one that is to be incorruptible and destined to live forever.

As seen, this provision for the bestowal of everlasting life involved the incarnation of the Word, or Son of God, who was before all things and created all things (John 1:1-4, 10; Ephesians 3:9; Colossians 1:1.6, 17; Hebrews 1:2), but who became flesh (Hebrews 2:14; 1 Tim. 3:16), taking upon Himself our nature, "yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15). And as Christ, the Messiah, the Anointed One, He died on the cross as our atoning Sacrifice. He thence forth became the mighty mediator for man before the Father, thus uniting

grace and mercy with the justice and righteous ness of God, and so vindicating His divine law and government.

His divine nature is wondrously united with man's nature in the provision of regeneration, through the incoming and indwelling of the Holy Spirit, who is the "Spirit of Life" of none other than the Lord and Giver of life (Romans 8:2, 10). Thus it is that holiness and immortality are made available to the believer by the life, death, resurrection, and mediation of Jesus Christ (2 Tim. 1:10). Consequently, redemption from death to endless life depends on this union of humanity and divinity, first in Christ through His incarnation, and then in us through regeneration. The nature which has broken the law becomes united with the life and nature of the Giver, Upholder, and Keeper of the law. Thus sin's victims are snatched from the great destroyer's hand forevermore.

4. ENABLING PROVISIONS OF REDEMPTION

It was possible for Adam in his perfect state of sinlessness before the Fall to develop a righteous character by loyal obedience to

God's commands. But this he failed to do. Now, not only because of Adam's sin, but because of our own sins as well, our natures as well as his are fallen. We are not innocent as was Adam when created, and therefore cannot achieve righteousness by means of our own obedience, because we ourselves are powerless to obey. Our fallen natures must be transformed, and divine power obtained.

Christ came to provide both the requisite righteousness and the enabling power and grace. He lived amid temptation but without sin. He took our sins vicariously that He might first impute His righteousness to us to cover our past sins, and then impart His righteousness by making His enabling grace and power available to care for our present spiritual needs and deficiencies. That was the divine plan of redemption, as spelled out under the gospel, first initiated in Eden after the Fall.

The Penalty of Death for Disobedience

When God placed man in the Garden He told him plainly, "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Genesis 2:16, 17).

The message of God could hardly have been clearer. He declared that He would punish disobedience with death. This Adam and Eve understood full well, for Eve referred to the death threat when she parleyed with the serpent. And as intimated, it was doubtless fear of punishment that prompted the guilty pair to flee in terror when they heard God calling them in the Garden. Let us return to the frightened pair standing before their insulted Maker that fateful day in Eden.

A Second Chance Provided for the Sinner

1. A REPRIEVE GRANTED ADAM AND EVE

God has just cursed the serpent, and in doing so He has intimated to Adam and Eve that a reprieve has been granted—in fact, that a second chance is being offered them. This is no disavowal of God's original intention to punish disobedience with death. As we have already seen, this death penalty deserved by them had already been accepted by His Son, the second person of the Godhead. In this sense Christ was "slain from the foundation of the world" (Revelation 13:8). Provision for - paying the debt of sin was already made before God faced His erring creatures with their guilt.

Expelled From the Garden, Adam and Eve Were Cut Off From Access to the Tree of Life, and Faced the Terrifying Prospect of Death, as Forewarned by the Almighty.

And now God turns to man on probation, with his second chance before him, and sets forth the changed conditions of his life:

"Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shall bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy "wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shall not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of ii all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it was thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. . . .

"And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life" (Genesis 3:16-24).

2. SIGNIFICANCE OF PROBATION FOR RACE

"Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Thus God passed sentence on the sinners before Him. After a life of toil, sorrow, and care, dissolution back into dust would be the fate of every man on earth. Children would be born, generation would follow generation, but death would close the history of each life. The immediate cause for this changed condition of affairs was separation from the tree of life. God did not intend to have a race of immortal sinners on His newly created earth. So He withdrew the tree of life from man's access. And man be came mortal—subject to death. The potential immortality with which man was endowed at creation was withdrawn, and man looked forward to the end of life.

The entire human race, and each person born therein, was thus assured of a period of probation for testing, just as Adam had in the beginning. Salvation from sin is offered to all, and each may accept or reject it. This racial probation gave time for Satan to fully develop his plans and demonstrate his principles before the universe. And it also provided time for God to demonstrate, through the gift of His Son, how salvation may be attained and immortality received through the provisions of the gospel.

B. Adam Died Judicially on Day of Transgression

Perplexity is often expressed over the clause, "For in the day that thou eats thereof thou shalt surely die" (Genesis 2:17). The simple fact is that, judicially and implicitly, Adam did die on the day that he sinned. He thereupon became a mortal, dying creature. His doom was fixed, his fate sealed. He passed under the irrevocable sentence of death. His life was forfeit, and he began to die. Although he might live on for an hour, a week, a year (or 930 years, as Adam did—Genesis 5:5), it was but a respite under condemnation, a

delay, or stay, of execution. If, however, he were to live forever, there must be a rescue, a redemption, an act of amnesty and grace. Otherwise, the death debt incurred must be paid in full. He must in due time die. That is the fundamental point.

1. RHETORICAL FIGURE OF PROLEPSIS EMPLOYED
This warning of immediate death is held by many able Bible students to be an instance of what in rhetoric is called prolepsis—

an anticipation of that which is future as if it were already present. It is a common figure of speech. Thus, when one is falling over a precipice, has taken poison, or has committed a capital crime, he is often referred to as a "dead man"—even if he should live on for days, weeks, months, or even years. When the angel of death had smitten their first-born, the affrighted Egyptians cried out, "We be all dead men" (Exodus 12:33). When Aaron's rod budded in condemnation of the rebels, the Israelites exclaimed, "Behold, we die, we perish, we all perish" (Numbers 17:12). Even God Himself employed similar words in addressing the presumptuous Abimelech: "Behold, thou art but a dead man, for the woman which thou hast taken" (Genesis 20:3).

2. OTHER INSTANCES ARE NOT MISUNDERSTOOD
A strikingly similar expression occurred when Pharaoh said to Moses, "Get thee from me, take heed to thyself, see my face no more; for in that day thou sees my face thou shall die'^ (Exodus 10:28). Yet no one would think the king faithless to his word if, under sentence, Moses waited for some time for execution. Again, when Solomon gave charge to Shimei concerning the tenure of his forfeited life, he declared: "It shall be, that on the day thou goes out, and passes over the brook Kidron, thou shall know for certain that thou shalt surely die" (1 Kings 2:37). Yet none would contend that he must flee, be arrested, tried, and executed all on the same twenty-four hour day. Thus he exclaims, "Thy blood shall be upon thine own head." The intent is clear.

So, out of it all, one thing is sure: The execution of the Edenic sentence upon Adam, "Thou shalt surely die," would indicate anything rather than the thought that man was to live on in endless immortality. [In twenty other places the same term, "surely die," occurs, and all of them refer to literal death. See Genesis 20:7; 1 Samuel 22:16; 1 Kings 2:37, 42; Jeremiah 26:8; Ezekiel 3:18; 33:8, 14; etc.] Had there been no redemption, Adam would have utterly perished.

3. SANDS IN TIME'S HOURGLASS BEGIN FALLING
The death that God threatened actually began in Eden on the very day of transgression, as Adam came under sentence of death. When, after Adam's transgression, God declared to him, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shall thou return" (Genesis 3:19), He was but passing the sentence of which He had previously warned, "In the day that thou eats thereof thou shall surely die" (Genesis 2:17).

From that day preparation was under way for the ultimate execution of the sentence. On -that very day Adam was ejected from the Garden of Eden, where grew that life-giving tree of life, the eating of the fruit of which would have perpetuated obedient life forever. He was now cut off from the channel through which deathlessness was designed to flow to him. The sands in time's hourglass of existence had now begun to fall.

4. FINALITY OF DEATH IMPOSED NOT SPECIFIED
But as to the duration, or finality, of the death decreed for disobedience—whether it would be final and irrevocable, with no awakening; or, whether life would be restored through a resurrection, for final award or punishment—not one word was said in advance. That omission was surely designed, making it possible for God to bring forward at the appropriate time and circumstance the provision of grace through Christ that He had purposed before sin entered the world. But the sentence of death, whether the first natural death, or the final second death, was passed upon all men.

C. Encompassing Involvements of Death Penalty

Man, because of his sin, was now on his way to destruction. Without divine intervention he would have been doomed to return to the nothingness, or non being, whence the Creator had brought him into existence at creation. But divine mercy had already intervened. The promised Seed, or Saviour, was to come and exhaust thedeath penalty, and regain the lost life—eternal life—for man. The blow that in justice should fall on man was to fall on Christ. Death at the close o£ life's tenure, the return to dust, was to be simply a "sleep," from which all would be awakened by a resurrection from this initial, or "first," death.

God set His attested seal upon the gospel of the resurrection by raising Jesus from the dead—His resurrection becoming the pledge of our own in due course. Otherwise there would be no assurance, no tangible guarantee, of life beyond the grave. But the promise and provision of Christ, the Redeemer, provide that assurance. Thus the light of the radiant gospel of life was injected into the impenetrable darkness of death at the very gates of Eden.

1. "DEATH" EMBRACES TOTAL PUNISHMENT FOR SIN

Death was the total penalty that was forewarned upon Adam by God as punishment for that primal sin. All that God purposed to inflict upon Adam and his posterity because of transgression was comprehended within that single word "death." "In the day that thou eats thereof thou shalt surely die," was the solemn but all-inclusive decree (Genesis 2:17). That clearly meant complete loss of life, deprivation of being forfeiture of existence.

2. JUSTICE REQUIRES PENALTY BE UNDERSTOOD

Elemental justice requires that the penalty for a transgression be explicitly stated, so it may be unmistakably understood by all who may be involved. And in this instance that penalty is declared, according to the term "die," as just noted, to be loss of life, cessation of being and existence—not, as some later came to contend, eternal living existence in endless agony.

It would be a strange way of understanding a law, which requires the plainest and most direct words, that by death should be meant eternal life in misery and perpetual torment, as later advocated first in paganism, then in Jewry, and finally in a major segment of Christianity.

Christ must have suffered the very penalty to which sinning man was sentenced at the beginning, for Christ bore our sins. Consequently, an eternal life in misery can form no true part of the meaning of death (Romans 5:7, 8; 6:10; Hebrews 2:9). Christ did not endure Eternal Torment. He was raised the third day. The ultimate penalty for sins is the cancellation of life when the true objective has been lost (Ezekiel 18:4, 13, 18). And inasmuch as God gave life initially to the human race, He could by the same power withdraw that life if man sinned. And that is just what the death sentence means.

3. "SECOND DEATH" COMPLETES THE DEATH PENALTY

The initial death, at the end of the natural life (and which in the Bible is called a sleep), is a consequence of facial or universal sin. The first, or natural, death is not the penalty to be paid for our personal sins. Descendants are not punished for the sins of their ancestors, unless they persist in their ancestors' sins. The initial death that overtook Adam and Eve was not the end. The punitive death for unrepented sin is the second death, and does not come until after the second resurrection for the execution of judgment.

That will be a death of both soul and body, which involves final and irretrievable loss of the total life (Matthew 10:28; Malachi 4:1; Revelation 20:14). So man's first death is not the end; it is only the first, or natural death, which passed upon all men (Romans 5:12). The second death, which will bring about the completion of the death penalty, will be executed only upon the obdurately evil.

Let us consider it another way: The wicked die the first time in their sins, but the second time (after their resurrection, Revelation 20:5, 6), they die for their sins (Ezekiel 18:26). It is, appointed unto all men "once to die" (Hebrews 9:27). All die the first time because they became mortal as a result of Adam's transgression. In the matter of this first death men have no choice. But it is a matter of complete and inescapable choice as to whether we die the first death in our sins, or are saved and safe in Christ. For if we die in Christ, then the second death will have no power over us (Revelation 20:6). And the second death, which is eternal, can be averted by accepting Christ's provision of salvation.

4. "SECOND DEATH" IS LOSS OF LIFE, NOT CONTINUANCE.

We would stress this point, that the second death—for unrepented of and unpardoned sin—is not to be confounded with the first death, which all men, whether saved or lost, undergo alike as the children of Adam. This is often misunderstood.

The second death applies only to future punishment for the second death is the punishment for personal, unconfessed sin, just as everlasting life is the reward of individual righteousness, received through and in Christ.

Thus loss of life was the doom pronounced against sin. But this loss of life is not simply implied in Scripture. It is definitively stated to be the punishment determined— "The soul that sins, it shall die" (Ezekiel 18:4, 20; cf. 3:18). The Old Testament explicitly and repeatedly describes this loss of life, or existence, as the reversion of the organized being into its original elements—reduction to what it was before it was called into being. Here are a few of the less-known texts:

"The destruction of the transgressors and of the sinners shall be together, and they . . . shall be consumed" (Isaiah 1:28). "Prepare them for the day of slaughter" (Jeremiah 12:3). "The slain of the Lord shall be many" (Isaiah 66:16). "They shall go forth, and look upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed" (Isaiah 66:24). "He shall destroy them" (Psalm 28:5). "The transgressors shall be destroyed together: the end of the wicked shall be cut off" (Psalm 37:38). They shall be rooted "out of the land" (Psalm 52:5). "Let them be blotted out of the book of the living" (Psalm 69:28); et cetera.

Every clear-cut Old Testament declaration on the punishment of the wicked states it to be loss of life, not continuance — dissolution of life into its original elements, as though one had never been called into existence as an entity. And while the redeemed are to have life immortal which knows no end, the lost will succumb to the second death, which knows no awakening.

5. DOOM APPLIES TO MAN AS A WHOLE

God's sentence declared, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return" (Genesis 3:19). This pronouncement was more explicitly explained after man's transgression, as related to his person. But there is nothing in the context that minimizes or changes the meaning or force of the words or limits their all-inclusive application.

There is no hint of a distinction between body and soul in the application of Adam's destined doom. The whole man sinned. And the sentence appearing in the Inspired Record applies to man as a whole. Accordingly, as with the sentence so with its execution — the man, without redemption, would at death utterly and forever cease to live. Such would have been the final, tragic outcome had it not been for the divine plan and provision of salvation. This involves man's being brought back to life, through resurrection, for pronouncement of sentence based upon a just judgment, and then for final reward or punishment.

D. Supreme Argument Against Eternal Torment

1. DEATH PENALTY STEMS FROM LAW AND AUTHORITY

Punishment implies the existence of law. And law involves authority. But no law can have binding force unless it is but tressed by penalty for infraction. Moreover, punishment is inflicted upon the violator by the same authority from which the law proceeds. There can therefore be no legitimate penalty threatened, nor punishment inflicted, where there is no law or authority (Romans 5:13). But God, the Creator of man, had given an express command and warning to our forebears in Eden (Genesis 2:16, 17). And Adam and Eve had violated the explicit command and broken the declared law, or word, of God, and so had incurred the statutory penalty forewarned.

As we have seen, death—in the sense of forfeiture of life and extinction of being through withdrawal of life— was the stated penalty for infraction of the divine command. This is the uniform teaching of the Bible from cover to cover in all its multiple forms of statement—whether of doctrine, warning, statute, exhortation, promise, or prediction, and as amplified in parable, figure, and illustration. The uniform penalty in all forms is, "The soul that sins, it shall die" (Ezekiel 18:4, 20); or in the New Testament, "The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). Or, to change to one of the figures, the inevitable harvest from the sowing of the seed of sin is destruction (Matthew 13:30). The essence of it all is that "sin, when it is finished, brings forth death" (James 1:15).

2. QUESTION SETTLED AT HIGHEST LEVEL

We repeat, "death" means cessation of life, not eternal life in torment. Strange contention of some that to perish is to live on forever! That, of course, is a complete contradiction. Here is the supreme argument against the alien concept of the Eternal Torment of the sinner: If the death that threatened Adam were eternal torture, then it would have necessitated that our Saviour, as man's complete Substitute, must be tormented eternally in order to receive man's allotted punishment and pay his designated debt. But no one is prepared to contend that such is true as regards our Saviour.

If, on the contrary, the penalty of death is loss of life, as executed upon Christ on the cross, then Jesus must die by literally giving up His life in our stead, thus meeting the full demands of the law for our sins. And this is precisely what He did. That is consideration of the question at the highest level. That is the supreme and decisive evidence. Christ died, just as Adam was to die.

E. Sleep the Beautiful Euphemism for Death

1. FIRST A SLEEP, WITH RESURRECTION AWAKENING

Since the Bible states, "It is appointed unto [all] men once to die," and after death the "judgment" (Hebrews 9:27), the "first," or natural, death, is simply a temporary cessation of life, which the Bible pictures as a "sleep." The gospel makes provision for another life through the resurrection awakening—a second and eternal life for all who accept the gospel of Christ (2 Tim. 1:10) and are fitted for it. The same gospel also reveals the irrevocable "second death," from which there is a resurrection unto damnation for those who reject the gospel (John 5:28, 29), and no hope for those who lack fitness for immortality. All those who reject the sole means of salvation will be lost forever. There will be no immortal sinners. But let us examine the figure of "sleep."

2. IMPLICATIONS OF THE METAPHOR OF SLEEP

The Old Testament consistently speaks of death under this metaphor of "sleep"—like falling asleep at night. So this intermediate state,

between death and the resurrection, is for good and evil alike, and is thus likened to the hours of unconscious rest. The resurrection is compared to the experience of awakening to a new day. Death is repeatedly declared to be a deep, unconscious, unbroken sleep until the resurrection morn.

Thus in Holy Writ, "Man lies down, and rises not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep" (Job 14:12). The psalmist said, "Lighten mine eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death" (Psalm 13:3). And the prophet Daniel adds, "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake"—at the resurrection (Daniel 12:2). This is the unvarying testimony of the Old Testament. And the New Testament does not deviate from this in the slightest degree. Rather, it elaborates upon it.

Sleep, then, is a condition of suspended activity and unconscious rest. Thus the dead are repeatedly declared to be "at rest" (Job 3:17, 18; 17:16; Daniel 12:13; Revelation 14:13). And this intermediate state is defined as one of inactivity and silence (Psalm 6:5; cf. Revelation 14:13). The Hebrew concept of this unconscious sleep, in she'ol, or gravedom, is seen in such statements by the psalmist as:

"His breath goes forth, he returns to his earth [dust]; in that very day his thoughts perish" (Psalm 146:4). "In death [she'ol, the grave] there is no remembrance of thee" (Psalm 6:5). "The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence" (Psalm 115:17).

3. TIME OBLITERATED TO THE SLEEPER

Sleep obliterates the space, or span, between death and the resurrection. It has no perceptible passage of time. This Biblical concept of death as a sleep makes the Second Advent equally near to every generation and to every individual believer—to the first as verily as to the last. To both, our Lord is equally nigh, even at the door. Death, as a sleep, is not therefore a long, conscious, stretching blank of centuries or millenniums. A century is as short as a moment, a millennium as brief as the twinkling of an eye. The next conscious instant after falling asleep will be the day of redemption. Death is followed by rising, going to sleep by awakening.

Such a gracious provision, it is to be noted, robs death of its gloom and its sense and dread of long separation. Thus the twilight hour of death is succeeded, through the resurrection, by the dawn of eternal day for the righteous. But, alas, it is followed by an everlasting night of utter destruction for the wicked, after their resurrection for the execution of the judgment (Revelation 20:5, 6, 14, 15; 21:8).

4. "SLEEP" IS UNDEVIATING SYNONYM FOR "DEATH."

"Sleep" is consequently the common Biblical synonym for "death." Beginning with its initial application to Moses ("Behold, thou shall sleep with thy fathers," Deuteronomy 31:16), [That this meant Moses was to die is plainly stated in Deuteronomy 32:48-51. He died and was buried (Deuteronomy 34:5-7; Joshua 1:1, 2).] and then to David ("Thou shall sleep with his fathers," 2 Samuel 7:12), and Job ("Now shall I sleep in the dust; and thou shall seek me in the morning, but I shall not be," Job 7:21), we find that this beautiful euphemism runs like an unbroken thread all through the Old and New Testaments, ending with Peter's "since the fathers fell asleep" (2 Peter 3:4)."

This chosen synonym for death occurs no less than sixty-six times in seventeen books of the Sacred Canon, including it considered use by Jesus Himself (Matthew 9:24; Mark 5:39; Luke 8:52; John 11:11). These frequent occurrences are so important and significant, and impressive, that all Old Testament usages are tabulated here for reference, that the eye may quickly run down this meaningful tabulation. Thus the scope and weight of evidence quickly become apparent. The term, it will be observed, is used of good and evil alike—of Ahab as well as of David. Here are the texts:

Deuteronomy 31:16 —"Thou [Moses] shall sleep with thy fathers."
2 Samuel 7:12 —"Thou [David] shait sleep with thy fathers."
1 Kings 1:21 —"The king shall sleep with his fathers."
1 Kings 2:10 —"So David slept with his fathers."
1 Kings 11:21 —"David slept with his fathers."
1 Kings 11:43 —"Solomon slept with his fathers."
1 Kings 14:20 —"He [Jeroboam] slept with his fathers."
1 Kings 14:31 —"Rehoboam slept with his fathers."
1 Kings 15:8 —"Abijam slept with his fathers."
1 Kings 15:24 —"Asa slept with his fathers."
1 Kings 16:6 —"Baasha slept with his fathers."
1 Kings 16:28 —"Omri slept with his fathers."
1 Kings 22:40 —"Ahab slept with his fathers."

1 Kings 22:50 —"Jehoshaphat slept with his fathers."
2 Kings 8:24 —"Joram slept with his fathers."
2 Kings 10:35 —"Jehu slept with his fathers."
2 Kings 13:9 —"Jehoahaz slept with his fathers."
2 Kings 13:13 —"Joash slept with his fathers."
2 Kings 14:16 —"Jehoash slept with his fathers."
2 Kings 14:22 —"The king slept with his fathers."
2 Kings 14:29 —"Jeroboam slept with his fathers."
2 Kings 15:7 —"Azariah slept with his fathers."
2 Kings 15:22 —"Menahem slept with his fathers."
2 Kings 15:38 —"Jotham slept with his fathers."
2 Kings 16:20 —"Ahaz slept with his fathers."
2 Kings 20:21 —"Hezekiah slept with his fathers."
2 Kings 21:18 —"Manasseh slept with his fathers."
2 Kings 24:6 —"Jehoiakim slept with his fathers."
2 Chronicles 9:31 —"Solomon slept with his fathers."
2 Chronicles 12:16 —"Rehoboam slept with his fathers."
2 Chronicles 14:1 —"Abijah slept with his fathers."
2 Chronicles 16:13 —"Asa slept with his fathers."
2 Chronicles 21:1 —"Jehoshaphat slept with his fathers."
2 Chronicles 26:2 —"The king slept with his fathers."
2 Chronicles 26:23 —"Uzziah slept with his fathers."
2 Chronicles 27:9 —"Jotham slept with his fathers."
2 Chronicles 28:27 —"Ahaz slept with his fathers."
2 Chronicles 32:33 —"Hezekiah slept with his fathers."
2 Chronicles 33:20 —"Manasseh slept with his fathers."
Job 3:13 —"I should have slept."
Job 7:21 —"Now shall I sleep in the dust."
Job 14:12 —"Nor be raised out of their sleep."
Psalm 13:3 —"Lest I sleep the sleep of death."
Psalm 76:5 —"They have slept their sleep."
Psalm 76:6 —"Cast into a dead sleep."
Psalm 90:5 —"They are as a sleep."
Jeremiah 51:39 —"Sleep a perpetual sleep."
Jeremiah 51:57 —"Sleep a perpetual sleep."
Daniel 12:2 —"Them that sleep in the dust of the earth."

The seventeen New Testament references are:
Matthew 9:24; 27:52;
Mark 5:39; Luke 8:52;
John 11:11 (twice); Acts 7:60; 13:36;
1 Corinthians 7:39 (koimao, "fall asleep"; see Rotherham); 11:30; 15:6. 18, 20;
1 Thess. 4:13, 14, 15;
2 Peter 3:4

In all four Gospels, the Acts, and two of Paul's Epistles, as well as in Peter.

Sleep, then, is beyond question the established Biblical term for man's state in death.

Redemption in the Period of the Sacrificial Altar

The basic difference between the plan of redemption in Old Testament and in New Testament times is largely one of perspective and direction. The Old Testament believers looked forward to a suffering Messiah to come, One who would take away sin by the substitutionary sacrifice of Himself. The later New Testament believers looked back to the tremendous transaction of the cross as the accomplished fact, and upward to an ascended ministering Priest and just Judge, who is to come again at the end of the age as conquering King. The Person is the same in both cases, but the method of manifesting faith in His sovereign efficacy differs. In the Old Testament, saving faith was exhibited by symbolic sacrifices and services pointing forward to the Lamb of God to come, who would take away the sin of the world. But from the cross onward, with the great transaction of Calvary an accomplished fact, salvation was now by simple faith in a crucified, risen, ascended, ministering, and returning Lord. Note its earlier operation, first with the children of the primal pair, then among the patriarchs, and finally among the prophets of Israel, in Old Testament times.

A. Cain and Abel Tested by Sacrificial Offering System

Next in historical sequence after the expulsion from Eden the test was applied to Cain and Abel, Adam and Eve's first descendants, as recorded in Genesis 4. This particular test was likewise designed to prove whether they too would believe in and obey the word of God. In accordance with previous instruction Abel brought "of the firstlings of his flock"—a type of the coming Christ, "the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). Cain, on the contrary, brought only an offering "of the fruit of the ground," which was not in compliance with the divine directive.

By His Offering Abel Recognized the Principle of Atoning Blood Substitution, and Aroused the Hatred of Self- sufficient Cain With His Disobedient, Bloodless Offering.

The brothers obviously understood the purpose of the system of offerings that God had ordained, designed to express personal faith (Hebrews 11:4) in the atoning death of a coming Saviour. This involved the symbolic sin offerings. These bloody sacrifices dramatized the underlying principle that "without shedding of blood is no remission" (Hebrews 9:22) Such was the ordained way of acceptable approach to God, instituted immediately after the Fall.

This is the essence and foundation of the doctrine of substitution and blood atonement—"life for a life." The "wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23), and "without shedding of blood [and thus giving up the life] is no remission" (Hebrews 9:22).

1. FATAL LACK IN CAIN'S BLOODLESS OFFERING

Abel followed God's instructions. Therefore God had "respect unto Abel and to his offering" (Genesis 4:4). But Cain brought only a bloodless offering of the fruit of the ground—the product of his own labor. The fundamental principle of substitutionary sacrifice was thus omitted—the declared recognition of the need of a, Redeemer. That is why "by faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain" (Hebrews 11:4). Taking God at His word, he had grasped the basic principle of salvation—sin, penalty, death, substitution, and restoration—with righteousness and life received through the vicarious, sacrificial atonement of another. Abel's sacrifice clearly represented Christ, laden with the sinner's sins, in the sinner's place and stead. Cain's bloodless offering may have been an acknowledgment of the sovereignty of God and an act of worship, but there was no recognition of the forfeiture of his own life because of his sin nor of his need of salvation from its penalty of death.

The statement of Cain in Genesis 4:13 is really an inquiry, "Is mine iniquity too great to be forgiven?" So it is with the Septuagint, Vulgate, Syriac, Arabic, Targum uf Onkelos, Samaritan Pentateuch, and Greek and Latin Fathers. (See The Companion Bible, note on Genesis 4:13.)

Abel, on the other hand, pouring out the lifeblood of the innocent victim, acknowledged the forfeiture of his own life and sought the mercy of God through the sacrificial substitute. We have dwelt upon this because these two brothers represent the two religious classes that have existed and will continue to exist to the end of time. Here again is revealed the gospel in Genesis, the Abel class recognizing the Redeemer as the sole hope of man. And by New Testament times both the Redeemer's name and His identity are boldly proclaimed by the apostles

as man's only hope. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

It may also be observed that Cain's murder of Abel was the first example of the enmity that God declared would exist between the serpent and the seed of the woman—in other words, between Satan and his subjects and Christ and His followers.

The First Death, That of Abel, as the Fruit of Sin Brought Anguish to the Hearts of Our First Parents. But Death Called for Restoration Provided Through Christ.

2. LARGER INVOLVEMENTS OF SIN, DEATH, AND SALVATION.
So it was that the promise of a Redeemer was immediately followed by the institution of a perpetual reminder and a penitential acknowledgment of man's sin—a sacrificial confession of faith in the promised Redeemer. This provision was to impress constantly upon fallen man the solemn truth that it was sin that had caused death. Life, that only God could give, was to be taken—for if man had remained obedient to God, there would have been no death of man or beast. In time man came clearly to understand that his sin would cause the death of the coming spotless, sinless Lamb of God. man's divine Substitute (2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 9:14; 1 Peter 1:19). Nothing could actually expiate man's sin save the death of God's own Son, who would give Himself a ransom to save the guilty.

Moreover, the coming of the Redeemer would also vindicate the character and veracity of God and His word and will before the universe, and establish the justice and integrity of the government and law of God. Thus Christ said, when He came, "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (John 12:31, 32). That act of dying for the salvation of man would not only make the restored Paradise accessible to men but would justify God in dealing with the rebellion of Satan as well as of defiant man. It would reveal the subversive nature of sin and establish the perpetuity of the word and law of God—and thus show to all that the "wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23).

This sacrificial rite, established by God Himself, came to have a place in perverted form, it should be added, in most of the ancient religions of mankind. Though mankind had departed far from God, and had lost the true knowledge of Him, yet this one basic principle of forfeiture of life because of sin, and of redemption through a substitute as the only ground of, hope, still remained in varying degrees and in distorted, forms in most religions, which merely sought to placate their false gods thereby.

B. Unfolding Portrayal to Abraham Included Resurrection

As we have seen, the entire worship system of the patriarchal age centered, in fact, in the rite of sacrifice as typifying the Great Sacrifice that was to come. As such it was an enacted ceremonial prophecy, or type, of the gospel realities to follow. In this divine institution the offerer acknowledged the forfeiture of his own life in the death of the substitutionary victim he offered to God, and placed his hope in the promised Sacrifice to come, when man's Redeemer would give up His own sin less life to redeem sinners from death.

And in it all the shed blood was the essence and foundation of the doctrine of substitution and atonement—for, as observed, "without shedding of blood [in which is the life (Genesis 9:4)] is no remission" (Hebrews 9:22).

All through patriarchal times the sin offering represented Christ's bearing the believer's sins, taking the sinner's place, and dying in his stead—the sin offerings being both substitutionary and expiatory (Matthew 26:28; 1 Peter 2:24; 3:18; 2 Corinthians 5:21). Thus Abraham's "sacrifice" of Isaac was a dramatic portrayal of the great prophesied sacrifice of Christ for the redemption of mankind (Hebrews 11:8-10, 17), for Abraham "rejoiced to see my [Christ's] day: and he saw it, and was glad" (John 8:56). Let us scrutinize this historic episode in some detail.

1. ABRAHAM'S TEST OF FAITH IN GOSPEL PROVISION
Abraham's test of faith with the paralleling submission of Isaac in faith was a conspicuous example of this basic principle in the patriarchal age. Isaac, actually a child of miracle, was portrayed as Abraham's "only son" (Genesis 22:16)—a significant term. But looking beyond the strange command on Mount Moriah, Abraham grasped the implications of the divine word, in "accounting that God was able to raise him [Isaac] up, even from the dead" (Hebrews 11:19).

When Isaac asked, "Where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" Abraham's response was, "God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering" (Genesis 22:7, 8). And when Abraham's hand was lifted to slay, it was stayed by the voice calling, "Abraham, Abraham." And the words followed, "Lay not thine hand upon the lad . . . : for now I know that thou fears God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me" (vs. 11, 12). One can almost hear the pathos in those words, for when God's only Son died on Calvary there was no hand to stay!

Then it was that Abraham saw "a ram caught in a thicket" (v. 13). And taking this substitute, he offered it "in the stead of his son."

So it was that Abraham gave a new name to the place—"Jehovah-Jireh" (the Lord will see, or, provide, v. 14, margin). And here on Mount Moriah, God renewed His covenant. Thus was the gospel preached unto Abraham (Galatians 3:8). That is why Christ said to the Jews, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see ["that he- should see," margin] my day; and he saw it, and was glad" (John 8:56, R.V.).

But there is another important angle.

The Obedience of Abraham and Isaac Was Rewarded by the Provided Substitute Ram Seen in the Nearby Thicket. Christ Died in Our Stead.

2. PROVISION OF RESURRECTION RECOGNIZED BY PATRIARCHS

By faith Abraham "offered up Isaac," "accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure" (Hebrews 11:17, 19). While the binding and laying of Isaac upon the altar prefigured the sufferings and death of Christ, Isaac's being taken thence alive clearly signified Christ's resurrection from the dead. With highest propriety, then, Abraham may be said to have witnessed, in figure, the raising of Isaac from the dead. So the principle and provision of the resurrection were known like wise both to Abraham and to Isaac. Indeed, the hopes of all the patriarchs of old in a life to come were founded upon this expectation of a resurrection from the dead.

Thus David spoke of his flesh resting in hope because God would not leave his soul in she'61 ("the grave"), nor suffer His "Holy One to see corruption" (Psalm 16:10)—and this was in the eleventh century B.C. Later, in the time of the prophets, Isaiah expressly declared: "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead" (Isaiah 26:19).

By the time of Christ's first advent, man's coming resurrection to eternal life was so thoroughly established as a belief among most of the Jews that Martha, in reply to Christ's assurance of the resurrection of Lazarus, responded: "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day" (John 11:24). So belief in the resurrection had been known from antiquity. And in Daniel 12 there is explicit declaration of the awakening of some of the righteous from among those who "sleep in the dust of the earth" (Daniel 12:2). Clearly, then, Isaac the son was a type of Christ, "obedient unto death" (Phil. 2:5-8); and Abraham a type of the Father, who "spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all" (Romans 8:32). And the ram was a symbol of substitution—Christ as our offering, in our stead (Hebrews 10:5-10), and then the resurrection was prefigured (Hebrews 11:17-19).

3. ONLY THE DAWN; NOT YET THE NOONTIDE

The eleventh chapter of Hebrews is an important witness to the immemorial antiquity of this belief—the patriarchs "all died in faith," looking "for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Hebrews 11:13. 10). The entire chapter is a declaration of the faith of the fathers in a future life for the saints, and in a resurrection from the dead. And in time, after the resurrection of Jesus, the resurrection came to have the central place in the gospel plan of redemption.

But the patriarchs' expectation of receiving an everlasting inheritance must be distinguished from their understanding of the precise method. A ray of divine light, as in the dawn, shone upon them. But the opening and unfolding of the noontide floodlight of truth, and the full or detailed explanation of its provisions through the spectrum of the New Testament, were not as yet seen. Christ, in the purpose of God, was both the life and the light of the world from the day of Adam's sin. But the glories of His coming were only gradually perceived by the saints of old. As Peter says:

"Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into" (1 Peter 1:10-12).

C. Two Ways to Glory—Translation and Resurrection

The fifth chapter of Genesis, in which the taking away of the antediluvian prophet Enoch (seventh from Adam—Jude 1:14) is recorded, reads like a funeral hymn. Each strophe ends with the dirge "and he died." .But in the seventh recurrence the sequence is interrupted, and the usual refrain is replaced with the significant statement, "And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him" (Genesis 5:24).

Enoch, who was thus "translated that he should not see death" (Hebrews 11:5), became a type of the blessed destiny of the living righteous who, in the last days of earth, are likewise to be translated at the second coming of Christ (1 Thess. 4:15-17). Enoch's translation was thus a living proof in antediluvian times of the wondrous provision that immortal life with God was still to be the destined portion of the righteous. And Elijah's later translation to heaven similarly, and even more significantly, represented those to be translated at the Second Advent.

On the contrary, the bodily resurrection of Moses was a type of those who will be resurrected from the dead, but who rest in God in

the "sleep of death" until the call of the Life-giver (Psalm 13:3). Enoch, Moses, and Elijah were treated as exceptions—in that they were taken to Heaven early in Old Testament times. There is no Biblical hint of deliverance from death except through resurrection or translation, and this will commonly occur at the Second Advent.

The Resurrected Moses and the Translated Elijah on the Mount o£ Transfiguration Prefigured the Two Ways to Glory — Resurrection and Translation.

The later appearance of the resurrected Moses and the translated Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matthew 17:2), talking to Jesus, made them the forerunners of the two categories. They constituted fore gleams of the glory that is to come for the righteous. So there are just two ways to glory, as presented in the Old Testament— (1) bodily translation and (2) rest in God in the death sleep until the resurrection at the call of Christ the Life- giver.

1. ENOCH AND ELIJAH TRANSLATED WITHOUT DYING

Enoch and Elijah, as just noted, were translated without passing through death. In the time of Enoch the tide of human guilt had reached such heights that destruction through overwhelming divine judgment was decreed. But righteous Enoch, who had walked with God on earth, was taken up through the gates of the Holy City—the first among men to enter there. As the Epistle to the Hebrews specifically puts it, he was "translated that he should not see death; . . . for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God" (Hebrews 11:5).

He was not permitted to fall under the power of death, and thus his life represents the state of holiness of the living saints who will likewise be "redeemed from the earth" (Revelation 14:3) at the time of Christ's second advent, when gross iniquity will prevail, just as was the case before the Flood. And in this same way the saints of the last days, clad in the righteousness of Christ, will be translated just before the destruction of the world by the final deluge of fire (2 Peter 3:3-13).

2. MOSES' RESURRECTION: FIRST TO BREAK BONDS OF DEATH

But death "reigned from Adam to Moses" (Romans 5:14) upon all who came under its power. Israel's great leader Moses, greatest of all the Old Testament prophets (Deuteronomy 34:10), after viewing the Land of Promise from Mount Nebo and envisioning the future triumph of the faithful, died and was buried (vs. 1-6). But Michael the Archangel (one of the many names applied to Christ in the Old Testament) called forth the sleeping prophet. Satan was angered and dismayed, for he had claimed him as one of his prize prisoners of the grave.

Christ, however, did not deign to enter into controversy with Satan, not even to remind him that it was he who, through enticing Adam and Eve to sin, had brought universal death upon the human race. Christ simply said, "The Lord rebuke thee" (Jude 9), and Satan fled as Moses arose from the dead. This was the first instance of breaking the death power of the grave, and asserting the life-giving supremacy of Christ. Thus assurance was given of final resurrection to all who should "die godly" in Old Testament times. Translation and resurrection are therefore the two ways to glory.

See Matthew Henry's Commentary, on Daniel 10:10; Clarke's Commentary, on Jude 1:9; J. P. Glasgow, (Commentary on the Apocalypse, on Revelation l2:7; Lange's Commentary, on Revelation 12:1-12, Exegetical and Critical Synoptic View, p. 238; Calvin's "Commentaries, on Daniel." vol. 2, pp. 253, 368, also p. 13.

Later, when Christ the Messiah had appeared among men to die in their stead, and soon to break forever the power of Satan over the tomb and give assurance of His resurrection power, the two ancient worthies appeared with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration. Moses, prototype of the sleeping saints to be raised, was present along with Elijah, who had been translated without passing through death (Matthew 17:3), as an earnest of the living saints destined to be taken to Heaven without tasting death when Christ returns in power and glory (Matthew 24:30, 31). This episode demonstrated visibly both God's power to raise the dead and man's capability of life be yond the grave. This the apostle Paul amplifies in his description of that tremendous hour:

"We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we [the living] shall be changed" (1 Corinthians 15:51, 52).

"And the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thess. 4:16, 17).

D. Annual Round of Tabernacle Services Typified Gospel Realities

The whole Old Testament principle of sacrifice was further amplified under the ministrations in the sanctuary of old, first in the tabernacle service in the wilderness and then in the Temple that later took its place in the Jewish economy. By the rounds of typical offerings and priestly services the people were taught day by day the central truths relative to the coming death and ministration for the sins of the people of Christ the, Messiah.

And once each year, at the close of the round of typical services, their minds were carried forward to the closing events in the great controversy between Christ and Satan and to the final purification of the universe from all sin and sinners. Since Satan was the originator of sin, and man's arch tempter—and thus the direct instigator of all the sins that caused the death of the Son of God—justice demands that Satan shall suffer the final, fateful punishment for the instigation and perpetuation of sin. That, too, was prefigured in symbol on the Day of Atonement. Christ died vicariously for my part. Satan must also die for his part in all sin.

Both in the Patriarchal Age and in the Later Period of the Tabernacle, the Sacrificial Offering Pointed Forward to Christ Who Would Die in Man's Stead. The Slaying of the Lamb of Old Symbolized the Coming Lamb of God Who in Actuality Takes Away the Sins of the Repentant and Forgiven Sinner.

1. YEARLY ENACTMENT OF PLAN OF REDEMPTION

The sanctuary service was, in fact, a yearly enacted portrayal and graphic prophecy in type of the whole plan of redemption. All the offerings, of the several kinds, were portrayals foreshadowing in type various aspects of the one all-sufficient and all-embracing and complete and perfect atoning sacrifice for sin by Christ the Lamb of God on Calvary. And all the functions of all the priests, both common and high priest, in the multiple yearly round were but symbolic of the one all-comprehensive and all-efficacious priesthood and judicial ministry of Christ.

But in the antitypical fulfillment Christ was both offering and, offerer, both victim and priest. The multiple services of the sanctuary were simply a foreshadowing of the sublime gospel realities, centering in the atoning death, triumphant resurrection and ascension, and priestly mediation in Heaven before the Father, of Christ our Savior and Priest, our Judge and coming King. And the meaning of all these sanctuary types of old is to be understood and interpreted in the light of the great antitypical realities in Christ. He is both the grand center and the vast circumference of salvation for man.

2. JUSTICE AND MERCY MET IN TYPE AT THE ARK

The blood of the sin offerings represented the principle of the Substitute accepted in the sinner's stead. The repentant sinner brought his offering to the door of the tabernacle. Placing his hand on the victim's head and confessing his sins, he in figure transferred them to the innocent sacrifice. Then the animal was slain by the sinner's own hand, and the blood was placed by the priest on the horns of the altar of burnt offering. The law of God, enshrined in the ark, was the great rule of righteousness and judgment. And the vindication of that law involved the death of the transgressor. But above the law was the mercy seat, over which the presence of God was manifested in glory, and from which, by virtue of the atoning sacrifice, pardon was granted to the repentant sinner.

Thus the work of Christ for our redemption was symbolized by the Sanctuary service, where "mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other" (Psalm 85:10).

3. SIN AND RIGHTEOUSNESS, DEATH AND LIFE, PORTRAYED

The Levitical rites were only symbols, their efficacy depending solely upon the effectual sacrifice of Christ, which they prefigured. But this basic truth Israel, alas, came to forget.

The shed blood of the animal victims was only the emblem of redemption to be effected actually through the blood of Christ shed on Calvary. This truth Israel as a nation failed to grasp when Messiah came. The slaying of the innocent animal, through the shedding of its blood by the sinner, was a symbolic enactment of the offering of a substitute, the blood of which had been shed instead of his own, and the life of which had been extinguished instead of his own life. It was God's plan. Thus the principle was continually emphasized that sin is an offence against God. And the essential righteousness of God requires that sin be punished, and that death, which is the wages of; sin," is the divinely designated punishment. The sinner is unable of his own power to escape the punishment due to his offences. But God in His grace and mercy pardons the guilty offender by way of the substitution and offering of an expiatory victim.

But, be it be noted, the sinner was not to subject the animal to unending torture, but was to put it to death by taking away its life.

This was the true representation of death, the requisite punishment for sin—the death threatened to Adam, the one involved in the original transgression, and stressed in every book in the Old Testament.

4. PENAL PUNISHMENT DEATH NOT LIFE IMPRISONMENT

In the penal economy of the Mosaic law there was no such punishment as imprisonment for life, much less imprisonment for life under continuous torture. The penalty for the gravest offenses was always and only death. And it is to be remembered that this law of retribution, under the theocracy, was instituted by God Himself. We can draw no other conclusion than that for ancient Israel, capital punishment by death, under the divine as well as human administration, wag the supreme penalty set forth in the law.

Indeed, in the entire system of sacrifices, patriarchal and Mosaic, both of which were ordained by God, the substitute victim was never subject to prolonged torture, or imprisoned for life, but was put to death. By this the offerer acknowledged that he had forfeited not merely his liberty or his well-being but his life—his very being.

The sacrifice was not merely an offering, but the offering of a life in the place of the offerer. Under the theocracy of Israel the legislative, executive, and judicial powers and processes were all united, and death was the penalty for the major violations. But there is not a word about endlessly prolonged suffering of body and soul. We repeat: The penalty of the law was never even life imprisonment, but only and always DEATH— capital punishment, loss of life, cutting off, utter destruction, perishing, being blotted out. That is the testimony of Israel's theocracy.

5. SINNER INCURRED DOOM OF DEATH

The taking away of the life, dramatically portrayed all through the patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations, attested that man, refusing to live the intended life of holy obedience to the living God, had justly incurred the doom of
death, and that it was divine good ness alone that withheld the stroke of final death from man. Man could hope for a restoration to unending life only through the sacrifice of One who, by His atoning death and resurrection, should thereby abolish death and bring immortality to light (2 Tim. 1:10).

Above all, Christ's death showed that a final rejection of the remedy offered still left men liable to the penalty— but now with the added guilt of trampling underfoot the divine provision in the plan of redemption. Thus understood, those typical sacrifices take on tremendous significance. As one ponders the numberless effusions of blood, it is easy to understand the ancient testimony to the just deserts of sin—"the soul that sinned, it shall die" (Ezekiel 18:4, 20). It was a continuing dramatic representation to Israel of sin and punishment, remedy and redemption. It portrayed the results following from the fall of man. But with it comes the wondrous corollary, "If the wicked will turn from all his sins . . . , he shall surely live, he shall not die" (v. 21).

6. ENTIRE SACRIFICIAL SYSTEM FULFILLED IN CHRIST

The Christ-centered character and emphasis of the Mosaic sanctuary service cannot be overstressed. Before
leaving this aspect, note six points revealing the gospel in prototype and in essence: (1) The Passover lamb was a type of Christ

(Exodus 12:3- 14; 1 Corinthians 5:7).

(2) The daily, or continual, burnt offering was a type of Christ (Exodus 29:39-42; Hebrews 9:25, 26).

(3) The sin offering was a type of Christ (Leviticus 4:32, 33; Isaiah 53:6, 7; John 1:29).

(4) The tabernacle itself and its services all constituted a type of the incarnate Christ and His redemptive work
(Exodus 25:8; 29:43-45; John 1:14; 2:19-21).

(5) All other ceremonial observances were but shadows of the reality, which is Christ and His saving work (Colossians
2:16, 17; Hebrews 10:1).

(6) Finally, the typical system of sacrifices was abolished by the incarnation and death of Christ (Matthew 27:50,
51; Ephesians 2:14-16; Colossians 2:14; Hebrews 10:4-9). The types had served their prefatory purpose.

7. CHRIST ACTUALLY AND TRULY DIED IN ATONEMENT

These sacrifices all pointed specifically to Christ, "the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). If the punishment due to our sins is not actual death, then Christ could not have made an atonement for us by His death. Of the fact that He actually died there can be no valid question. And that He died an ignominious and painful death is undeniable. But His agony

on the cross was brief compared with the prolonged agony that many others suffered—even the thief on the other cross (John 19:32, 33). It was therefore Christ's death, not simply His suffering, that was efficacious unto atonement.

Death is definitely, then, the forfeiture of life. In the light of revelation, in this amazing, substitutionary, atoning transaction, the one and only God-man, becoming such through the incarnation, paid the exact and full penalty designated by law that was due to us. He died, actually and truly died, just as any other man dies, and as we must all die—but we without any hope of resurrection, save through Him. Then, by the almighty power of the Divine Spirit—"being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Peter 3:18)—Christ Jesus rose victorious over the power of the grave, and so became "able also to save them to the utter most that come unto God by him" (Hebrews 7:25). That is our sole hope.

8. DEATH PENALTY UNDER THE DIVINE LAW

Since the "wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23), the nature and essence of the death penalty under the divine law is of vital importance in this Old Testament survey. "The law entered, that the offence might abound" (Romans 5:20), and that "sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful" (Romans 7:13).

This was brought out as a fundamental principle in the Pauline theology. The law of God was not merely a human institution, applying only to Israel. The Jewish organization was a theocracy, a divine economy—the Ruler and moral Governor of the universe becoming the Ruler over Israel.

In attestation of His righteousness He gave them a law—"holy, and just, and good" (Romans 7:12)—a spiritual law (Romans 7:14), requiring not only outward obedience but inward purity of motive, and an obedience springing from loyalty to God. It was designed to exhibit the exceeding sinfulness of man and its disastrous penalty upon the sinner. It was indeed the Praeparatio Evangelica, or preparation for the gospel.

E. Christ, Prophesied First Fruits, Rose on Precise Day

According to Old Testament type and New Testament fulfillment, Christ was the prophesied first fruits of Old Testament resurrection assurance and provision. Paul declares:

"But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. For since by man [Adam] came death, by man [Christ] came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming" (1 Corinthians 15:20-23).

Speaking before Agrippa, Paul declared what Moses and the prophets predicted—"that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people" (Acts 26:23). Now, this precisely stipulated ceremony of the "first fruits" was given as a type to Israel, with this clear instruction:

"When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the first fruits of your harvest unto the priest: and he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted for you" (Leviticus 23:10, 11).

1. FIRST FRUITS A FIXED PART OF ANNUAL SERVICE

This ceremony of the first fruits became a fixed part of the annual typical service, prefiguring the antitypical actualities of redemption through Christ, that were to come. Each year the sheaf of the first fruits of the harvest was gathered and waved before the Lord, and was accepted for Israel. They might then freely partake of the grain of the harvest. Now note the unique application of the first fruits to the resurrection.

2. "EVERY MAN IN HIS OWN ORDER."

There are actually three resurrections involved, with "every man in his-own order" (1 Corinthians 15:23). Observe the distinctions:

The basic first resurrection was that of the Man Christ Jesus, the first fruits (1 Corinthians 15:23; Acts 26:23), at His resurrection. This was the essence and certification of those to follow.

Next, "they that are Christ's [the righteous] at his [Christ's second] coming" (1 Corinthians 15:23). This is commonly designated the resurrection of the righteous—out from, or from among, all the dead. It is called "the first resurrection," and comprises the "blessed and holy" (Revelation 20:5, 6). It is the "better resurrection" (Hebrews 11:35); the resurrection unto life (John 5:29; 1 Corinthians 15:51-53; Phil. 3:20; 1 Thess. 4:16, 17); or resurrection of the just (Luke 14:14; Acts 24:15).

Those who partake of it are called "children of God, being the children of the [first] resurrection" (Luke 20:35, 36). This takes place at the Second Advent. (3) And finally the "rest of the dead" (Revelation 20:5) come forth—the remainder, or wicked. This is called the resurrection of the unjust (Acts 24:15); the "resurrection of damnation" (John 5:29), and "to shame and everlasting contempt" (Daniel 12:2). This occurs at the close of the millennium, whereas that of the righteous comes at the beginning of the thousand years (Revelation 20:5, 6). The two are thus in vivid contrast. But they comprise the whole of humanity.

3. FIRST-FRUITS RESURRECTION FULFILLED ON VERY DAY OF TYPE

Now, it is tremendously impressive to note the exactness of the time of prophesied fulfillment. In the type, the Passover lamb was always slain on the fourteenth day of the first month (Abib; Numbers 9:2, 3, 5). It was eaten on the fifteenth, which was the first day of unleavened bread. And on the sixteenth day, the "morrow" after this annual Sabbath (Leviticus 23:11), the first fruits (which had previously been cut) were presented before the Lord... So it was that in the anti typical reality, Christ, "our Passover" (1 Corinthians 5:7), died on Friday afternoon, the fourteenth of Abib, in the year of the crucifixion." He rested in the grave over the Sabbath, the fifteenth. And on the "morrow after the Sabbath," that is, on the sixteenth, Christ, the first fruits, arose triumphantly from the tomb and presented Himself before the Father for acceptance—exactly according to prophetic stipulation. (In this particular year the annual typical Sabbath coincided with the weekly seventh-day Sabbath. As such it was a "high day.")

Thus it was that the resurrection of Christ, the anti-typical Wave Sheaf, or First Fruits, took place on the precise day stipulated in the prophetic type. He was the grand fulfillment. For more than a thousand years after its establishment, that typical ceremony took place annually in Israel. From the newly ripened harvest the first heads of ripened grain were gathered, and waved as a thank offering before the Lord. And not until the wave sheaf was presented could the sickle be put to the grain for the use of the people.

For detailed study, with diagram, see L. E. Froom, Prophetic Faith, vol. 4, pp. 1245-1247.

In the great antitypical reality Christ, as the divine First Fruits of the resurrection, was the, great pathfinder, as it were, of the spiritual harvest of the redeemed to be gathered at His second advent by means of the first resurrection. Thus Christ's own resurrection, after the cross, became the inviolable pledge of assured resurrection of the righteous dead at His return. That is its broader significance. "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will bring with him" (1 Thess. 4:14) Such is the remarkable assurance of our resurrection based upon the Mosaic type.

The phrase "bring with him" does not, as some contend, imply that when Jesus comes will bring back with Him the souls of the saints who have been in Heaven since their death. On the contrary, those who are now silently "asleep" in death and not engaged in unceasing activity in Heaven, must first be raised from the dead, just as Jesus rose, before they can be with their Redeemer.

Furthermore, the Greek word ago, for "bring," means to lead, lead among or take along—as a general leads. Thus in Acts 21: The chief captain commanded him [Paul] to be carried [ago] into the castle" (v. 34). In the

Emphatic Diaglott, 1 Thessalonians 4:14 reads “lead forth." 1 Hebrews 13:20 reads, "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus," et cetera. So when Christ comes He will raise, or bring again, the dead from their death sleep, and they will thus be led forth to meet their Lord, who comes with all His holy angels.

Eternal Destruction Is Decreed Doom of Wicked

A. Utter Destruction Ultimate Fate of Intractably Wicked

We now come to the final phase of the tragic episode of sin—the ultimate and utter destruction of the unrepentant sinner if he willfully clings to his sin. According to the Inspired Word all such will be destroyed "root" and "branch." This means Satan and his evil angels, together with all the incorrigibly wicked who have joined in the great rebellion against God and His government and law, and have spurned His proffered redemption and righteousness. Here is a typical passage from the last chapter of the last book of the Old Testament:

"For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch" (Malachi 4:1).

The writers of the Old Testament seem to have exhausted the resources of the language at their command—the Hebrew tongue—to affirm the complete destruction of the intractable sinner. The major Hebrew verb roots (such as destroy, perish, consume, cut off, burn up) are literal, and are used to signify the total extinction, or excision, of such animate beings. Other expressions are figurative—couched in metaphor, simile, symbol, analogy, metonomy, synecdoche, comparison, and allegory. But they are all designed to further enforce this foundational emphasis. These must be noted in some detail, as we can only determine their real significance by surveying their over-all Biblical usage.

The Ultimate and Utter Destruction of the Wicked Will Forever End the Terrors, Sorrows, and Memories of Sin. Then the Fires Will Go Out.

1. SCORES OF OLD TESTAMENT VERBS SIGNIFY "DESTROY."
The Old Testament uses some fifty verbs (along with their Greek equivalents in the Septuagint and the New Testament), signifying different aspects of destruction when setting forth the ultimate doom of the wicked. Many of them declare absolute cessation of existence. Others point strongly in that direction, and the clear must always explain the obscure. Together they constitute overwhelming testimony. Indeed, no stronger terms are to be found in any language than those employed in both the Old and the New Testament to connote ultimate total extinction of being for the wicked. Note the scope of the terms.

2. IMPOSING ARRAY OF LITERAL ENGLISH EQUIVALENTS
In order for us to get the over-all picture, here is an imposing list of English equivalents used in translating the Old Testament terms: Destroy, end, consume, devour, take away, tread down, 1 burn, burn up, cut off, hew down, cut down, break in pieces, quench, go out, extinguish, slay, break down, overthrow, cast down, destroy utterly, sink down in a pit, beat down, melt away, die, mortify, put to death, strike, melt, pluck out, fall dash in pieces, scatter as dust, pass away, trample underfoot root out, bring to nought. No loopholes are left.

Only God can dissipate the "breath," efface the personality, and destroy the sinful ego, or entity, comprising man. And He has fully and irrevocably declared the fate of the incorrigibly wicked. Such is the witness of the literal depictions.

3. GALAXY OF FIGURATIVE EXPRESSIONS SUPPORT THE LITERAL
And here are some of the varied figurative or proverbial expressions that harmonize with, and consistently buttress, the non figurative literal declarations concerning the ultimate, end of existence for persistent evildoers: They will be as a vessel broken to pieces, as ashes trodden underfoot, as smoke that vanishes, as chaff carried away by the wind, as tow that is burned, as bundles of dry tares, as thorns and stubble, as vine branches pruned off, as wax that is melted, as the fat of sacrifices' —all combustible and all destructible by fire. And all of these expressions, it will be observed, likewise preclude the notion of sufferings infinitely prolonged.

Again, the wicked will pass like the morning cloud, like the early dew, like a dream when one awakens. Other figures in the Scripture symbolism are: the lost sheep, threatened with speedy death by hunger and thirst or the wolf's jaws; the withered tree, without root or branch; the garment that is moth-eaten; the axe and the fire, and the leprosy that consumes the tissues. Everywhere and always the concept prevails of the decomposition, of the

breaking up of the organism and final cessation of the existence of being—never that of immortal life in endless suffering.

4. ITERATED AND REITERATED IN KEY CHAPTERS
A striking but typical example of Old Testament teaching is found in Psalm 37. Here are nine different expressions concentrated in the one psalm, italicized to brine out the intent:

Vs. 1, 2—"For they [workers of iniquity] shall soon be cut down like the grass."
9—"Evildoers shall be cut off."
10—"For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be."
20—"The wicked shall perish,. . . into smoke shall they consume away."
22—"They that be cursed of him shall be cut off."
28—"The seed of the wicked shall be cut off."

34—"The wicked are cut off."
36—"He passed away, and, lo, he was not: ... he could not be found."
38—"The transgressors shall be destroyed together: the end of the wicked shall be cut off."

Or take the eighteenth chapter of Job, with seven declarations: Vs. 5—"The light of the wicked shall be put out."
6—"His candle shall be put out with him."
12—"Destruction shall be ready at his side."
13—" It [destruction] shall devour the strength of his skin."
16—"His roots shall be dried up beneath, and above shall his branch be cut off."
17—"His remembrance shall perish from the earth."
18—"He shall be ... chased out of the world."
20:9—"The eye . . . shall see him no more."

A wide range of individual declarations of similar intent and equal intensity is scattered all the way from Genesis to Malachi.

B. Multiple Terms Signify Complete Destruction of Being

We here list alphabetically for reference some seventy variant expressions denoting the one thought of "destruction," "perishing," "consumption by fire," "turning to ashes," and "cessation of being," as portraying the fate of the wicked. Note the impressive, cumulative array:

Ashes under soles of feet	—Malachi 4:3.
Be as though they had not been	—Obadiah 16; Job 20:9; Psalm 37:10.
Be no more	—Psalm 104:35; Proverbs 10:25.
Become as nothing	—Isaiah 41:11, 12.
Blossom go up as dust	—Isaiah 5:20-24.
Blot out name forever	—Psalm 9:5.
Blot out of existence	—Deuteronomy 29:20; Psalm 69:28.
Break in pieces	—Job 34:24; Psalm 2:9.
Bring down to pit of destruction	—Psalm 55:23.
Burn like tow	—Isaiah 1:31.
Burn them up	—Malachi 4:1.
Burned up as cut thorns	—Isaiah 33:12.
Candle of wicked put out	—Job 21:17.
Cast down to destruction	—Psalm 73:18.
Cast down, unable to rise	—Psalm 36:12.
Cast off forever	—1 Chronicles 28:9.
Chaff which wind drives away	—Psalm 1:4.
Chased out of world	—Job 18:18.
Consume	—Psalm 59:13; 104:35; Isaiah 29:20.
Consume away into smoke	—Psalm 37:20.
Consumed	—Job 22:20.
Consumed out of the earth	—Psalm 104:35.
Cut down like grass	—Psalm 37:2.
Cut off	—Psalm 37:9, 22, 28, 34; 94:23; Proverbs 2:22; Nahum 1:15.
Cut off remembrance from earth	—Psalm 34:16.
Dash in pieces	—Psalm 2:9.
Destroy	—Psalm 145:20; Proverbs 13:13.
Destroyed forever	—Psalm 52:5; 92:7.
Destroy utterly	—Exodus 22:20; Psalm 21:10.
Devour	—Psalm 50:3.
Devour as stubble	—Nahum 1:10.
Die	—Ezekiel 18:4, 20.

Dissolved	—Psalm 75:3.
Driven away like chaff	—Psalm 1:4.
Eaten up like garment	—Isaiah 51:8.
Fire shall devour them	—Psalm 21:9.
Lamp of wicked put out	—Proverbs 13:9; 24:20.
Leave neither root nor branch	—Malachi 4:1.
Light of wicked be put out	—Job 18:5.
Melt away as waters	—Psalm 58:7.
Melt like wax	—Psalm 68:2.
Name put out forever	—Psalm 9:5.
Not be	—Psalm 37:10; Proverbs 12:7.
Overthrown	—Proverbs 12:7.
Perish	—Psalm 37:20; 49:20; Isaiah 41:11, 12.
Perish forever	—Job 20:7.
Pluck thee out	—Psalm 52:5.
Put away like dross	—Psalm 119:119.
Put out light	—Job 18:5, 6.
Put out name forever	—Psalm 9:5.
Put to death	—Leviticus 27:29.
Quenched as fire of thorns	—Psalm 118:12.
Quenched as tow	—Isaiah 43:17.
Rain of fire and brimstone	—Psalm 11:6.
Return to dust	—Genesis 3:19; Psalm 104:29.
Root out	—Psalm 52:5; Proverbs 2:22.
Roots dried up	—Job 18:16.
Scattered	—Psalm 92:9.
See him no more	—Job 20:9.
Shall not be	—Psalm 37:10.
Slay	—Psalm 34:21; 62:3; 139:19; Isaiah 11:4.
Stubble taken away by whirlwind	—Isaiah 40:24.
Swallow them up	—Psalm 21:9.
Tear ... in pieces	—Psalm 50:22.
Tread down	—Psalm 60:12.
Turned into hell [she'ol or grave]	—Psalm 9:17.
Utterly consumed	—Psalm 37:20 (LXX 72:19).
Whirlwind passes, wicked no more	—Proverbs 10:25.
Wither as green herb	—Psalm 37:2.

Such an array is overwhelming. But one conclusion can be drawn.

It is to be particularly noted that all these variant terms are simply an unfolding or expansion of the original penalty threatened in Eden—death, or returning to the dust (Genesis 2:17; 3:19). They simply indicate the mode of destruction and the results. Summarizing, these multiple terms fall under four general categories. Anglican Vicar R. S. Callander, of Gloucester, England, has accurately analyzed and summarized them as indicating:

Death by fire, or burning, set forth as the designated MODE of final punishment1 (Psalm 21:9; Malachi 4:1, 3; cf. Revelation 20:14, 15; Matthew 13:40, 42; 25:41, 46).

Perishing as the RESULT of such punishment (Psalm 37:28; cf. 2 Peter 2:12; John 3:14, 15).

Death, or cessation of being, as the END of such punishment (Ezekiel 18:4, 20; Romans 6:23; Revelation 21:8).

Utter destruction is the permanent EFFECT of such punishment (Psalm 55:23; 92:7; 145:20; cf. Matthew 7:13; 10:28). And in support

of these conclusions the New Testament confirms, adds to, and gives precision—such as specifying the "second death," of Revelation 20:6 and 21:8, by destruction in the lake of fire.

C. Eternal Torment No Part of Death Penalty

It will be observed that in this vast array of Scripture passages there is uniform testimony as to utter destruction—without a single statement implying Eternal Torment for the finally impenitent wicked. And even if a few perplexing texts are found they could not reasonably be allowed to reverse the preponderant emphasis of Scripture or nullify its over whelming testimony. The notion of Eternal Torment came out of paganism, as a corollary to the postulate of the universal Innate Immortality of the soul. But that presumption did not penetrate Jewry until about 150 BC, or begin to infiltrate the Christian church until nearly A.D. 200.

This may be checked by scanning the following passages from nearly a score of Old Testament books and a few New Testament examples, as showing beyond peradventure the uniform testimony of Scripture to fire as God's designated mode of destruction for the wicked.

(Old Testament) Genesis 19:24, 25: Exodus 32:10: Leviticus 10:2; Numbers 11:1; 16:35: Deuteronomy 32:22. 24; 2 Kings 1:12: Psalm 21:9; 97:3; 140:10; Isaiah 1:28, 31; 9:18, 19; 10:16-18: 30:33; 33:11, 12; 47:14; 66:15, 16, 24: Jeremiah 4:4; 21:12; Lam. 2:3, 4; Ezekiel 15:6, 7; 21:31, 32: 22:21, 22, 31; 28:18; Amos 5:6; Nahum 1:5, 6; Malachi 4:1.

(New Testament) Matthew 3:10, 12; 13:49, 50; 25:41; Luke 17:29, 30; Hebrews 6:4-8; 2 Peter 3:7; Jude 1:7. Revelation 20:9, 10, 15. Our God is a consuming fire to the wicked. Hebrews 12:29; Exodus 24:17; Deuteronomy 4:24, 9:3; Isaiah 33:14).

See Outline Chart A, page 522, and pertinent chapters in Parts III and IV.

God's blessings in this life extend to a "thousand generations" of those who love Him and keep His commandments, while He punishes only to the "third and fourth generation" of those who hate Him (Exodus 20:5, 6; Deuteronomy 7:9) The punishments of the future life were to go on forever, paralleling the bliss of the righteous, it would logically follow that God would likewise punish to the thousandth generation. But even here there is intimation that the wicked are doomed to ultimate and utter extinction.

1. TORTURE NO PART OF JEWISH SACRIFICIAL RITE

As previously pointed out, in the Levitical sacrificial offerings the victim in the 5m offering stood for the sinner— It typified Christ, atoning vicariously for the guilt of man's sin—Christ bearing our sins and standing in our place and stead. Those who offered the sin offering were neither required nor allowed to inflict prolonged torture upon the sacrificial offering—be it lamb, goat, bullock, or turtle dove—but simply to impose death. In the burnt offerings the animal was already dead before it was burned upon the altar, where it was wholly consumed (Leviticus 4-7). The rite, therefore, was not based on extended suffering but on the suppression of the life. In Jewish practice, if the execution was prolonged the sacrifice had to be rejected.

2. TORTURE NO PART OF MOSAIC PENAL CODE

Likewise in the penal code of the Mosaic theocracy the heaviest punishment prescribed was the imposition of the death of the offender (Leviticus 20:2; 24:14-16; Numbers 15:33-36; Deuteronomy 17:5; 22:21). Long-continued torture was foreign to Old Testament legislation. The odious practice of torture, so common in ancient pagan civilizations, had no equivalent in the code of Israel. (Crucifixion, it should be noted, was of Roman origin.) In case of stoning; under Israel, care was taken that the first stone cast should be large enough to crush the victim's chest, resulting in death.

Death, not torture, as the wages of sin (Romans 6:23), is consistently set forth in Scripture. The punishment fitted the crime.

D. Eternal Destiny Revolves Around Intent of "Life" and "Death"

1. LIFE AND DEATH—KEYS THAT UNLOCK INSPIRED INTENT

The issues of eternal destiny turn on the intent of Holy Scripture, as seen in the prologue (of Genesis) and in the epilogue (of the Revelation). The terms "life" and "death" are the dual keys that unlock the Biblical intent as to the destiny of man. Everything turns upon these two antithetical expressions.

As mentioned, life and death are ever set forth as opposites, like black and white. For one to say that death is simply another kind or state of life is like insisting that black is only a variation of white.

But if death were a certain state of life, it would simply be a continued manifestation of that same life. The usage of Biblical language protests such violence. To die is to cease to live, or exist, not to suffer on forever, simply away from the presence of God, but to keep on living.

2. PLATONIC PERVERSION OF DEATH AS PERPETUAL LIFE

When man is under consideration, life—in the historical and grammatical sense—refers to his existence as manifested through animation, action, and sensation. Death, on the contrary, is the end of that existence, the termination of all action and sensation. But under the Platonic influence, with its notion of the absolute and indefeasible immortality of the human soul, and the consequent flaunting of the total testimony of Scripture, the traditionalist took his stand on the premise that the inherent life of the soul cannot cease.

As a result the death of the soul inevitably came to signify its perpetual life in the midst of sin and suffering— without any possible end. Ever dying, the soul nevertheless could never die. Death was consequently replaced by pain that is interminable, while life was made synonymous merely with holiness and blessedness in that existence. It was a travesty of truth both in word and in intent.

3. INNATE IMMORTALITY POSTULATE REVERSES TRUE EXEGESIS

But the postulate of the Innate Immortality of all soul involves an inescapably unnatural and arbitrary interpretation of Scripture—a reversal of true exegesis—so that instead of death being the penalty for the unrepentant sinner, with unending life solely for the righteous, eternal life is instead asserted to be the final destiny of both righteous and wicked —only with the one class in bliss and the other in torment. But such a procedure is undeniable eisegesis—a reading into the text of what is not there, and of what is, moreover, fundamentally contrary to the uniform, overwhelming testimony of Scripture.

4. CHRIST'S DEATH, NOT SUFFERINGS, CONSTITUTED ATONING SACRIFICE

There is often, of course, intense suffering with death—but always ending in destruction. However, it is not the suffering but the destruction that is the ultimate. Suffering precedes it. Thus it was with the death of Christ, if we are to consider this point at the highest level. There is frequent allusion to His "sufferings" in our behalf. But, dreadful as these were, Christ's sufferings alone did not constitute His atoning death. They were only the accompaniments thereof. Death is ceasing to live.

The fundamental point is that Christ did not endure Eternal Torment. He paid the designated penalty due to Adam and the race—which was death. The death of Christ on Calvary, though including fearful mental and bodily suffering, required the extinction of His life. This principle was illustrated back in the case of Old Testament Israel:

"If thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that thou may fear this glorious and fearful name, The Lord Thy God; then the Lord will make thy plagues wonderful, and the plagues of thy seed, even great plagues, and of long continuance, and sore sicknesses. . . . Also every sickness, and every plague, which is not written in the book of this law, them will the Lord bring upon thee, until thou be destroyed. And it shall come to pass, that as the Lord rejoiced over you to do you good, and to multiply you; so the Lord will rejoice over you to destroy you, and to bring you to naught" (Deuteronomy 28:58-63).

Thus all suffering terminates in final destruction, and comes to nought. That is the over-all Bible evidence.

5. DESTRUCTION, NOT ETERNAL TORMENT, THE PUNISHMENT

Man was placed in the Garden of Eden with the explicit warning that "in the day that thou eats thereof [of the tree o£ the knowledge of good and evil] thou shalt surely die" (Genesis 2:17). Should he disobey he would be subject to capital punishment—death, by forfeiting his life. There is nothing in the language employed that conveys any concept other than utter destruction as punishment for transgression.

There is no intimation of a prolonged, much less endless, existence in torment. Life and death must have appeared as opposites to Adam—the threat of "death" being the opposite of "living forever." We must therefore repeat that there was absolutely no Biblical declaration of death as an endless life in interminable misery as the penalty for sin.

E. Stock Objections Invoked Collapse Under Scrutiny

In both Testaments there are certain stock-objection texts that are always invoked. Three such passages in the Old Testament—Isaiah 33:14; Isaiah 66:24; and Daniel 12:2—are pressed into service by those contending for the Eternal Torment of the wicked.

1. ISAIAH 33:14—CONTENTION COLLAPSES UNDER SCRUTINY

The first of the three texts reads: "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with, everlasting

burnings?" These words are often brought forth by Immortal-Soulists as describing the torments of the lost, and to impress one with the torrid glare of the pitiless prospect of eternal misery. But even a cursory glance at the context will show that the future state is not under discussion in this text. It is simply a portrayal of the insufferable temporal miseries being inflicted upon Israel by her enemies and by God's threatened retribution.

It is an exclamatory expression to the effect that no one can endure such burnings—a strong negative, to indicate that what is doomed to fire cannot continue to exist; that none can dwell with such devouring flames.

The passage has no relation to the fate of the lost, but rather to the desolation of Palestine by the Assyrians. Verses 10-12 describe Sennacherib's invading army, even threatening Jerusalem itself but nevertheless awaiting sudden and utter destruction, as already foretold in chapter 27:4—when the Lord would "go through them" and "burn them together." And the fulfillment is portrayed in chapter 37:36, when the angel of the Lord "smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and fourscore and five thousand: and when they [the Israelites] arose early in the morning, behold, they [the Assyrians] were all dead corpses." That is a simple statement of historical fact.

According to the ancient custom of the Eastern nations these bodies were to be burned. The effect of this display of divine power was to alarm those who had not trusted in God, and so lead them to exclaim, "Who among us shall dwell with this devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with these ever lasting burnings?"

These words have not the remotest reference to future retribution in Gehenna, only to present punishments on earth. They echo the outcries of terrified sinners in Jerusalem who feared that the perpetual conflagrations of war and the devastations of fire and sword by the invader—and God's wrath—would end in their own destruction, for "who can dwell in these perpetual burnings?" In verses 10 to 12 of Isaiah 33 the Lord addresses them:

"Now will I rise, saith the Lord; now will I be exalted. Ye shall conceive chaff, ye shall bring forth stubble: your breath, as fire, shall devour you. And the people shall be as the burnings of lime [fuel for lime-kilns]: as thorns cut up [common Palestinian fuel for such] shall they be burned in the fire."

If a further application is desired, it is well to remember that "our God is a consuming fire" (Hebrews 12:29). He is the Sun of Righteousness whose brightness glorifies the saints but is a fire of vengeance that burns up the worthless (Malachi 4:2, 3; Hebrews 6:8; Revelation 20:9).

Then the text in question (verse 14) follows immediately. We would simply add that indifference to the sense of Scripture in an attempt to establish a predetermined point is unworthy of hermeneutics and is fatal to sound conclusions. The "fire" of verse 14 is manifestly the same as that of verse 12— the flame of war kindled in Palestine by the Assyrians, and God's predicted retribution. So the first contention collapses.

2. ISAIAH 66:24—CARCASSES, UNDYING WORM, UNQUENCHABLE FIRE

We next scrutinize Isaiah 66:24: "And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh."

The scene is set in verses 22, 23: "For as the new heavens and new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me," and "all flesh" shall come to worship before the Lord. Then follows the declaration of the verse quoted. The "worm" and the "fire" in this passage can only legitimately symbolize the utter destruction of dead and insensible carcasses or corpses. as expressly stated. The text does not therefore support the theory of an eternal, conscious suffering of sentient, disembodied souls of the living damned, which have been consigned to an ever- burning hell.

Any attempt to deduce the immortality of the lost from this text must first assume the indestructibility of "carcases." But an unquenchable fire is not necessarily one that will not ultimately go out. Rather, it is one that must consume and destroy until nothing remains (cf. Jeremiah 7:20).

The clause, "their worm shall not die," unquestionably signifies that the worms shall not cease to be until their sordid mission has been accomplished. The contention of eternal, conscious, human suffering could be sustained only by taking out the word "die," in the sense of ceasing to live, because only as so taken, with a negation, could the passage be construed to speak of eternal suffering.

And it is of course obvious that such "worms" are not endowed with immortality, or with powers of continuous reproduction throughout

eternity in a blazing fire. We repeat that a "fire" that never shall be "quenched" does not necessarily mean it must burn forever. Jude, in verse seven, declares that Sodom and Gomorrha are set forth as examples of eternal fire. But Peter tells us that they were turned into ashes, "condemned . . . with an overthrow [Gr. katastrophe]" (2 ^Peter 2:6). Thus Jude's "eternal fire" is equivalent to Peter's "ashes." It signifies ultimate extinction.

"Unquenchable fire" is therefore a fire that is destined ultimately to go out, but that cannot be put out until it has consumed all upon which it feeds. It thus denotes inevitable and utter destruction, and the eternal results of such awesome punishment. With this agrees Christ's solemn New Testament declaration that He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire (Mark 9:43, 45).

The "abhorring" clearly refers to the nauseous spectacle of the putrefying "carcases." The reference to the "worm" is not to the remorse of a tormented conscience as some contend, but to literal maggots (Hebrews tola'), bred in putrid substances (Exodus 16:20; Deuteronomy 28:39; Isaiah 14:11). And it is to be noted that the "worm" is distinct from that upon which it feeds. The allusion is unmistakably to the ghastly scenes of the ancient Valley of Hinnom, or Tophet, with its flames and its worms—where those permitted to walk over the fields of the-slain could see the vast number of the dead and putrefying bodies of their former enemies. And the case in point, in "Isaiah's time, was the 185,000 slain of Sennacherib's host. So it is not the immortal soul but the multitude of the dead who perished that engages the unquenchable fire and the insatiable worm. That was the Old Testament type. And in the final, antitypical fulfillment, and the punitive destruction of the wicked, there is depicted the feast for these worms at the "supper of the great God," to which the fowls of heaven are invited (Revelation 19:17, 18)

Allusions to the "worm" that feeds upon the "carcases," or dead bodies, appear frequently in the Old Testament, and are actually used to exclude all hope of restoration, and to declare that the punishment is eternal and without hope. (See Job 17:14; 19:26; 24:20; Isaiah 14:11.)

3. DEPRIVED OF LIFE, NOT CONSIGNED TO MISERY

It is further argued that in Mark 9:43-48 Christ quotes the last two clauses of Isaiah 66:24 in proof of the eternal sufferings of the wicked in Gehenna, and thus gives divine support to the contention. But both the premise and
the conclusion must be denied. Christ was not uttering words in proof of eternal suffering. Not a syllable did He express to that effect. He was warning the disciples that it is better to enter into life halt or maimed rather than having two hands or feet to be cast into the unquenchable fire of Gehenna—for it is better that one of the members should perish than the whole body be cast into Gehenna (Mark 9:43).

Cf. Isaiah 66:15, 16—"Behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. . . . And the slain of the Lord shall be many."

In Mark 9, Christ contrasts the living and the perishing. But the perishing of one member, by its being cut off, is to deprive it of life, not to consign it to endless misery. It there fore follows that the perishing of the whole body likewise results in similar but total destruction. Consequently, the persons whose worm shall not die are those who have been reduced to peger (dead corpses). So the second citation, from Isaiah 66:24, obviously does not apply to Eternal Torment.

The ancient fire of Gehenna was not a fire into which living persons were cast, to be kept alive under torture, but one into which corpses were cast to be consumed. It was not fire designed to prey upon living beings, but upon the "carcases" of animals, and the dead bodies of malefactors, hence the consistency of associating fire and worm together. What portion of the dead body the fire failed to consume, the worm would seize upon and devour. Even if one were cast alive into such a fiery place (as the wicked will be cast into the coming Gehenna), his life would soon become extinct, and his lifeless remains would soon be utterly consumed by these agents of destruction. So this contention likewise collapses.

4. DANIEL 12:2—RESURRECTIONS TO LIFE AND TO JUDGMENT

The third text, often cited, reads: "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth [the inspired depiction of death] shall awake [in the resurrection], so me to everlasting life, and some to, shame and everlasting contempt [thrusting away]."

The awakening of "some" clearly applies to the resurrection of the righteous, destined to eternal life. As has been shown, those doomed to shame and "everlasting contempt" are excluded from eternal life. Their brief awakening is but for the execution of the judgment. The contempt is felt by the righteous survivors after the judgment and destruction of the contemptible have been meted out.

Thus the "everlasting" applies to the righteous, and the "contempt"—or more accurately "abhorrence"—is that of the righteous over

the incorrigibly wicked, who perish. This text affords one of the clearer Old Testament fore gleams of the two fold resurrection—one group to life, and the other to judgment—expressly stated in the New Testament (Luke 14:14; John 5:28, 29; 1 Corinthians 15:23; Revelation 20:4, 5).

Some assert that the everlasting contempt involves the continued conscious existence of those who are the recipients of the contempt referred to. But the .epithet "everlasting" is not applied to the word "shame" ("abhorrence," R.V., margin)—the same Hebrew dera'on used in Isaiah 66:24 in referring to the corpses of the slain that lie unburied. Dera'on means "an object of abhorrence." Hence it is not the subjective conscious ness of the guilty, but the objective abhorrence in which their memory is held by others, that is declared to be everlasting, (cf. Jeremiah 20:11, R.V.; 23:40).

5. CONCLUSION: CONTENTIONS OF THREE CITATIONS COLLAPSE

These are the stock Old Testament passages frequently cited in support of the Platonic postulate of the Eternal Torment of the wicked. But such an interpretation is in direct conflict with the prophet's own position and testimony elsewhere. Furthermore, these three texts are declared by many of the most competent Bible scholars to have no relevancy to a supposed unending torment.

Obviously, they are "theologizing hand-downs" from Neo-platonic Christian philosophers of the third and fourth centuries. They came from men steeped in the theory of the universal, Innate Immortality of the soul, and its corresponding corollary, the Eternal Torment of the wicked. They are unworthy of valid Christian exegesis. All three contentions collapse under scrutiny.

Prophetic Witness Concerning the "Last Things"

A. The Two Advents Focal Points of All Prophecy

It has been well said that eschatology is the crown, or capstone, in the edifice of systematic religious thought. It systematizes, in logical sequence and relationship, the revealed facts regarding the prophetically heralded last days, so as to synthesize the textual evidence and resolve seeming contradictions, as well as to systematize and coordinate the vast array of pertinent evidence.

1. MASTER KEY TO MAN'S DESTINY

True eschatology, or the doctrine of the last things, thereby becomes the master key that unlocks the problem of
the origin, nature, and destiny of man, dealing especially with the climactic finale of human history and destiny. For our purpose here, eschatology may there fore be defined as that subdivision of systematic theology that treats of the last days, or time of the end, preceding and leading up to the actual end of the age, or world, the "great day of the Lord." It culminates in the Second Advent and resurrection, the final judgment, the future life, and thus the final destiny of all mankind, good and evil—and the final disposition of Satan and sin.

In theological parlance, eschatology (the doctrine of the last things] is here used in contrast with anthropology (the doctrine of the origin and destiny of man), and soteriology (the plan of God in reference to the salvation of man).

2. ISSUES OF TIME AND ETERNITY

"Time" may well be termed that portion of eternity marked off for the redemption of a lost race, ruined as we have seen by the tragedy of sin. History traces the transactions of time. And "time" has been compassed again and again in Bible prophecy, portraying the transcendent developments in the carrying out of God's great redemptive provisions of the divine plan of the ages. The apostle Peter depicts "prophecy" in these words:

"For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter 1:21). And further: "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts" (v. 19).

3. KEY TO DIVINE MOVEMENTS OF THE AGES

The two great areas of prophecy as concerns the Redeemer, Peter declares, involved the testifying "beforehand the sufferings of Christ [predictions of the first advent], and the glory that should follow"—prophecies of the Second Advent and the consummation of the plan of redemption (l Peter 1:10-11). Therefore the two great focal points of prophecy are the first and second advents—with the latter in glory and majesty at the last day. So the twin and inseparable centers of Bible prophecy are the transcendence of the cross and the

triumphant return of the Redeemer.

Indeed, God's plan of redemption cannot be completed apart from the second coming of Christ and the events connected therewith. The Second Advent is tied in with the first as the necessary and complemental part o£ the same divine provision for the redemption of man. It is the last, or consummating, phase of His original coming in the flesh. The incarnate, crucified, risen, glorified Redeemer will assuredly come again. Thus the unity and coordination of the plan of salvation is disclosed as complete and harmonious.

4. ONLY TRUE PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY

Once the transcendent truth of the two coordinate and consecutive advents is grasped, one possesses the key to the divine movements of the ages—past, present, and future. He has the only true philosophy of history, for around these two advents revolve the issues of time and eternity. But the climax of the plan of redemption, with its glorious consummation, is preceded by an unfolding sequence of mighty epochs and events, portrayed step by step in Old Testament prophecy. This relationship of part to part is disclosed through the great outline prophecies of Daniel. But these all terminate in the final phase of the redemptive plan of the ages, as all history moves irresistibly on to the final, transcendent events predicted by many inspired penmen of old.

So the central theme of prophecy all the way from Genesis to Malachi—and on through to the Revelation—is the unfolding story of the redemption of lost man. That is its lofty purpose. From the first whisper of hope in Eden to the last peace of triumph in the Apocalypse, the restoration of the image of God in the soul is the dominant note of inspired revelation. Prophecy presents the full sweep of this glorious plan of redemption. And eschatology deals with the last portion thereof.

B. Outline Prophecies Mark Out Highway of the Centuries

The outline prophecies of the Old Testament are most completely presented by the prophet Daniel.

These set forth a continuous sequence of epochs, as well as major events, spanning the centuries from the time of Daniel onward and reaching to the climax of the ages. Interwoven into these outline coverages are the great prophetic time periods—the 70 weeks, the 1260, 1290, 1335, and 2300 year-days—which are concerned with the specific events, epochs, and activities. And these, in combination, constitute the inspired timetable of the centuries.

1. CONTINUITY, COMPREHENSIVENESS, AND REPETITION

The characteristics of Daniel's outline prophecies are continuity, comprehensiveness, and the principle of repetition—as the prophet four times covers the grand outline, repeating for emphasis and amplification, and establishing beyond all question the landmarks mapping out the highway of the centuries. The establishment of the eternal kingdom of God is the terminus in each unfoldment, when all earthly dominions are superseded by the eternal kingdom of God, with the redeemed saints as its citizens forevermore.

For documented evidence see L. E. Froom, The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers, 4 volumes.

These long-range outline prophecies, extending to the end of the age, therefore involve in their closing sections the various aspects of eschatology—emphasizing the last things, and specifically the climactic close of the age, involving the Second Advent, resurrection, judgment, establishment of the everlasting kingdom, the future rewards of the righteous, and the final destruction of the wicked. Scrutiny of the terminal sections of Daniel's multiple prophecies is therefore essential to our quest.

2. DESTINY OF WORLD POWERS OF HISTORY PORTRAYED

The symbolism of the' great metallic image of Daniel 2, recognized as constituting the ABC of all outline prophecy, presents the far-reaching vista of the life span and destiny of the great world powers of history, and lifts the veil on the "deep and secret things" (v. 22)—particularly as to "what shall be in the latter days" (vs. 28,
29).

A huge symbolic colossus of a man, comprised of gold, silver, bronze, iron, and clay, is succeeded by a mystic stone that smites the image on the feet, grinding the entire image to powder, and becoming a mountain which fills the whole earth. These four consecutive metals symbolically portray the course of world empires until the shattering stone, representing the kingdom of God, ends man's rule and makes way for God's eternal kingdom. It presents the vast sweep of the ages.

3. COURSE OF EMPIRE GIVES WAY TO GOD'S KINGDOM

Then, paralleling this symbolism of Daniel 2, come the four symbolic beasts in Daniel 7, rising in succession out of the sea of

nations—the Babylonian lion, Persian bear, Grecian leopard, and Roman nondescript beast (the same four world powers) —followed by a multiple-kingdom period, in which we now live. Then is to follow the establishment of the kingdom of God.

So the scintillating metal image and pulverizing stone (chap. 2), the wild beasts rising from the sea (chap. 7), and the battling ram and the speeding he-goat clashing in chapter 8, all portray the rise and fall of these great nations of the past, in God's charted course of empire, and their final terminus. Thus while there is a distinct eschatological emphasis running all through the Old Testament prophets, Daniel not only presents the all- encompassing outline of the major epochs of history but gives the most complete and comprehensive herald ing of the "time of the end," leading to the time of the resurrection of the righteous, the establishment of the eternal kingdom of God, and the final destruction of the wicked.

4. NOW LIVING IN "TIME OF END."
The identity of Daniel's four world powers—Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome in the grand outline, with Rome, the fourth empire, divided into ten major divisions—is attested by hundreds of leading scholars of all faiths across the centuries. It is significant that there was widespread recognition in the early decades of the nineteenth century of the fact that mankind has now entered the prophesied "time of the end."

The evidence is so overwhelming and so well established—attested by men of so many lands and many faiths— that it cannot be brushed off as simply visionary speculation. There has been a fundamental understanding stemming from the prophetic books of the Old and New Testaments, based upon these unmistakable predictions of the prophets of old.

5. SUBLIMITY OF REVELATION SURPASSES HUMAN COMPREHENSION
The sublimity of the scenes presented by the prophet Daniel surpasses human comprehension. These scenes
disclose the plans and purposes of God for ending the tragic innovation of sin, for recognizing and rewarding the characters that will stand throughout eternity, that will put an end to the author of sin, quash forever his lie in Eden, and terminate his deception of the human race.

This divine plan of redemption, as here outlined, exemplifies the wisdom and love of God, and is imperative for the recovery of lost man. It constitutes God's matchless solution for the sin problem. In it justice and mercy meet, and everlasting righteousness and peace are established. Here again the two advents constitute the essence of the portrayal.

For as surely as the incarnation led to the cross, the cross to the tomb, and the empty tomb to the throne, so surely do the ministration before the throne and the judgment scenes lead to Christ's coming again in glory and the establishment of His eternal kingdom. This divine portrayal and provision touches the deepest depths and reaches the highest heights in the whole range of human contemplation of man's sin and God's redemptive remedy—man's total ruin by sin being met by God's complete salvation in Christ. It constitutes, we repeat, the only true philosophy of history. Indeed, there is nothing more profound in the whole range of human destiny than man's fortune and fate in the hands of divine purpose and power, now on its way to consummation.

The Final Event in Human History Is the World-shattering Second Advent With Its Resurrection and Bestowal of Immortality Upon the Righteous.

As stated, it compasses the whole of time—that portion of eternity marked off for the redemption of a lost race. It constitutes the ultimate in divine revelation and redemptive achievement. God is holy and righteous, and cannot condone sin. Neither can He ignore sin. He must therefore judge sin, and propitiation must be made in order to save man. And that by the very act of expiation, by Christ, reconciles man to God. Thus lost man is restored to his lost estate.

C. Significance of "Day of the Lord" and Cognate Terms

1. TRANSCENDENT "DAY OF THE LORD."
There are several similar terms of increasing intensity that appear in the writings of the Old Testament prophets.
These are: "The day" (Malachi 4:1); "latter day" (Job 19:25); "day of the Lord" (Isaiah 2:12; 13:6, 9; Ezekiel 30:3; Joel
2:11; Amos 5:18; Zechariah 14:1); "day of his coming" (Malachi 3:2); "great day of the Lord" (Zeph. 1:14); "great and the terrible day of the Lord" (Joel 2:31); "great and dreadful day of the Lord" (Malachi 4:5); "day of the Lord's anger" (Zeph. 2:2, 3); "day of the Lord's wrath" (Zeph. 1:18). Job and Daniel both refer to the "latter days" (Job
19:25; Daniel 2:28; 10:14), and Daniel alludes to the coming "time of the end" (Daniel 8:17; 11:35, 40; 12:9)," and to the "time of trouble" (Daniel 12:1). Here are two examples:

"That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of the trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities, and against the high towers. And I will bring distress upon men, that they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the Lord: and their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as the dung. Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord's wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy: for he shall make even a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land" (Zeph. 1:15-18).

"And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book" (Daniel 12:1).

The New Testament writers usually refer to this period as the "latter times" (1 Tim. 4:1), "last days" (2 Tim. 3:1), or equivalent phrases.

2. SECOND ADVENT TO TERMINATE "LATTER DAYS."

The Old Testament is replete with prophecies of the Second Advent and its attendant events. From Enoch to Malachi, the prophets graphically foretold Christ's coming in power and glory to bring salvation and to execute judgment. The Advent was to all the "hope of all ages," the "desire of all saints." Job expected his Redeemer to stand on the earth at the "latter day." Then follow the holy hopes of others:

"For I know that my redeemer lives, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another" (Job 19:25-27).

"Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people. Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice" (Psalm 50:3-5).

"For he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth" (Psalm 96:13).

"Behold, the Lord hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him" (Isaiah 62:11).

"And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts" (Haggai 2:7).

"And the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts. But who may abide the day of his coming? And who shall stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap: and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver" (Malachi 3:1-3).

And as recorded in the New Testament:
"Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all" ungodly sinners and bring salvation to His saints (Jude 1:14, 15).

And as Enoch was "translated that he should not see death" (Hebrews 11:5; Genesis 5:24), and therefore lives today— in Heaven above with his Creator and Redeemer—it follows that the first preacher, or prophet, of the Second Advent is still living!

3. RESURRECTION IS CLIMACTIC FEATURE OF ADVENT

A score of varied expressions are used, all meaning the same thing, to indicate bodily resurrection from the grave, living again at the coming and call of the Life-giver. Here are the key words in their various expressions:

"Awake" (Job 14:12).
"Awake, with thy likeness" (Psalm 17:15). "Behold thy face in righteousness" (Psalm 17:15). "Arise" (Isaiah 26:19).
"Raised out of their sleep" (Job 14:12). "In my flesh shall I see God" (Job 19:26).
"Remembered" (Job 24:20).
"My change come" (Job 14:14).
"Thy dead men shall live" (Isaiah 26:19).

"Together with my dead body shall they arise" (Isaiah 26:19). "Live again" (Job 14:14).
"Thou shall call, and I will answer thee" (Job 14:15). "Redeem . . . from the power of the grave" (Psalm 49:15). "Swallow up death in victory" (Isaiah 25:8).
"Put my spirit in you, and ye shall live" (Ezekiel 37:14). "They lived, and stood up" (Ezekiel 37:10).
"Shall awake" (Daniel 12:2).
"Ransom them from the power of the grave" and "redeem them from death" (Hosea 13:14).

4. ETERNAL RESTORATION Is REWARD OF RIGHTEOUS
The lost Paradise will be restored and immortality conferred and endless joy and peace will be the reward of the righteous forevermore:

"For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain" (Isaiah 66:22).

"But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever" (Daniel 7:18).

"And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him" (v. 27).

"Those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth. . . . But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace" (Psalm 37:9-11).

"In thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore" (Psalm 16:11).

5. WICKED TO RECEIVE PUNITIVE DESTRUCTION
Many terms are employed to specify the ultimate and utter destruction of the wicked—involving complete cessation of being, be coming as though they had not been. The leading expressions are:

"Burn them up" (Malachi 4:1).
"Destroyed" (Psalm 37:38); "wicked will he destroy" (Psalm 145:20). "Consume," "consume away" (Psalm 37:20).
"Perish" (Psalm 37:20; 68:2).
"Cut off" (Psalm 37:22, 34; 94:23). "Not be" (Psalm 37:10, 36).
"They shall be ashes" (Malachi 4:3).
"Like the chaff . . . the wind carried them away" (Daniel 2:35).

The completeness of the Old Testament picture is impressive. A tremendous portrayal of the plan of God is presented.

D. Solemn Procession of Prophetic Witnesses Testify

1. PANORAMIC SURVEY OF OLD TESTAMENT WITNESSES
As we have already observed, the prophesied "time of the end" (Daniel 8:17, 19), climaxing with the "day of the Lord," is that final segment of time leading up to and terminating with the "end"—the end of the age, or present world order. It there fore leads to and through the time of God's judgments, the close of human probation, the Second Advent and resurrection, the final rewards and punishments, the conferring of the covenanted immortality upon the righteous, and the utter destruction and dissolution of sinners forevermore—and thus the ending of the sin problem.

A score of Old Testament prophets proclaim the coming of the "day of the Lord" with all of its involvements— embracing the eternal overthrow of wickedness and the everlasting establishment of righteousness. There are about eight categories of frequently reiterated events that are stressed: (1) The coming of the Lord in power and glory, (2) the resurrection of the righteous, (3) the convulsions of nature, (4) the attendant fire and destruction, (5) the resultant desolation, (6) the judgment and punishment for sin, (7) the kingdom of blessedness; and (8) the new heavens and the new earth. This sequence of tremendous events of course involves divine interposition in the affairs of mankind and the physical world.

It may well be noted that many of the characteristic New Testament expressions in this field are drawn directly from the Old Testament. There the coming and the kingdom of Messiah are constantly stressed by Inspiration, far beyond the narrow provincial concepts

increasingly envisioned and adopted by the Jews. Jehovah as the righteous Judge and the future kingdom of God for the regenerate of all peoples were constantly portrayed in vivid phrasings. Let us now take a sweeping survey of the witness of the Old Testament prophets, and note their testimony.

2. CONSTANT SUCCESSION OF ESCHATOLOGICAL GLIMPSES

The climax of human history has intrigued men through out the centuries. But, far more significantly, it has engrossed the thoughts and pens of God's prophets. Eschatological glimpses of the last things appear in constant succession in their inspired writings. Here are some of the many Old Testament declarations:

(1) JOB—tells of the great resurrection day, when the heavens depart, and the Life-giver calls forth the sleeping dead:
"Man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep. . . . All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. Thou shall call, and I will answer thee" (Job 14:12-15).

(2) DAVID—declares that judgment by fire from Heaven has been prepared for sinners: "Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup" (Psalm 11:6).

(3) SOLOMON—sets forth the expectation of a judgment at the end of the world:
"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments. . . . For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil" (Eccl. 12:13, 14).

(4) DANIEL—gives a multiple testimony. Among other points he forewarns:
"And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt" (Daniel 12:1, 2; cf. Matthew 25:46).

(5) EZEKIEL—passing over Isaiah for the moment, we find that Ezekiel stresses the responsibility of the soul to God, then declares, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezekiel 18:4). And he emphasizes the resurrection of the body in his graphic portrayal of the vision of the dry bones reclothed with flesh by God's command, and filled again with the "breath," or "spirit," of life (Ezekiel 37; especially vs. 5, 6, 14).

(6) HOSEA—holds forth the hope of the future triumph of righteousness in the Messianic kingdom, and affirms the hope of the resurrection: "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction" (Hosea 13:14).

(7) JOEL—looks forward to the latter day, when there will be "wonders in the heavens and in the earth" and celestial signs seen "before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come" (Joel 2:30, 31). Then he assures that a "remnant" will be delivered, and the nations judged, as the Lord shall "roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem" (chap. 3:16).

And finally, a new Jerusalem will become God's dwelling place forever (chap. 3). He pictures the dark antecedent "day of the Lord" in vivid terms:
"Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand; a day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness." "The day of the Lord is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?" (Joel 2:1, 2, 11).

(8) AMOS—attacks the popular current concept of the day of the Lord as vindicating not merely Israel but righteous ness. And he cries, "Woe unto you that desire the day of the Lord! to what end is it for you? the day of the Lord is darkness, and not light" (Amos 5:18). And he likewise warns of celestial signs—how the Lord of hosts "in that day . . . will cause the sun to go down at noon, and . . . will darken the earth in the clear day" (chap. 8:9).

(9) HABAKKUK—foretells the glad time when, with all tribulations past, "the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Hab. 2:14).

(10) ZEPHANIAH—warns of the approaching "day of the Lord" (Zeph. 1:14): "A day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness" (v. 15). But when the tempest is past

then all the righteous will serve God "with one consent" (chap. 3:8, 9).

(11) ZECHARIAH—presents both the gloom and the glory of the "latter days," as well as the Messianic Era, in which the Gentiles are to be converted (Zechariah 2:11).

(12) MALACHI—tells of the "messenger of the covenant" who will "suddenly come to his temple," but comes in judgment: "Who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire" (Malachi 3:2).

His final chapter describes graphically "the great and the terrible day of the Lord"—the day that "shall burn as an oven," consuming the wicked like "stubble," reducing them to "ashes," and leaving them "neither root nor branch" (chap. 4:1). Then shall the eternal "Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings" (v. 2).

These all portray, in various inspired phrasings, the "last things," the events of the "latter days," "time of the end," and "great day of the Lord." That is Old Testament eschatology.

E. Isaiah—Star Witness on Inspiration's Witness Stand

ISAIAH—portrays the glories of the new heavens and the new earth to come. But first he pictures the preceding general judgments. The testimony of these prophetic witnesses has a strikingly similar pattern, climaxing with the Second Advent and the concurrent literal resurrection of the righteous. Here is Isaiah's characteristic portrayal of the dread scenes of desolation, when the Lord returns in judgment: "Behold, the Lord makes the earth empty, and makes it waste, and turns it upside down, and scatters abroad the inhabitants thereof" (Isaiah 24:1).

Then follows a succession of vivid descriptions: The earth is to be utterly emptied and despoiled—devoured with a curse—broken down and desolated—the inhabitants gathered together as prisoners in the pit—but visited again after many days (chap. 24). Then comes the time when "he [the Lord] will swallow up death in victory," and all tears will be wiped away. That is when the saints, who have waited for their Lord, are saved (chap. 25).

He sets forth a fervid expectation of resurrection—when "thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise," and "the earth shall cast out the dead" (chap. 26:19). There is also allusion to the coming of the Lord to punish earth's inhabitants for their iniquity. And at that time "the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain" (chap. 26:21).

Thus the "indignation of the Lord" upon all nations is disclosed, and they are "utterly destroyed" (chap. 34:2)— because it is "the day of the Lord's vengeance" (v. 8). Then the "streams" and the "land" are turned into "burning pitch," and the "dust thereof into brimstone," as vast destruction reigns (v. 9). The tremendous physical upheavals of the last days are portrayed, but always with hope:

"Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner: but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished" (Isaiah 51:6; cf. 2 Peter 3:7-13; Revelation 21:1). While there is warning that "darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people," there is assurance that this will be followed by the coming of the glory of the Lord (Isaiah 60:1, 2). And there is radiant promise of a "new heavens and a new earth," to supersede the present sin-and-death-pocked earth: "For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind" (Isaiah 65:17; cf. Revelation 21; 22). But the Lord's coming in awesome fiery judgment is again portrayed:

"For, behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. For by fire and by his sword will the Lord plead with all flesh: and the slain of the Lord shall be many" (Isaiah 66:15, 16). Then Isaiah's portrayals end with the glorious assurance to the redeemed:

"For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain" (v. 22).

But Isaiah, the gospel prophet, likewise gives a tremendous portrayal of Christ's first advent, when the Redeemer should come to Zion (Isaiah 59:20). Isaiah tells graphically of the mission of Christ's first advent, beginning with His birth (chaps. 7:14; 9:6),

then His role as Suffering Servant, and on to His glorious triumph. (Micah even names his birthplace—Micah 5:2.) Tremendous is the detail of Isaiah's inspired portrayal of the anguish of the Redeemer's last hours, as "his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men" (Isaiah 52:14), as He gave His "back to the smiters," and His "cheeks to them that plucked off the hair," and hid not His face from "shame and spitting" (chap. 50:6).

Christ's sufferings and death are all disclosed in chapter 53: "Despised and rejected"—"a man of sorrows"— bearing our griefs—carrying our sorrows—taking the iniquities of us all—"smitten of God, and afflicted"—"wounded for our transgressions"—"bruised for our iniquities"—"brought as a lamb to the slaughter"—"taken from prison and from judgment"—"cut off out of the land of the living"—making His grave with the rich—and His soul made an offering for sin—"numbered with the transgressors"—justifying many—and making inter cession for the ransomed transgressors. It is the incomparable prophetic portrayal of the atonement on Calvary.

F. Major Results Spring From "Day of the Lord"

1. SCENES OF JUDGMENT DOMINATE CLOSING PORTRAYAL.

Let us now summarize. First, scenes of judgment, to determine the reward of the righteous and the punishment of the wicked, appear in the multiple portrayal:

"Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people. Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice. And the heavens shall declare his righteousness: for God is judge himself (Psalm 50:3-6).

"For he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth" (Psalm 96:13).

"For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil" (Eccl. 12:14).

"I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened" (Daniel 7:9, 10).

2. NEW EARTH BECOMES ETERNAL HOME OF REDEEMED.

The new heavens and new earth, created anew by God, be come the eternal home of the redeemed and now immortalized saints, paralleling the transcendent scenes and provisions of Revelation 21 and 22 and 2 Peter 3:13. This is in the eternal kingdom of glory that shall never end:

"And thou, O tower of the flock, the strong hold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion; the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem" (Micah 4:8).

"But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace" (Psalm 37:11; cf. Matthew 5:5).

"Wait on the Lord, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land: when the wicked are cut off, thou shall see it" (Psalm 37:34).

"In thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore" (Psalm 16:11). "Behold, the righteous shall be

recompensed in the earth" (Proverbs 11:31).

"For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind." "The voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her" (Isaiah 65:17, 19; cf. Revelation 21:4).

"For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain" (Isaiah 66:22).

"And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom" (Daniel 7:27).

3. OBLITERATION OF SIN EVENTUATES IN CLEAN UNIVERSE

The final disposal of sin and its author, together with all who have followed him, will eventuate in a clean universe, in which sin and its dire results will not rise up the second time:

"He will make an utter end: affliction shall not rise up the second time" (Nahum 1:9).

"For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind" (Isaiah 65:17).

"They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Isaiah 11:9; cf. Revelation 21:4).

"For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent" (Zeph. 3:9).

4. RESURRECTION AND MILLENNIUM CLARIFIED IN NEW TESTAMENT

The eschatology of the Old Testament is not, of course, as fully developed or expounded as in the New Testament, which complements and completes the Old. For example, the two resurrections (of righteous and wicked, or just and unjust), which take place a thousand years apart, as clearly presented in the Apocalypse (Revelation 20:5, 6), are only implied in the Old Testament. These separated events are sometimes grouped together, and not sharply distinguished as to timing, as in the New. Similarly, the doctrine of the millennium was not as yet clearly developed in the Old Testament, being reserved for the fuller presentation of the Apocalypse.

Nevertheless, the millennium definitely follows the second coming of Christ. According to Daniel, it is after the Son of man comes with the clouds of heaven that He is given—"dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." "And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, . . . and all dominions shall serve and obey him" (Daniel 7:14, 27).

The millennium is preliminary to this eternal kingdom. According to the psalmist the appearing of the Lord in flaming fire upon His adversaries prepares the way for the establishment of His glorious kingdom, as He comes first to judge and then to rule the world with righteousness and the "peoples with equity" (Psalm 98:9; 96:13). The millennium is consequently an interim period.

5. BARREN CONDITION OF EARTH DURING MILLENNIUM

The Old Testament gives flash pictures of the chaotic condition of the earth during the millennial period. But contrary to common expectation the saints spend the millennium in Heaven with Christ, with whom they ascend at His second advent (1 Thess. 4:16, 17; cf. 1 Corinthians 15:51, 52), returning to this earth at its close. The condition of the earth during this period is one of desolation and ruin, being inhabited only by Satan and his evil minions (Revelation 20:1-3, 7). This is strikingly portrayed in the Old Testament. Then at its close the earth will for a time become the scene of the complete destruction of all evil beings in the Gehennan lake of fire (Revelation 20:9, 10). Old Testament intimations of the devastation are:

"I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was without form, and void; and the heavens, and they had no light. I beheld the mountains, and, lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly. I beheld, and, lo, there was no man, and all the birds of the heavens were fled. I beheld, and, lo, the fruitful place was a wilderness, and all the cities thereof were broken down at the presence of the Lord, and by his fierce anger. For thus hath the Lord said, The whole land shall be desolate; yet will I not make a full end" (Jeremiah 4:23-27).

"The Lord hath a controversy with the nations, he will plead with all flesh; he will give them that are wicked to the sword, saith the Lord. . . . And the slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth: they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried; they shall be dung upon the ground" (chap. 25:31-33).

The clear distinction of the New Testament as to the temporary disposition of the living wicked, at Christ's second advent, is not brought out clearly in the Old Testament. But at Christ's second coming the living wicked are cut off; slain by the brightness of His coming—thus bringing about the first death of all remaining living sinners (as is the lot of all men), except the living righteous who

are translated and immortalized without experiencing death (1 Corinthians 15:51, 52; 1 Thess. 4:15-17).

But the wicked who are slain by the brightness of the Second Advent will come up in the "second" resurrection, at the close of the millennial thousand years (Revelation 20:5), for final judgment—and then utter and final destruction through the second death.

Fuller portrayal of New Testament eschatology appears in connection with the New Testament presentation. See pp. 388-418.

See L. E. Froom, Prophetic Faith, vol. 4.

"The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly. The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth. And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited" (Isaiah 24:19-22).

But this will pass, and the glories of the eternal kingdom of the saints continue on forever.

As might be assumed, the Old Testament eschatology is simple, logical, and majestic. It is without a single element degrading to the highest concepts of Deity and the divine philosophy of history, and with nothing to revolt the moral senses—nothing of the weird extravagances replete in pagan speculation and myth. It deals with the glorious destiny of the righteous and the irremediable doom of the wicked at the end of the age. That is the evidence of eschatology.

Technical Terms and Usages Preclude Innate Immortality

An Examination of Nephesh, Neshamah, and Ruach

This chapter, and the one to follow, will take on more of a technical turn than has been our wont. But somewhere along the way we must pause to examine more critically the Old Testament terms that we have occasionally touched upon. And this is obviously the place. Some may not be too keenly interested in this semantic angle, but such a scrutiny is essential to a clear understanding of the ground we are traversing. Such a follow-through will more than repay the effort required to grasp the facts involved.

A. Must Understand Key Old Testament Terms Through Usage

Words represent thoughts, ideas. When employed to portray what can easily be seen—such as tangible and perceptible objects—there is far less likelihood of misunderstanding than when used to depict invisible things or abstract ideas. Moreover, the difficulty is inevitably increased when such terms have to be translated from the idioms of one language into the phrasings of another. And this impediment is intensified when rendering from an ancient tongue into a modern language. That is because of dissimilarity of thought, habit, customs, and forms of expression.

Furthermore, the presence of any parables, metaphors, and other figures of speech compound the difficulties. There fore the task of transferring the meaning with precision is not an easy one. Also, as is candidly admitted, the theological viewpoint of the translator has often had a definite bearing on the translation. But to these challenges we must now turn.

There are five Old Testament Hebrew key words that we must survey in order to determine their true import. And this must be gained through a comprehensive tracement of their Biblical usage. This point cannot be overstressed. The reason for this procedure will become increasingly apparent as we continue. These terms are (1) nephesh (soul), (2) ruach (spirit), (3) neshamah (breath), (4) she'ol (the grave) and (5) Ge Hinnom, or gehenna (devouring fire)—with their similarities and comparisons, contrasts and relationships.

B. Meaning of Nephesh in the Hebrew of the Old Testament

The word "soul" in the K.J.V. of the English Bible is translated from the Hebrew word nephesh in all but two cases. Since the word "soul" has more than one meaning in English, it is important to inquire what the word nephesh really means, if we are to understand the teaching of the Bible correctly.

1. "NEPHESH" HAS SEVERAL COMMON MEANINGS

The Hebrew word nephesh, like the English word "soul," has more than one meaning, some being not synonymous with the English meanings of "soul." Koehler and Baumgartner in their lexicon give the following meanings for nephesh:

1. Throat.
2. Breath, the breathing substance, making man and animal living beings; the soul (strictly distinct from the Greek notion of soul), the seat of which is in the blood.
3. Living being.
4. Soul as equal to living being, individual, person.
5. Breath, soul, personality.
6. Breath as equal to life.
7. Breath as equal to soul as the seat of moods, emotions, and passions.

Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libras, Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner, eds., vol. 2, pp. 626, 627.

Quite parallel with this is the general classification of the various usages of nephesh adopted by Bullinger in his lexicon:
(1) "CREATURE"—"beast," "thing."

(2) "PERSON"—"man," "men," "him," "me," yourselves," "himself," "we," "he," "myself," "her," "thee," "herself," "thyself," "themselves," "dead," "body," "one," "any," "they," "own," "fellow," "deadly," "mortally," "soul."

(3) "LIFE" and "LIVES"—"ghost," "breath."

(4) "DESIRE"—"mind," "heart," "lust," "pleasure," "discontented," "will," "greedy," "hearty," "appetite."

2. A GENERAL DEFINITION OF "NEPHESH."

With this much before us, perhaps it is appropriate to attempt a definition of nephesh. As a start, at least, we can quote a modern book that is the combined work of many scholars "with a thorough knowledge of modern scholarship and theology," to quote the jacket-flap description of the book. Here is the definition: "SOUL (nephesh) means the living being. We might render it 'person' or 'personality,' so long as we remember that in Hebrews thought even an animal is a nephesh. In passages of dignified or poetic diction the word is used instead of the personal pronoun (my soul—I or me); or to give a reflexive sense (his soul—himself, etc.). Roughly speaking, it means mind as distinct from matter (to quote the terminology of a once familiar dualism), but always includes more than mind in the limited sense of the reasoning faculty. It includes feelings, interest, and inclination; cf. Jeremiah 15:1."

3. BASIC IDEA THAT OF INDIVIDUAL HIMSELF

Nephesh comes from the root naphash, a verb used three times in the Old Testament (Exodus 23:12; 31:17; 2 Samuel 16:14), in each case with the meaning "to revive oneself" or "to refresh oneself." The verb seems to go back to the basic meaning of breathing, and in the three times it is used the ordinary English reader might be tempted to translate it colloquially as "catch one's breath" or "take a breather," as after some extreme physical exertion.

E. W. Bullinger, A Critical Lexicon and Concordance, art., "Soul," p. 721.

A Theological Word Book of the Bible. Alan Richardson, ed., art. "Mind, Heart," p. 144.

Nephesh as meaning the individual himself, is best illustrated by the portrayal of man's creation. As translated from the Hebrew in the R.S.V., it reads: "The Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being" (Genesis 2:7). Since each person is a distinct unit of life, the uniqueness of individuality seems to be the idea emphasized in the Hebrew word nephesh. And since the obvious evidence of life is breath and breathing, it is easy to understand how nephesh is used of man as a living being. Thus the R.S.V. translation is an accurate rendering of the Hebrew word.

Nephesh is also used of animals, and is appropriately rendered "creature" in both the K.J.V. and R.S.V. Since animals breathe as

evidence of life, the Hebrew use of the word here seems appropriate. As a matter of fact, animals are called nephesh chayah ("living creatures," K.J.V.) in Genesis 1. The basic idea that nephesh is the individual himself, rather than merely a constituent part of the individual, seems to underlie the various usages of nephesh. From this basic idea springs the idiomatic use of nephesh for the personal pronoun —"my soul" for "I" and "me"; "thy soul" for "you," et cetera, to use the common English translations in the Bible. The majority of the occurrences of nephesh may be properly translated by "person," "individual," "life," or by the appropriate personal pronoun.

There are also a substantial number of places in the Bible where nephesh applies to the inner being, if by this term we will understand nephesh as the seat of mind, heart, emotions, will, et cetera.

C. Nephesh as Translated in the English Versions

1. ENGLISH TRANSLATION REVEALS SIGNIFICANT FACTS

It seems proper to ask at this point whether the English versions really convey to the common English reader the true meaning of nephesh. A survey will reveal some interesting facts. One interesting and useful analysis is to be found in The Companion Bible, Appendix 13. The following facts and figures are taken from it:

Nephesh occurs in the Old Testament 754 times. In the K.J.V. and the R.V. it is translated "soul" 472 times, and by 44 different words in 282 other occurrences.

Nephesh is used of the lower animals only—in 22 instances.

Nephesh is used of lower animals and man—7 times. (The first usage of nephesh is Genesis 1:20.) Nephesh is used of man as an individual—53 times.

Nephesh is used of man as exercising certain powers or performing certain acts—96 times. Nephesh is used of man as possessing

animal appetites and passions— 22 times.

Nephesh is used of man as exercising mental faculties and manifesting feelings, affections, and passions—231 times in 20 different ways.

Nephesh is used of man "cut off" by God, and being slain or killed—in 54 passages.

Nephesh is used of man as mortal, subject to death, but from which he can be delivered—in 243 passages. Nephesh is used of man as

actually dead—in 13 passages.

Finally, nephesh is used of man (all rendered "soul") as going (1) to she'ol, (2) to the "grave," (3) to "hell," (4) to the "pit"—hence a grave, (5) a "deep pit," and (6) into "silence."

[Based on Bullinger, The Companion Bible, Appendix 13, pp. 19-21. Complete references for each classification and use appear on these pages, which are thus invaluable for reference or study.]

Another summary presents the facts in a slightly different way. In the K.J.V. the Hebrew word nephesh is translated as follows: 471 times soul (every text in the Old Testament where soul is used except two, Job 30:15 and Isaiah 57:16).

118 times life (life's, lives).
29 times person.
15 times mind.
15 times heart.
9 times creature.
7 times body.
5 times dead.
4 times man.
3 times me.

3 times beast.
2 times ghost.
1 time fish.

Nephesh is also translated one or more times as we, he, thee, they, her, herself, him (and other forms of the personal pronoun), and as will, appetite, lust, thing, breath, etc.

One thing is abundantly clear from this analysis. The Hebrew word nephesh was used in a variety of contexts with a variety of meanings. This is common in a language that is as word poor as Hebrew. To present the correct meaning it is necessary to use many different English words, depending for guidance on the context.

2. INTERESTING VARIATIONS IN R.S.V

Let us now turn to the Revised Standard Version, and make some comparisons. At the time of this writing the R.S.V. is the latest group-produced English translation of the complete Old Testament. Others are in preparation, and may reveal additional facts for our quest. A check of the computer-produced Concordance of the Revised Standard Version reveals that the words soul and souls are used 200 times in the Old Testament. A cross-check with the English man's Hebrew and Chaldee Concordance, which lists every text in which nephesh occurs, with the English translation in the K.J.V., reveals that only 190 times is nephesh translated soul in the R.S.V.

This is interesting, for it reveals that the translators were aware of the difficulties presented by the word soul and have used the other English meanings of nephesh in 281 more cases than the K.J.V. In the R.S.V. many of the uses of soul for nephesh refer to the mind, will, emotions, desires. In a few cases soul is retained where life or person would be appropriate.

3. PROBLEMS CONFRONT THE TRANSLATORS

One text in particular is worthy of mention because it is often used by those who believe in an immortal soul that can separate from the body. In the R.S.V., Genesis 35:18 reads: "As her soul was departing (for she died), she called his name Benoni." It would appear that here the revisers did not follow the principles they had been using in the other texts. Nephesh could very well have been translated life, since the text goes on to explain that she died.

These figures are based on a comparison of The Englishman's Hebrew and Chaldee Concordance, Young's Analytical Concordance, and Strong's Exhaustive Concordance. There are probably minor errors in these books, so the figures vary slightly.

Several modern translators have recognized this, for they translate this verse in harmony with Hebrew usage to give the correct English meaning.

Berkeley: "With her last breath—for she expired— . . ."
Fenton: "But she breathing out her life—for she was dying— . . ." Moffatt-. "As her life went from her (for she died) . . ."
Knox: ". . . her life was ebbing away in her pangs . . ." Quite parallel to this text is 1 Kings 17:21, 22:

"And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the Lord, and said, O Lord my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again. And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived."

This child was dead, for in verse 17 it is said, "His sick ness was so sore, that there was no breath left in him." He had stopped breathing. Here the R.S.V. continues the use of the word "soul" from the K.J.V., but again in apparent violation of its principles in other texts. Several modern translations follow the Hebrew consistently:

Moffatt: ". . . the child's life came back and he revived." Knox: ". . . the boy's life returned to him, and he revived."
Berkeley: ". . . the life of the child returned to him, and he lived again."
Smith-Goodspeed: ". . . the life of the child came back to him again; so that he lived." Rotherham: ". . . the life of the boy came again within him and he lived."

It should be added that in the new Jewish Publication Society translation, of which only the Pentateuch is available at present, the translators have designedly omitted the English word soul altogether, because in their opinion it does not correctly represent the Hebrew meaning in any text.

4. THREE CLEAR CONCLUSIONS CONCERNING "NEPHESH."
It is now possible to draw some definite conclusions about nephesh.

(1) "Nephesh" is not an independent entity—something that is separate, or separable, from the individual himself; something put into one when he is brought into being, and that lives on after he is dead, a sort of double, another self. There are not two personalities in man. Man is an integer, a single personality, a unit.

(2) "Nephesh" does not denote something peculiar to man alone, distinguishing him from the animals beneath him in the scale of being. There is assuredly a radical difference, a fixed gulf, between the lowest type of man and the very highest order of brute or beast. But nephesh is not the differentiating factor, for the term nephesh is applied to lower animals as well as man.

(3) "Nephesh" definitely does not designate something in man that is immortal and indestructible. If nephesh does not denote a separate entity that may survive death and separate from the body, is it possible that the word "spirit" can carry such a connotation? The English word "spirit" is often the translation of the Hebrew word ruach. So let us study this word to discover its real meaning.

D. Ruach and Neshamah Have a Variety of Meanings

1. CONTEXT MUST INDICATE BEST TRANSLATION
The Hebrew word ruach occurs some 380 times in the Old Testament. In the majority of cases (some 360 occurrences) it is translated by three English words—"wind," "breath," and "spirit." Thus the same word is used to carry several different meanings, and the context must indicate the English word that best translates the Hebrew meaning.

In the case of the translation "spirit," the word has several different applications. It is used 76 times in the sense of vitality, courage, temper, or anger. It is used to describe the living principle in man and animals 25 times; as the seat of the emotions 3 times, mind 9 times; as will, volition, or heart, 3 times; and as moral character 16 times. As applied to God, ruach, "spirit," is used some 90 times." The word is also used of angels, both good and bad. Since God and the angels are usually invisible to human sight, they may be considered spirit beings, spirits, and are so spoken of in the Bible.

Since breath, wind, moral character, vitality, principle of life, and spirit beings are all invisible, the underlying idea of ruach seems to suggest an invisible force, power, or being, which acts to produce visible results. We are dealing with man and his nature, and we may therefore properly ignore all the uses of ruach (spirit) that refer to God and angels. We are interested in breath as evidence of life, and in the principle of life with which God has endowed man.

2. "NESHAMAH" AND "RUACH" IN POETIC PARALLELISM
In Hebrew there is an approximating synonym for ruach in the word neshamah. In fact, it is this word that is used in the record of the creation of man. "The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath [neshamah] of life; and man became a living soul" (Genesis 2:7). Neshamah is not a common word, for it appears only 24 times in the Hebrew of the Old Testament. It is translated 17 times as breath; 3 times blast; 2 times spirit; once souls; and once inspiration. It is used with ruach in two compound expressions:

"breath [neshamah] of the spirit [ruach] of life" (Genesis 7:22, margin),
"blast [neshamah} of the breath [ruach} of his nostrils" (2 Samuel 22:16; Psalm 18:15, with "thy" in place of "his"). Neshamah and ruach are also used in poetic parallelism in a number of verses:

"By the blast [neshamah] of God they perish, and by the breath [ruach] of his nostrils are they consumed" (Job 4:9).

"All the while my breath [neshamah] is in me, and the spirit [ruach] of God is in my nostrils" (Job 27:3).

"But there is a spirit [ruach] in man: and the inspiration [neshamah] of the Almighty giveth them understanding" (Job 32:8). "But it is the spirit in a man, the breath of the Almighty, that makes him understand" R.S.V.

"The spirit of God [ruach] hath made me, and the breath [neshamah] of the Almighty hath given me life" (Job 33:4).

"If he set his heart upon man, if he gather unto himself his spirit [ruach] and his breath [neshamah]; all flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again into dust" (Job 34:14, 15).

"He . . . gives breath [neshamah] unto the people upon it, and spirit [ruach] to them that walk therein" (Isaiah 42:5).

These figures are based on The Englishman's Hebrew and Chaldee Concordance and Strong's Exhaustive Concordance. There may be minor differences in the count in different concordances, so no claim is here made for absolute accuracy. But the exact number of times a word is used or translated a given way is not of prime significance to our quest.

3. THE LIFE PRINCIPLE THAT GOD IMPARTS

Consider Job 33:4, before cited, for a moment. The "spirit of God" is obviously identical with the "breath of the Almighty." And "the breath of the Almighty" is the source of the "breath of life" (or "breath [that is] life")—as in Genesis 2:7—which God "breathed" into man's "nostrils," thereby causing the inanimate Adam to become a "living soul [being]."

When neshamah and/or ruach are used in this sense they refer to the life principle which God imparts to each new individual on this earth. It is equally clear that the same life principle is given to the animals also. In the announcement of the Flood to Noah, God said, "Behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven" (Genesis 6:17). In the description of the flood catastrophe, in fulfillment of this threat, it is recorded, "And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth, and every man: all in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died" (Genesis 7:21, 22).

Parenthetically we should say right here that the "breath of life" common to all breathing creatures does not degrade man to the level of a beast or elevate a beast to the level of a man. God has organized the various creatures of His hand with different qualities and natures. Just as the breath of life does not make a lion like a rabbit, neither does it make a man like a beast. Man made in the image of God is far removed from even the most intelligent animal.

4. "RUACH" HAS NO SEPARATE CONSCIOUS EXISTENCE

There is nothing in the Old Testament that even hints that ruach as the life principle has a separate conscious existence, that it is the man himself as distinct from the body. It is given to man when he comes into existence, and is withdrawn, or surrendered, when he dies. It is a gift from God, and in one sense always belongs to Him, though man may call it his own while he lives. The preacher in Ecclesiastes 8:8 depicts the helplessness of man when God withdraws the principle of life —his breath: "There is no man that hath power over the spirit [ruach] to retain the spirit [ruach]; neither hath he power in the day of death."

No, man does not have an undying spirit that continues in conscious existence in another sphere.

There is one more text in which ruach appears, translated "spirits," which may trouble some. It is Numbers 16:22, with the same expression occurring again in chapter 27:16. It reads: "And they fell upon their faces, and said, O God, the God of the spirits [ruach] of all flesh, shall one man sin, and wilt thou be wroth with all the congregation?" The new Jewish Publication Society Torah renders this as "O God, Source of the breath of all flesh." This would appear to be a better English rendering of the Hebrew meaning, and clears up any difficulty the text might seem to present.

E. Relation of "Spirit" or "Breath" to Life and Death

1. "BREATH OF LIFE" AND "SPIRIT OF GOD" THE CAUSE OF LIFE

The "breath of life," or "spirit," which brought life originally to man, is expressly declared to have been in breathed by God. The patriarch Job in characteristic Hebrew parallelism, in referring back to the creation of man, utters these impressive words: "The spirit [ruach] of God hath made me, and the breath [neshamah] of the Almighty hath given me life" (Job 33:4). And in speaking of man's death, Job states that it is brought about by the reversal of the creation process—God gathering back to Himself His "spirit [ruach] and his breath [neshamah]" (Job 34:14), which He originally inbreathed, or infused, into man. Hence the spirit that God takes back from man at death is God's own vitalizing spirit, or breath, imparted to man, and then returning to its originating Source. This appears also in Ecclesiastes: "Then shall the dust [by metonomy, the body] return to the earth as it was: and the spirit [ruach; not nephesh, soul] shall return unto God who gave it" (chap. 12:7).

2. SPIRIT DISTINCT FROM LIFE IT PRODUCES

In death man's ruach (spirit) goes back to God, from whom it came when man was formed. While it is the presence of the spirit, or breath, of God that bestows life on man, it is to be particularly noted that God's "spirit," or "breath" (Job 33:4), is distinct from the life it has brought into being—just as cause is different from effect.

This differentiation is highly important. If the life of man were identical with the spirit that produced it, it would possess all the essential attributes of the spirit. But this is safe guarded in the Scripture account, which describes the spirit as the cause of life, but distinct and distinguishable from it. Thus the effect may perish, but the cause does not perish. The life of man may disappear and become extinct, while the spirit, or breath, from the Almighty does not. It simply returns to Him from whom it came.

Man has the breath, or spirit, of God within him. But the spirit may be withdrawn, since it is only a loan from God for the duration of man's lifetime. Job significantly describes life as "all the while my breath [neshamah] is in me, and the spirit [ruach] of God is in my nostrils" (Job 27:3). Job knew that his spirit, or breath, was not his own, with an independent and innate right to keep it, but was the spirit, or breath, of God in his nostrils—subject to withdrawal at his Maker's will. Job recognized himself as intrinsically but "dust" (Job 10:9; 34:15).

3. RESTORATION OF SPIRIT AT RESURRECTION

As the entrance of the spirit into man originally gave him life, so in the same way the restoration of the spirit, at the resurrection, renews his life. This is foreshown by Ezekiel's vision of the valley of the dry bones—then "very dry" (Ezekiel 37:2) and entirely lifeless, having once had life but now with "no breath [spirit, ruach] in them" (v. 8). And then through the action of the figurative "WIND" [breath, or spirit, ruach] life was restored by God's causing His spirit, or breath, to enter into them again. Thus:

"Behold, I will cause breath [spirit, ruach] to enter into you [the dry bones], and ye shall live: and I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath [spirit, ruach] in you, and ye shall live." "And shall put my spirit [ruach] in you, and ye shall live" (Ezekiel 37:5, 6, 14).

The life that was relinquished when the spirit left the body is thus renewed. And it was this renewal, or restoration of the spirit, or breath—the breath of God that caused life —that was the hope and the promise of a future life for the Old Testament worthies. When they knew they were dying, and were soon to sink back into their original earth, they commended their spirits into the safekeeping of God. Thus the psalmist David, upon the prospect of death, said: "Into thine hand I commit my spirit [ruach]: thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth. ... I trust in the Lord" (Psalm 31:5, 6).

He made the same committal that Christ later made (Luke 23:46). It was because he had been redeemed that David was able to commend his spirit with confidence into the hands of God. Reiterating then: God gave man his "spirit" at creation. But man forfeited his right to the causative spirit, and in consequence it is rendered back to God at (the first) death, going back to Him to whom it belongs.

And while the spirit is rendered back to God as a forfeit because of the original sin, its restoration is pledged by covenant through Christ. It is the believer's in promise—a promise that will not be broken, for it is "impossible for God to lie" (Hebrews 6:18). It is kept safe for him. The separation is for the time when the sleeper lies silently in the dust of gravedom, which passage of time will seem as but the twinkling of an eye.

F. Fundamental Distinction Between Man and Beast

1. IMMORTALITY NOT CONFERRED BY INBREATHED "BREATH."

We would once more stress the fact that there is no justifiable basis for the frequent assertion that the inbreathing of the "breath of life" into man's nostrils made the resultant "living soul [nephesh chayah]" immortal. Man is not intrinsically the breath of life. He simply has the breath of life.

Adam had life through the "breath of life," or "spirit of God," that was inbreathed, infused, or inspired into him at creation (Genesis 2:7). This principle and provision of life came to man from God, the sole origin of life, and at death it goes back to God, who gave it (Eccl. 12:7). To die is to expire, and to expire is to emit the last breath.

Death is therefore the separation of the "breath of life" from the body. Man's present physical life, as with all the animal creation, is dependent upon the breath. When that is gone, both man and beast die. In that respect man has no pre-eminence over the beast (Eccl. 3:19). And this is irrespective of whether good or evil. Such is God's universal law.

2. TOTALLY DIFFERENT FROM BRUTE CREATION

But, in the sight of God there is a vast difference between the nature and character and value of the respective lives of man and beast. Man was expressly made in the "image" of God (Genesis 1:26, 27; 9:6; cf. 1 Corinthians 11:7; 15:49); the beast was not. Furthermore, man's power of speech, his moral nature, his distinctive capability for religion and worship, and his capability of constant progression and fellowship with God are totally different from that of the brute creation, which ever remains at the same level of intelligence, and does not have fellowship with God. Man is a "son of God" (Luke 3:38); the beast is not.

In addition, a fundamental difference was established by God in the relationships and destiny of man and beast. Thus man was given dominion over the lower animal creation (Genesis 1:26); never the reverse. And while both man and beast return to dust, the brute simply ceases to be thereafter, whereas man sleeps under the watch care of God until the resurrection. According to the Word, man's "spirit," or "breath," goes back to God who gave it (Eccl. 12:7; cf. Numbers 27:16; Job 12:10; 34:14, 15; Psalm 104:29, 30; Isaiah 42:5; Zechariah 12:1; Hebrews 12:9), and is hid with Christ in God awaiting the glad reunion of spirit, or breath, and body at the final resurrection day.

3. AT DEATH BEAST CEASES TO BE

Such are the fundamental distinctions between man and beast. They are as far apart as the poles, and were so designed, created, and kept by God. At death the beast permanently ceases to be, has no awakening, no future
life. That is its end. But redeemed and regenerated man will be called forth from his sleep by Christ the Life- giver, to a life that measures with the life of God, and in eternal communion thereafter with God.

Let none say, then, that because both have life and breath from God, man has no fundamental pre-eminence over the beast. There is no pre-eminence in this—that both die, or cease to live. They both expire. But there the similarity ends. Upon man alone will be conferred the gift of immortality, to be bestowed at the Second Advent and its concurrent resurrection. Thus man is indeed the crown of creation, made in the "image of God" (Genesis 5:1; Acts 17:29; 1 Corinthians 11:7).

Weak Arguments Formulate Unworthy Platform

Two other vital Hebrew terms must be considered ere we turn to certain favorite Old Testament problem texts constantly invoked by Immortal-Soulists in seeking to sustain their view of the persisting consciousness of disembodied spirits, or souls, after death and of the Eternal Torment of the incorrigibly wicked. We will then bring this survey of the Old Testament on the nature and destiny of man to a close. So we now turn, first to she'ol and then to Ge Hinnom.

A. She'ol's Most Suitable Rendering Is "Gravedom"

In seeking to grasp the meaning and to understand the usage of the basic Hebrew terms that concern the destiny of man, we come to the familiar word she'ol, which we should remember is always connected with death. Now, there are two principal reasons for the prevalent difficulty in grasping the true intent of she'ol—(1) conflicting translations, and (2) popular misconceptions prevalent concerning Hell. These must be clarified and the true intent ascertained.

1. DIFFICULTY CREATED BY VARIANT TRANSLATIONS

First of all, variant translations of the Hebrew word she'ol have made it difficult for the English reader to grasp the basic meaning of the word. For example, in its sixty-five occurrences in the Old Testament she'ol has been given three different and actually contradictory renderings. In the Authorized Version, she'ol is twenty-seven times rendered as "hell," thirty-five times as "the grave," and three times as "the pit." (It should be noted at the outset that "grave," as here used, means "the grave" in contrast to "a grave" [qeber] or mere burial place.) Added to this primary difficulty is the fact that nine other words besides she'ol are also translated "pit." Furthermore, six other words, in addition to she'ol, are translated "grave."

This obviously complicates the situation. In the Revised Version she'ol is translated as "hell" four teen times, as "grave" fifteen times, and as "pit" six times. In thirty instances she'ol is left untranslated—just the plain transliteration "sheol." In the Revised Standard Version she'ol is transliterated in all but two occurrences—1 Kings 2:9 and Song of Solomon 8:6, in both cases being rendered "grave." The Jewish Publication Society Torah transliterates she'ol in all cases. As a convenience for those who wish to check the various translations, the sixty-five instances are listed in the note be low.

See Bullinger, A Critical Lexicon and Concordance, art., "Hell." p. 368.

The sixty-five instances in which she'ol occurs are: Genesis 37:35; 42:38; 44:29, 31; Numbers 16:30, 33; Deuteronomy 32:22; 1 Samuel 2:6; 2 Samuel 22:6; 1 Kings 2:6. 9; Job 7:9; 11:8; 14:13; 17:13, 16; 21:13; 24:19; 26:6: Psalm 6:5; 9:17; 16:10; 18:5; 30:3; 31:17; 49:14 (2), 15; 55:15; 86:13; 88:3; 89:48; 116:3; 139:8; 141:7; Proverbs 1:12; 5:5; 7:27; 9:18; 15:11, 24; 23:14; 27:20; 30:16; Eccl. 9:10; Song of Solomon 8:6; Isaiah 5:14; 14:9, 11, 15; 28:15, 18; 38:10, 14; 57:9; Ezekiel 31:15, 16, 17; 32:21, 27; Hosea 13:14 (2); Amos 9:2; Jonah 2:2; Hab. 2:5.

2. "HELL" A WHOLLY UNSUITABLE TRANSLATION

The second major handicap to correct understanding is the popular misconception that Hell (one of the principal words by which she'ol is translated in the English versions) is commonly considered to be a place or state of fiery, endless, present torments for the wicked.

As mentioned, in a total of thirty-eight instances out of the sixty-five, in the Authorized Version she'ol is rendered either "the grave" or "the pit." Now, if she'ol were to signify the lake burning with fire and brimstone in which the wicked are generally believed writhing in endless conscious misery, then why should she'ol ever be rendered "grave," or "pit," which it is in more than half the passages? The question is pertinent, and the answer is simple and basic: In Old Testament times she'ol meant the unseen secret resting place of all the dead—not the place of torment for the wicked.

In the first occurrence of: she'ol (in Genesis 37:35, "For I will go down into the grave [she'ol] unto my son mourning"), the revisers in the Revised Version added a marginal note, "Hebrews she'ol, the name of the abode of the dead, answering to the Greek hades, Acts 2:27." Certain texts seem to suggest this definition ("If I wait, the grave is mine house," Job 17:13), and it presents no difficulties if we do not take it to imply that the dead are living in she'ol, which is contrary to other plain texts describing the state of man in death.

3. "GRAVEDOM"—MOST SUITABLE RENDERING FOR "SHE'OL."

A careful examination of the sixty-five she'ol pas sages will show that the word "gravedom" s—not primarily the place of interment

or the locality of departed spirits, but the condition of death or the death-state—offers the nearest suitable preponderant rendering.

The insertion of "gravedom" for she'ol into the sixty-five texts where she'ol appears, would clarify the whole problem, and afford the nearest possible uniform meaning.

Thus harmony and consistency would result, and a semblance of order come out of much confusion. Added to this is the fact that the New Testament Greek hades, equivalent of the Hebrew she'ol, may likewise be consistently translated gravedom. This is further reason for approving this, term.

4. SUSPENSION OF LIFE IN "SHE'OL" AWAITING RESURRECTION

In the Pentateuch and throughout the subsequent books of the Old Testament, she'ol is set forth as the place or state of death, or the dead, where deepest darkness and silence obtains, and in which there is total absence of life
in any form. In she'ol all human activities cease. It is the awesome terminus toward which all human life moves. The dead who are therein give no sign of life. In she'ol nothing is seen or heard. There is no thought or perception, no activity of- any kind. Good and bad alike are there—confined in darkness, with suspension of all life.

3 Employed by such eminent scholars as Canon Henry Constable, Prof. E. W. Bullinger, Congregationalist Chaplain J. H. Pettingell, and many others, as will be seen in volume 2.

See Bullinger, A Critical Lexicon, art., "Hell," p. 368; also The Companion Bible, Appendix 35, p. 33.

In she'ol "there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom" (Eccl. 9:10). Each is wrapped in heavy, unconscious sleep, there to await the call of the Life-giver on the resurrection morn. Beyond any question she'ol is the place of death, darkness, and silence—gravedom. [Genesis 37:35; Job 14:12, 13; Psalm 6:5; 49:19; Eccl. 9:5-10; Isaiah 38:18.] The fact is particularly impressive that she'ol, or grave dom, stands in complete contrast with the state of the living (Deuteronomy 30:15, 19; 1 Samuel 2:6-9), and is never connected with the living except by contrast. As to its duration, the dominion of she'ol, or the grave, lasts until, and will end only with, the resurrection which is its only exit. "I will ransom them from the power of the grave [she'ol]; I will redeem them from death . . . ; O grave [she'ol], I will be thy destruction" (Hosea 13:14. Cf. Psalm 16:10 with Acts 2:27).

Man himself, as a person or individual, goes down into she'ol, the state of death, and remains in she'ol during the entire period of death. Here are confirmatory texts:

"As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away: so he that goeth down to the grave [she'ol] shall come up no more" (Job 7:9)—that is, not until the resurrection.

"They [the wicked] spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave [she'ol]" (Job 21:13). "Like sheep they [the

foolish] are laid in the grave [she'ol]; death shall feed on them" (Psalm 49:14).

5. DARKNESS OF "SHE'OL" DISSIPATED BY LIGHT OF RESURRECTION

The concept of death and she'ol as equivalents runs all through the Old Testament (Proverbs 5:5; 7:27; Song of Solomon 8:6; Isaiah 28:15; Hab. 2:5). Resurrection was understood and anticipated. But the sadness of the Old Testament Hebrew contemplation of entrance into the dark, silent, lifeless state of she'ol, gives way to the New Testament Christian emphasis on the exit from the grave under the gospel, where she'ol's dominion is broken and its rule abrogated by the triumphant resurrection of Christ from its power and domain. Job's words thus somberly tie she'ol, darkness, corruption, and the dust, together in "gravedom."

"If I wait, the grave [she'ol] is mine house: I have made my bed in the darkness. I have said to corruption, Thou art my father: to the worm, Thou art my mother, and my sister. And where is now my hope? . . . They shall go down to the bars of the pit [she'ol], when our rest together is in the dust" (Job 17:13-16).

However, under the gospel, the exit from gravedom through the assurance of resurrection, becomes luminous and central. Thus sadness gives way to gladness.

6. "SHE'OL": PLACE OF DEATH, NOT LIFE

She'ol is therefore the place or state of death. Not once does the Old Testament speak of she'ol in connection with life. Only in the poetical imagery of Isaiah 14 are those in she'ol said to perform the acts of living beings, as will be noted in Part IV. She'ol is therefore

invariably connected with death. Hannah the prophetess speaks of God as the One who "bringeth down to the grave [she'ol], and bringeth up" (1 Samuel 2:6). In other words, she'ol is clearly, and always, the place of death.

"What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave [she'ol]" (Psalm 89:48). "The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell [she'ol] gat hold upon me" (Psalm 116:3).

7. "SHE'OL" AND "DEATH" ARE FREQUENTLY SYNONYMOUS

She'ol and "death" are often equivalents. Proverbs speaks of the strange woman whose "feet go down to death [maweth]; her steps take hold on hell [she'ol]" (Proverbs 5:5). "Her house is the way to hell [she'ol], going down to the chambers of death" (chap. 7:27). So, we repeat, she'ol and "death" are used in Holy Writ as synonyms. Thus: "We have made a covenant with death, and with hell [she'ol] are we at agreement" (Isaiah 28:15). And Habakkuk describes the proud as one who "enlarges his desire as hell [she'ol], and is as death" (Hab. 2:5). This is invariable from the earliest book of the Old Testament through to its close.

We therefore rightly conclude that she'ol is the grave, or gravedom—the silent, invisible place to which God told sinful Adam he must go—"dust thou art, and unto dust shall thou return" (Genesis 3:19)—not to a land of living ghosts. That was the understanding that Job had of she'ol, or the grave, as noted:

"If I wait, the grave [she'ol] is mine house: I have made my bed in the darkness. I have said to corruption, Thou art my father: to the worm, Thou art my mother, and my sister. . . . They shall go down to the bars of the pit [she'ol], when our rest together is in the dust" (Job 17:13-16).

B. Origin of "Gehenna" (Ge Hinnom) Symbol of Final Destruction

The Old Testament origins of New Testament expressions are significantly illustrated by the term Gehenna, frequently employed by Christ Himself, but involving definitive allusions and backgrounds rooted in the history of ancient Israel, as for example in Isaiah 66:23, 24.

1. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF "GEHENNA."

Historically, the Valley of Hinnom (or Ge Hinnom) was a narrow glen sweeping down from the south western wall of Jerusalem, and watered by the brook Kidron. Under the earlier Hebrew kings it was laid out in the form of pleasant gardens, groves, and pools. Here the wealthy had their summer homes. And at the south eastern extremity was the famed garden of Solomon with its Tophet, royal music grove, and its singers. But Hinnom came to be polluted by idolatrous shrines and "high places" in which the cruel and licentious rites of Egypt and Phoenicia were introduced, such as worship of the fire-gods by Ahaz (seventh century BC)."

Other references include "high places [idolatrous places] of Tophft" (Jeremiah 7:31); "they all bury in Tophet" (v. 32, also 19:6); "even make this city as Tophet" (19:12); "denied the place of Tophet" (v. 13, also 2 Kings 23:10). It is to be called the "valley of slaughter."

Valley of Hinnom, or "Slaughter," South of Jerusalem, Used for the Burning of Carcasses and Rubbish, Became a Symbol of Gehenna, and the Utter Destruction of the Wicked.

This pollution was intensified under Solomon's successors, like Manasseh in the sixth century B.C. (2 Chronicles 33:1-10). The hideous fires of Molech were kindled, and the shrieks of children being immolated resounded through the beautiful valley, as idolatrous Jews passed their infants "through the fire" to Molech—becoming symbolic of the wailing and gnashing of teeth to come [Leviticus 18:21; 2 Kings 23:10; 2 Chronicles 28:3; 33:6; Jeremiah 7:31]. So Tophet came to mean "place of burning," and the Valley of Hinnom, of "slaughter" (Jeremiah 7:32). It thus became a type, in prophecy, of all that was flagrantly wicked and abominable to the faithful, and of the final judgment by destruction. In succeeding centuries blood flowed there in streams. And corpses, buried and unburied, filled many of the hollows—the bones of Jews, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Moslems, and Crusaders.

2. ASSOCIATED WITH UPSURGE OF NECROMANCY

But there is yet another and related angle that needs to be noted: "And he [Manasseh] caused his children to pass through the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom: also he observed times, and used enchantments, and used witchcraft, and dealt with a familiar spirit, and with wizards: he wrought much evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke him to anger" (2 Chronicles 33:6).

Thus the heathen fires of Molech were associated with an upsurge of necromancy, witchcraft, and wizardry. They all went together. And their later destruction, under Josiah, became a symbol of the final and utter destruction of all perversions—including the false teachings and practices of alleged communication with the living spirits of the dead, under the simulating deceptions of evil angels.

3. JOSIAH TRANSFORMS VALLEY INTO REFUSE PIT

In the sixth century B.C., when Josiah came to the throne, as part of his religious reformation the groves were burned down, the pleasant gardens laid waste, and the idolatrous shrines ground to powder. To render the valley forever unclean the bones of the dead were strewn over its surface. Thenceforth it became a vast refuse pit, into which the offal of the city was cast, and the carcasses of animals, along with the dead bodies of criminals so wicked as to be adjudged unworthy of burial. Here worms preyed upon their putrefying flesh, and fires were kept burning to consume the corruption. It was the place where refuse was burned up.

Whatever was worthless was cast into the Gehenna fires, there to be utterly consumed. And in case any part remained unburned it was devoured by worms. So there was nothing left. Thus Isaiah wrote prophetically: "For Tophet is ordained of old; . . . the pile thereof is fire and much wood; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it" (Isaiah 30:33). [On Spiritualism sec last twelve chapters of volume 2 of Conditionalist Faith.]

By New Testament times the idolatry had ceased and the ancient human sacrifices were no longer offered. But the fires were still burning continually for the destruction of the refuse of Jerusalem. Hence the Greek term Gehenna (transliteration of the Hebrew Ge Hinnom) was used by Christ to designate the final fires of the destructive judgments of God.

The dread word Gehenna occurs twelve times in the New Testament," eleven of which issued from the lips of Jesus Him self in solemn warning of the consequences of sin. Gehenna is synonymous with the coming "lake of fire" of Revelation 19:20; 20:10, 14, 15.

4. VIVID SYMBOL OF FINAL DOOM PORTRAYED

Thus it was that the symbolism of the fires of the valley came to portray the final destruction of the wicked in the quenchless fires of Gehenna. Hence Isaiah prophesied of the devouring worm and fire:

"And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh" (Isaiah 66:24).

The dead bodies of the wicked lie in the valley, unburied and rotting, slowly burning amid the heaps of Jerusalem's refuse, devoured by the undying worm and quenchless flame until the whole is consumed. But the worm consumes only dead flesh—thus excluding the idea of sensibility and unending torment. And the fire precludes the concurrent presence of the worm.

But the two together symbolize complete destruction of the being that has ceased to live. And the work of the worm and fire is eternal—not in their duration but in their eternal results. The sight was an awful warning to all beholders, signifying an end, a dissolution, a disintegration, and a final disappearance—the doom of the wicked dead!

C. Three Supporting Citations Break Down Under Scrutiny

1. RECOURSE TO WEAK ARGUMENTS AN UNWORTHY PROCEDURE

It is regrettable to see how, when bereft of strong, clear, positive statements from the Word declaring Innate Immortality for all men—and deprived of clear-cut assurances of persisting, conscious existence of the soul (or spirit) follow ing the crisis called "death"—how many Immortal-Soulists grasp at certain hazy, disputed passages, parables, and figurative statements to sustain their views.

The twelve New Testament references to Gehenna (always rendered "hell") are: Matthew 5:22, 29, 30; 10:28; 18:9; 23:15, 33; Mark 9:43, 45, 47; Luke 12:5; James 3:6.

Such a procedure would almost appear to be an act of desperation that would be disdained as unworthy under virtually all other circumstances. Recourse to such doubtful evidence would seem to indicate an inherent weakness of their case. A dubious assortment of such props does not provide a trustworthy platform for a fundamental belief. It will not bear much weight or strain, and cannot endure close scrutiny. Nevertheless, draft upon such is frequently made.

We must not close this Old Testament survey without examining, briefly, a few such citations and contentions that are commonly

invoked. Then we will look into the inevitable Saul and the witch of Endor episode—always brought forward from Old Testament annals as primary testimony.

Without direct proof of Innate Immortality, recourse is often had to indirect supports—some of them of rather strange character. Curious Old Testament citations are claimed by certain believers in the immortality of the soul to support the postulate of disembodied life after death. First, there is the case of the prophet Jonah in she'ol, in the belly of the great fish (Jonah 2). Second, there is Isaiah's parabolic taunting ode on the king of Babylon in she'ol (Isaiah 14:4-11). And third, there are the parabolic dirges by Ezekiel on the fate of Pharaoh and other monarchs, likewise in she'ol (Ezekiel 31; 32). These will suffice.

2. JONAH NOT DEAD: SO CASE IS DISMISSED

As to the first episode, it can be dismissed with a couple of paragraphs—for the simple reason that Jonah was not dead, but living and conscious while in the "she'ol," or grave as it were, of the fish's belly. Consequently this dramatic episode can have no bearing on the question of consciousness in death. Jonah's recorded prayer, offered while in the belly of the fish, was this: "I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell [she'ol; or margin, "the grave"] cried I, and thou heard my voice" (Jonah 2:2).

Jonah went down into "she'ol" he said, when he descended into the waters in this living "submarine," where none but dead men had ever been before. It seemed to him that he was practically dead. The darkness and horror of his extremity made it a veritable grave. So Jonah cried out as if he were already dead—and he surely would have been dead in that living tomb had not God heard and speedily delivered him.

But to draw from this graphic narrative of life in extremity any valid conclusion as to man's continuing consciousness in death is reasoning from a totally false premise. The recital is not dealing with death. The case must consequently be dismissed forthwith, as the contention breaks down before it starts.

D. Isaiah's Parabolic Taunting Ode on King of Babylon

The taunting ode, or parable, of Isaiah 14:4-11, is like wise presumed by various Immortal-Soulists to teach that she'ol is a land of active ghost life, with ghostly memories and thoughts of life on earth. But in the narrative itself Isaiah twice plainly identifies she'ol with "the grave" (vs. 9, margin, and 11), while personifying for the moment the eerie shades of the dead as infused with life, in order to utter God's doom upon the tyrannical king of Babylon.

In the story conquered kings are parabolically represented as having thrones in she'ol, and sitting upon them as they had sat in the royal palaces from which they had been rudely ejected by the conquering arms of Nebuchadnezzar. And now, when the haughty king of Babylon, himself defeated and dead and descending to the grave, joins them in their dark domain, these departed monarchs are portrayed as rising up from their shadowy thrones to mock the fallen tyrant with feigned obeisance—but actually with insult and derision—just as in life they rendered him feigned homage.

1. PERSONIFIED TREES REJOICE OVER FALLEN MONARCH.

The whole earth rejoiced in Nebuchadnezzar's overthrow, and here the "she'ol-eans" rejoice over the downfall of this tyrannical king of Babylon, as the scene shifts from earth to she'ol, region of the dead. Even the fir trees and the cedars (v. 8) are introduced as uttering a derisive taunt over the fallen tyrant, and voicing their new security now that he is no more.

But this impressive parable was all in imagery—the inspired poet creating one of the classic odes of the Old Testament, to cast contempt upon the pride of Babylon, while its broad walls and mighty gates still stood imperiously on the plains of Chaldea. It was all in the striking figure of prosopopoeia, or personification, by which the dead are represented as speaking.

In the same passage the prophet makes the fir trees and cedars of Lebanon to speak (vs. 8-10)—thus to portray, through this literary device, how death will reduce the king of Babylon to the same level as his subjects, and become fellow prisoners in the realm of death.

Students of literature and language are well aware of the figure of prosopopoeia, or personification, wherein things are frequently represented as persons. In the Sacred Writings these include the members of the human body (Genesis 48:14; Psalm 35:10); animals (Genesis 9:5; Job 12:7); products of the earth (Nahum 1:4); inanimate things (Genesis 4:10); kingdoms, states, and countries (Psalm 45:12)—with human actions attributed to things (Genesis 18:20; Psalm 85:10).

2. PATHS OF GLORY LEAD BUT TO GRAVE

So this she'ol, to which these royal inhabitants were made to descend, was actually the silent grave (v. 11; v. 9, margin), or gravedom. And these kings are so represented under this figure of personification, thus to describe their real condition, and to say to the king of Babylon:

"Art thou also become weak as we? Art thou become like unto us? Thy pomp is brought down to the grave [she'61}, and the noise of thy viols: the worm [rimmah, "maggot"] is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee" (Isaiah 14:10, 11).

Thus in the mind and teaching of Isaiah she'ol was none other than the grave, the place where worms revel in their feast on the dead—worms being grossly material, not spiritual. No one was to assume that the characters portrayed actually acted or spoke as pictured. The term "proverb," u as here used, simply means a parabolic taunt (v. 4, "taunting speech," margin).

It was never Isaiah's purpose, in this impressive ode, to reveal the conditions of the death state. Rather, it was to fore cast in graphic pictorial language God's coming judgment upon Israel's great oppressor, and to show that the paths of cruel glory "lead but to the grave." Thus the second argument in behalf of conscious persistence of the soul after death like wise collapses.

E. Ezekiel's Parabolic Dirge Over Pharaoh of Egypt

The third plank in this wobbly platform of indirect evidence in behalf of Immortal-Soulism is this: In Ezekiel 31 and 32 a parabolic dirge of similar strain over Egypt proclaims the doom pronounced on Israel's foes—Egypt, Babylon, Assur, Elam, and Edom. The same figure of personification is employed in describing the overthrow of Pharaoh the oppressor. Here Pharaoh and his hosts, slain in battle against the king of Babylon, are portrayed in similar fashion. The "strong among the mighty" are represented as speaking from their graves in the midst of "hell" (she'dl), or gravedom, as he enters that dark domain to await his fate.

The Hebrews mashal is rendered "proverb" nineteen times, and "parable" eighteen times in the Old Testament, "parable" being preferable here.

1. "SHE'OL" CONTRASTED WITH STATE OF LIVING

Thus she'ol—"the nether parts of the earth" (Ezekiel 32:18, 24), full of graves, and so the land and state of the dead—is contrasted with the land and state of the living. The victims of slaughter had "gone down" to she'ol with their "weapons of war," and with their swords laid "under their heads" (v. 27). And when Pharaoh, figuratively portrayed as lying among them, saw the "multitude" of his enemies that also were slain, he was "comforted" by the sight (vs. 31, 32). It is all highly figurative and impressive, and not at all literal. But prediction of bitter overthrow is spoken of the conqueror of Israel. Here is the dirge:

"Thus saith the Lord God; In the day when he went down to the grave [she'ol] I caused a mourning: I covered the deep for him, and I restrained the floods thereof, and the great waters were stayed: and I caused Lebanon to mourn for him, and all the trees of the field fainted for him. I made the nations to shake at the sound of his fall, when I cast him down to hell [she'ol] with them that descend into the pit [she'ol]: and all the trees of Eden, the choice and best of Lebanon, all that drink water, shall be comforted in the nether parts of the earth. They also went down into hell [she'ol] with him unto them that be slain with the sword; and they that were his arm, that dwelt under his shadow in the midst of the heathen" (Ezekiel 31:15-17).

2. PARABOLIC SCOURGE NOT CONSTRUED LITERALLY

The portrayal was wholly parabolic, like Jotham's famous parable to Abimelech, making the trees elect a king over them, choosing a bramble, et cetera, in Judges 9:8-15. Then the imagery of the parable is openly applied: "This is Pharaoh and all his multitude, saith the Lord God" (Ezekiel 31:18). Then there follows, in chapter 32, an enumeration of the various forces of the slain that in life had caused such terror, but are now in she'ol (gravedom), "whose graves are set in the sides of the pit [she'ol]" (chap. 32:23)—their "princes" and mighty warriors "slain by the sword" (v. 29), which have "gone down to hell [she'ol, the grave] with their weapons of war" (v. 27).

It is to be noted that the three terms "grave," "hell," and "pit" in these verses are variant translations of the selfsame Hebrew word she'ol.

They are there simply personified as speaking "out of the midst of hell [she'ol]" (v. 21). But the parabolic dirge is not to be construed literally. She'ol is the place of the silence of death. But the parable had nothing to do with the intermediate state. The lesson was that, having raised up a heathen nation to chasten His own people because of their moral departures, when that instrument has executed His

will, God will not allow it to go beyond His purpose, but will send retribution upon it for its own sins and cruelties.

Such literary devices are samples of testimony sometimes unworthily brought forward to bolster the theory of conscious ness in death, and of the persistence of disembodied souls or spirits in the nether world. But these have no actual bearing on the question.

F. Saul Deceived by Necromancy of Medium of Endor

Turning from the figurative side, let us now examine a problem passage, constantly cited in support of Immortal-Soulism. Modern Spiritualism, or spiritism, is not new in its operations. Its ancient counterpart and forerunner had already made its tragic appearance back in ancient Israel's day, and before. But so grave was this corrupting and forbidden practice considered by God, and so sinister were its involvements, that under the theocracy those who sought out the practitioners of this evil art were to be "cut off," or excommunicated, from the commonwealth of Israel. So heinous was the fraudulency of this pretended communication with the dead regarded that the mediums, when apprehended, were to be summarily put to death by stoning. The solemn warning against necromancy or consulting with "familiar spirits," was written thus into law by Israel: "Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be defiled by them: I am the Lord your God" (Leviticus 19:31).

1. EVIL SPIRITS PERSONATING THE DEAD

"Familiar spirits" were none other than "evil spirits," or demons—fallen angels personating the dead—appearing
at the beck and call of a medium who had entered into sinister league with them. And here was the dread penalty then provided for such transgression, first for the seeker and then the medium:

"The soul that turneth after such as have familiar spirits, ... I will even set my face against that soul, and will cut him off from among his people" (Leviticus 20:6).

"A man also or woman that hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death: they shall stone them with stones" (v. 27).13 That was the gravity of the evil traffic. Later, this further admonition was given by the prophet Isaiah:

"And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? For the living to the dead? To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isaiah 8:19, 20).

This peeping and muttering refers to the incoherent incantations of the pagan mysteries, which they simulated. Such an inspired admonition surely constitutes a most solemn warning against all ancient or modern spiritism, and is an appeal to heed the declarations of the Word regarding the true nature and condition of man in death. And it should be added that the traditional belief that death is but life continuing on in spirit form, is the foundational basis of Spiritualism in its various forms, which has blighted the centuries, climaxing in these latter times.

2. SAUL'S RECOURSE TO FORBIDDEN CRAFT OF NECROMANCY

Nevertheless, the case of Saul and the witch of Endor is constantly and fervently invoked by those maintaining

the continued consciousness of the dead. Let us therefore examine the circumstances of that dramatic episode. Israel's apostate King Saul, when the Lord refused to answer him, sought out "a woman [or medium] that hath a familiar spirit" (1 Samuel 28:7), to inquire of her. Here is the story:

Disguising himself to avoid recognition, Saul came to the woman, significantly under the suggestive shelter of "night," and asked her to bring up the prophet Samuel, who had been dead for some time, to elicit information from him (v. 8). After being assured by an oath that she would not be betrayed or harmed for cooperation (vs. 9,
10), she then brought up 13 Compare Deuteronomy 18:10-12 where witches and wizards, consulters with familiar spirits, or necromancers (i.e., seekers unto the dead) are declared to be an abomination unto the Lord. The modern counterpart is dealt with fully in the closing chapters of volume 2. (not down, or forth) "out of the earth" (v. 13)—allegedly some subterranean region—one of the "gods" in characteristic spirit manifestation, whom she described as an "old man," and "covered with a mantle" (v. 14).

This materialization took place in the questionable abode of a forbidden, outlawed sorceress, invoking the alleged "shade" of the old prophet said to be wearing a "mantle." (It might be asked, If it was Samuel's "spirit," supposed to be with God, why the mantle? If it was Samuel's body, up from the grave, would it not rather be with "graveclothes," as with Lazarus [John 11:44]?)

3. SAUL DECEIVED; SLAIN FOR HIS TRANSGRESSIONS

The record then states that Saul "perceived"—that is, understood indirectly, for he himself saw nothing—that it was "Samuel."

But this evil "spirit," impersonating Samuel, first chided Saul for disquieting him when the Lord had departed from the king. This alleged "spirit" then proceeded to predict Saul's defeat and death. Perhaps this "lying spirit" here gave a true message, as in the case of Ahab of old (2 Chronicles 18:19-22). But the sad sequel was simply this:

"So Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the Lord, even against the word of the Lord, which he kept not, and also for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to enquire of it; and enquired not of the Lord: therefore he [the Lord] slew him, and turned the kingdom unto David the son of Jesse" (1 Chronicles 10:13, 14).

So back through the centuries this question of the nature and destiny of man, and purported communication with the "dead," has been a vital issue, constantly fraught with disaster for those disobeying the Word of God. Saul's act was a transgression, punishable with death. Why, then, is such testimony valid? But let us probe into this unsavoury episode a little deeper.

4. CRUX OF THE WHOLE PORTRAYAL

The crux of this whole occurrence hinges on whether this appearance, or materialization, was wrought by the power of God or was manoeuvred by Satan. If by Satan, we may well look for deception, for he began his duplicity back in Eden by asserting the Innate Immortality of man, and has ever since persisted in his trickery by tenaciously perpetuating his original contention wherever and whenever he can gain a foothold.

Note the facts closely: Saul was violating God's express command by communicating with such a character and by engaging in a sinister practice sternly forbidden by God. He was deceived by this "familiar spirit" simulating Samuel, who first of all significantly put the medium on her guard as to the identity of Saul. And the appearance in the night, under the incantations of an abandoned woman, was that of "an old man" "with a mantle."

It is to be particularly noted that Saul had to ask the medium, "What saw thou?" "What form is he of?" (1 Samuel 28:13, 14). Saul himself never saw the simulating spirit that was brought "up" through the agency of Satan. And while the appearance was actual, it was simply a manifestation of ancient necromancy, sorcery, witchcraft, spiritism. It was a gross deception, a simulation of Samuel by a depraved "spirit," palmed off on the desperate apostate king, and with fatal results.

5. CRUEL HOAX AND ITS MODERN COUNTERPART

One major difference between ancient and modern spiritism is that the medium of Endor then pretended to bring the spirits "up" from the lower regions. Now their present counterparts claim to bring them "down" from the upper spheres. How dare any firm believer in the Word of God presume to appeal to this episode of Saul and the witch of Endor to prove the continuing living existence, or immortality, of the soul—unless he is prepared to deny the express declarations of the Inspired Word, and to maintain that ancient necromancy and modern spiritism are a divine gift, and that the blasphemous pretensions and contradictions of such lying spirits are to be accepted instead of the verities of the Scriptures of truth?

The Word of God expressly declares that when a man dies "in that very day his thoughts perish" (Psalm 146:4). But fallen angels do have supernatural knowledge and mystifying malign powers. And they have uncanny powers of deception. Of these we are to beware. We trespass at our peril. Incidentally, the invoked "spirit" told Saul (through the medium), "To morrow shall thou and thy sons be with me" (1 Samuel 28:19). Might it not be pertinent to ask, Where was this rendezvous to be?—in the grave? or in Heaven, where the Immortal-Soulist would expect the Lord's prophet to be? or per chance in some kind of Purgatory or intermediate place? Where, we ask, and in what state? Further question: Do God's prophets and apostate kings go to the same place—if conscious?

6. GRANDEUR OF GOD'S WONDROUS PROVISION

In the face of such artificial negativisms, how comforting it is to have not only the clear, positive, consistent testimony of the Old Testament concerning the actual mortality of man, but the glorious assurance of immortality for the righteous as a gift from God through Christ, bestowed at His second advent and its attendant resurrection.

How good to know that in the interim of death man quietly sleeps until the great awakening. And finally, that the incorrigibly wicked will, after due and just punishment for their sins—and their rejection of the overtures and saving provisions of God—be ultimately and utterly destroyed, passing out of existence.

The infinite love, righteousness, justice, grace, and mercy of God, as the wondrous hope of man, stand out in impressive grandeur all the way from Genesis to Malachi. The in spired testimony of the Word is consistent and satisfying—and, above all, authoritative and final. Happy the lot of all who put their trust in the revealed provisions of God. And all this is amplified and intensified in the New Testament portrayal, now to be studied in fullness in Part II.

Christ's Infallible Testimony on Life Versus Death

A. Definitive Testimony of Jesus, Supreme Witness of All Time

1. JESUS CHRIST—STAR WITNESS OF ALL TIME

The apostle John presents the Lord Jesus Christ pre-eminently as "God." That is the characteristic difference between John's Gospel and that of the Synoptists, who largely emphasize His human side. Together they make up the perfect portrayal. So John presents the God-man. Jesus' utterances consequently have an authority unapproachable by any other witness or spokesman.

Beyond challenge, He is the supreme authority, the Star Witness, than whom there is none greater and from whom there is no higher court of appeal. His declarations are consequently the ultimate in this area of inquiry. Jesus is the One for whom the worthies of old had waited all through Old Testament times. Now He speaks.

As might be expected, His witness is primarily affirmative rather than negative. He emphasizes life rather than death, though He deals definitively with both. But He is definitely affirmative and positive, and is never evasive. He gave no answers with dual intent, as was the custom of the Delphic oracles. Further, His teachings are changeless and abiding, not transitory or ephemeral. And He is inerrant, not faulty and fallible. There are no revisions or reversals of His positions. And Christ is unequivocal in His utterances. His declarations cannot be classed as "doubtful disputations" (Romans 14:1), though they were the subject of acrimonious debate. His responses are frank and firm, never elusive or ambiguous. And He spoke with authority (Matthew 7:29).

2. FATAL CLASH COMES OVER MAN'S DESTINY

From Him, then, we shall get the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth on the nature and destiny of man. And that is just what we need, and precisely what we want. As noted, Christ's presentations were always straightforward, explicit, and faithful. But because of His fidelity to truth concerning life and death, His utterances of necessity ran counter to tragic Jewish departures that had become entrenched in this area of vital teaching.

Christ came to earth. He came to die that others might have life—more abundant life, eternal life, and immortality, for through sin man had forfeited that imperative. He came to dispel error and confute falsehood, that truth might be exalted and right might prevail. He came to seal the doom of error and to crush its author. And He was ever faithful to His Heaven-born mission. But first let us go back to the beginnings, and to the foundations of the plan of redemption manifested in the in carnation, as disclosed in the opening chapters of John's Gospel.

B. Transcendent Scope and Significance of Incarnation

The incarnation of the Son of God was the most stupendous event in the history of the world—yes, of the universe—to that time. God then became man. Through this mysterious means Christ became identified with the human race. The plan of redemption, conceived in the inscrutable wisdom and infinite power of God from the foundation of the world (Revelation 13:8), was formulated to meet the contingency of sin's tragic entrance into the newly created earth, and the fatal fall of man. The incarnation, then, is the core of God's redemptive method for the recovery of lost man and his forfeited life. It is the center, the essential, the transcendent heart of Christianity (John 3:16).

1. MASTER KEY TO ALL REDEMPTIVE HISTORY

The incarnation was not a strange isolated event, breaking suddenly into human history. Everything before led up to it; and all that followed after—the cross and the resurrection, the ascension and heavenly ministry, and the final restitution of all things—grew out of it and were dependent upon it. It was the initial step, and thus constitutes the master key to all redemptive history.

Everything moved toward the incarnation until its accomplishment. The messages of prophets and seers all forecast and led up to it. The Gospels are the record of its accomplishment, and the New Testament is the unfolding of its wonders. It was the mysterious "secret," held in silence through eternal times (1 Corinthians 2:7; Ephesians

3:3-5; Colossians 1:26). And it was in this chosen way that Christ "brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (2 Tim. 1:10).

To effect the restoration of man, God became man and dwelt among men. And the supreme purpose of this entrance of the Eternal Son into our nature was to accomplish man's redemption, to save him from destruction, and to restore the endless life he had forfeited. The incarnation invasion of human history was to snatch the scepter from the malign usurper and effect his overthrow. In this divine plan Christ's humanity was representative, for He became the "second Adam," the head of a new race, and thus provided the way back to God. So it was that God adopted humanity in the person of His Son.

2. BECOMING MAN, HE RETAINS HUMANITY FOREVER

In the incarnation, eternity entered into the conditions of time. At His incarnation Christ became what He was not before. He accepted the limitation of a human bodily life as the mode of His existence while on earth. And upon His ascension He carried His glorified body into highest Heaven (Acts 1:9-11; 7:56; cf. Daniel 7:13), there to retain it forever, for when He returns at the Second Advent He comes as the Son of man (Matthew 24:39; 25:13, 31; 26:64; Mark 8:38; 13:26; Luke 21:36; Revelation 14:14).

Thus the incarnation is the most stupendous event that human thought can conceive—whether in itself or in its consequences, which have no limit. It was actual union of the Creator with the creature, effected in the person of the Eternal Son of God. When He became man He did not cease to be God, but became the one and only God- man. He bridged the gulf between God and man. Through this means He assumed the headship of the human race, and became the "second man," the "last Adam" (1 Corinthians 15:45-47).

In this way humanity was wedded to divinity in the adoption of perpetual humanity by Jesus Christ. But, we repeat for emphasis, in the union of the Godhead with humanity, divinity did not destroy the humanity, and the humanity remained in its integrity that divinity might be revealed in and through it. In His incarnation Christ became the focal point of redemption's converging lights. In Him was embodied light, life, love, righteousness, wisdom, power, and glory—the sevenfold revelation of God's power to save.

3. RETAINS ONLY SCARS OF SIN IN UNIVERSE

Christ did not choose between dying at one time instead of at another. Rather, He chose between dying and not dying. His death was a death for sin, and sin is rebellion against God. His death canceled the curse, lifted the ban, purchased our pardon, and restored lost man and his forfeited life. That is why the incarnation is of such transcendent significance.

Jesus Christ united Heaven and earth in one person—God and man—and since His return to Heaven He has not ceased to be man. In His own body He will bear the only scars of sin left in eternity—the scars on His hands, His side, and His feet. Sin's ugly scars on man will be healed forever. When Christ returned to the throne He carried with Him the manhood He had assumed, and bore it into the glory in which the Eternal Word had dwelt from the beginning. He is thus identified with man forever. That was the price of our redemption. That was the cost of our recovery of the life lost in Eden. That is the wonder of His love and grace.

4. PURPOSE OF INCARNATION WAS FIVEFOLD

Summarizing, we may say that the purpose of Christ's incarnation was—

(1) To reveal God to the world (John 1:14, 18; 17:6, 26; 1 Tim. 3:16). (2) To redeem man by bearing the sin of man (Isaiah 53: 4-16; John 1:29, margin; Hebrews 9:28; 1 Peter 2:24; 1 John 3:16).

(3) To bring God and man together (Genesis 28:12; Matthew 1:23; John 1:51; 1 Peter 3:18).

(4) To bring back endless life to dying man (John 3:15, 16; 4:1-4; 5:24; 10:28; 11:25, 26; 14:19; 17:3). (5) To destroy the devil and his works (John 12:31; 16:33; Romans 8:1-4; Hebrews 2:14; 1 John 3:8).

C. Eternal Life—Throbbing Heart of John's Gospel Story

The Gospel of John, written by the "disciple whom Jesus loved" (John 21:20), is the best-loved book of all time. Sublime in thought and unsurpassed in word, it has, more than any other New Testament message, captured the heart of mankind. Now John's portrait of Christ is pre-eminently the portrayal of His deity. And "love" and "life," as revealed and embodied in Christ, are the predominant points of emphasis throughout.

It may rightly be said that the central message and constant emphasis of the Gospel of John is that of life eternal through Jesus Christ as God's sole provision for escaping the sinner's designated doom of utter and ultimate destruction (John 3:16). The basic distinction between the lot of the saved and the fate of the lost is pre- eminently one of life—life without end, life through Christ alone, and with Him forever in His eternal kingdom to come. But only as one senses the dreadful destiny of sinful man apart from Christ, as involving total death and utter destruction, does the gospel of life stand out in its sub lime grandeur and glory. Now let us go back to the beginnings.

1. FROM BLEAKNESS OF SIN TO RADIANCE OF SALVATION

The opening chapters of the Old Testament part of the Book of God set forth the account of the sin and fall of our first parents from their estate of original innocence, and the doom they brought upon themselves and their posterity. This formed the bleak background for the radiant gospel of salvation that immediately began to unfold with steadily increasing clarity. The law set forth the fearful penalty of death, that the gospel might present its wondrous offer of life. After the dark ness of sin, came the glorious light of salvation. Thus a message of hope was commingled even with the thunders of Sinai. From the time of Eden onward the depression of the long night of estrangement from God was relieved by the outshining of the twin stars of hope and promise, as men watched and waited for the appearing of the Saviour throughout Old Testament times.

2. NEW TESTAMENT A NEW REVELATION OF LIFE

We now come to the New Testament times. The New Testament is not merely a fuller and clearer revelation of the divine truths already disclosed in the Old. It is all that. But it is vastly more —it is a new revelation. While embracing and confirming, and harmonizing with, all the truths unfolded in the Old Testament—and revealing them even more clearly—the New Testament contains, we stress, other and higher truths that distinguish it as a distinctly new revelation. We use this expression advisedly. And this, as just stated, is pre-eminently a revelation of life through Jesus Christ alone. The Old Testament contains in undeveloped form—in type and symbol, prophecy and promise—inklings of truth only unfolded in full ness in the New Testament. There is an unmistakably progressive unfolding of revelation.

And that broad and deep line of demarcation between the Old and the New is this clear revelation of life and immortality for mortal man, through Christ, effected by a new birth now and a resurrection from the dead at Christ's second advent. And along with these comes the inseparable corollary of the ultimate destruction of all evil through the almighty power of the Son of God our Saviour, now set forth in fullness and in escapable clarity.

3. BROUGHT ABOUT BY NEW SPIRITUAL INGENERATION

This life is a new and higher life than our natural life, and he to whom it is given becomes a "new creature." Thus: "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature [ktisis, "creation"]" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

In a way, it is the Genesis story all over again. A new life is generated in a responsive man by the Spirit of God. And it is as superior to the old Adamic life as it is more enduring. The first generation is natural and earthly, and because of sin leads to death. The second is supernatural, from above, and leads to eternal life with its wondrous, ultimate immortality bestowed at the resurrection.

This new life is "begotten" not of flesh and blood, nor of the will or power of man, but solely of God (John 3:3-7; 1 Peter 1:23). And it will, in time, be invested with a new and transformed spiritual body, like unto Christ's glorious body, that will rise to meet Christ the Life-giver at His second coming (1 Corinthians 15:49-53), thus to take its purchased and destined place in His everlasting kingdom. Hints and foregleams of this new life are scattered through out the pages of the Old Testament. These are but anticipatory. Let it never be forgotten that only in the New Testament is it distinctly revealed as the gift of God through Jesus Christ

(Romans 6:23; John 3:16), by whose own death and resurrection eternal life is unimpeachably assured to the believer.

D. Two Progenitors, Two Births, Two Contrasting Destinies

Two matching lines of thought run through John's Gospel— (1) The incarnation of Deity (the divine nature) in the person of Jesus Christ of Nazareth that involved the union of the divine and human in Christ, in order that He might redeem man. He was both God and man, yet not two but one, in the unity of one person. And (2) the parallel affirmation, from the first paragraph to the. last, that this incarnation of the divine Word had for its

supreme object the giving of everlasting life to mankind through redemptive union with Christ, the Light of life. But it was these twin truths that aroused the incredulity and awakened the intense hostility of many of the Jews.

At the very outset of the Gospel of John the sublime declaration is made: "In him [Jesus] was life 1 [that is, the fountain of life]; and the life was the light of men" (John 1:4). "Life," as we have seen, is one of the two characteristic words of John's Gospel, appearing many times in this short missive. Jesus came not, as did John the Baptist, merely to bear witness of the light of life, but pre-eminently as the actual Life-giver, "the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6).

He is the very source and embodiment, the herald and bestower of eternal life. The "first man Adam was made a living soul [psuchen zosan];" but "the last Adam was made a quickening spirit [pneuma zoopoioun]," or life- giving spirit (1 Corinthians 15:45). And John's whole Gospel is the unfolding and applying of that glorious truth and provision. But let us pause to define and differentiate that life.

That life was manifested (John 1:4); is obtained (3:16); is possessed (4:14); is sustained (6:35); is ministered (7:38); is abounding (10:10); and is resumptive (11:24, 25).

1. SIGNIFICANCE AND SCOPE OF THE TERM "LIFE."

Certain words are characteristic in John's Gospel. One of the most conspicuous and striking is "life" (zoe), which appears 36 times. The verb "love" (agapao) is used 37 times. And "light" (phos) is found 23 times, and is used especially of Christ and of God (John 1:4, 5; 8:12; 1 John 1:5). But the zoe-life holds a unique place. It is essential that we grasp John's use of the term "life." There are three Greek words rendered by the one word "life." Note the fundamental distinctions:

(1) Zoe (life) is the opposite of death, which is the end of life—the result of the sentence and punishment of God against sin. Zoe is life in all manifestations. It is the principle and essence of life. Its one and only source is God—the Living One, the Fountain of Life. We live only in and by His life. He originates and sustains life by giving it out of Himself. "In him we live, and move, and have our being" (Acts 17:28).

(2) Psuche (life) is used of the life of man—which can be lost, destroyed, saved, laid down, et cetera—58 times in the New Testament, and is rendered "life" 39 times and "soul" 19 times. It is used of man as an individual 14 times.

(3) Bios is manner of life, the period or duration of life, the means of living.

John uses zoe in a theological sense to describe the life that comes to the Christian through Christ. Actually he calls it zden aidnion (eternal life, everlasting life) 16 times in his Gospel. In other cases the context makes it clear that it is eternal life that he is talking about. This life (zoe) belongs to those to whom it is communicated. It is the life the Christian has now in Christ, as the "gift of God" (Romans 6:23), by faith in Christ (John 6:27; 10:28). "He that hath the Son hath life [zden]; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (1 John 5:12). In general, the other New Testament writers use zoe in this theological sense, even where the word "eternal" is not connected with it. Now let us continue.

See Bullinger, Critical Lexicon, p. 462; The Companion Bible, Appendixes 170 (p. 191) and 110 (p. 153).

2. NATURAL DYING LIFE; SUPERNATURAL ENDLESS LIFE

From Adam, our natural progenitor, we obtained only a mortal, transitory life received through natural generation. Nothing else, and nothing higher, could come from or through him. But in our glorious Spiritual Progenitor is vested the life that is spiritual and undying, which He gives through re-generation. This distinction between the natural life and the super natural is very real, and is everywhere drawn throughout the New Testament, and particularly in the Gospel of John. In general the two words psuche and zoe in the Greek are used to designate and differentiate them. But the translation of these two distinct and often antithetical terms by the single word "life" (as the English does not have the dual equivalents) has obscured this distinction. Nevertheless, there are two separate progenitors, two separate births, and two separate destinies. Christ came that whosoever believeth

in Him might be "saved" from death and unto life. He came to confer eternal life upon repentant, believing, mortal men.

This was the sublime and revolutionary truth that Christ, at the very outset of His public ministry, enunciated and pressed home to Nicodemus. Note the precise phrasing: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be

born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."

"As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.3 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved" (John 3:3, 6, 7, 14-
17).

Zoe aidnios (life everlasting). Note that the adjective "everlasting" (atdntoi) appears only with zoe, never with psuche. (See John 3:15, 16, 36; 4:14, 36; 5:24, 39; 6:27, 40, 47, 54, 68; 10:28; 12:25, 50; 17:2, 3.) Aidnios occurs with zoe 16 times in John's Gospel and 6 times in 1 John.

3. NICODEMUS THE PHARISEE HELD TO INNATE IMMORTALITY

Nicodemus, the Pharisee and believer in Innate Immortality, had but vague notions of life beyond the present. He obviously held to a prolongation of man's natural life beyond the present state, not the reception of a new
life. It was the same old immortal life of the "soul" of Platonic philosophy, accentuated by Philo, after the soul has escaped from the encumbering body—a kind of ghostly, innate, immortal entity —that he and others had imbibed from the widespread penetrations of Greek philosophy current among the Pharisees. Nicodemus therefore not only had no conception of that new spiritual life, which comes from a new spiritual birth—and which is presented in the New Testament as the sole foundation for man's hope of immortality—but alas he was
destitute of the means of conceiving it, for—"the natural [psuchikos] man receives not the things of the Spirit of
God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually [pneumatikos]
discerned" (1 Corinthians 2:14).

4. "LIVING WATER" SPRINGING UP UNTO "EVERLASTING LIFE."

It was this same essential doctrine that Christ next at tempted to teach, from a slightly different approach, in
conversing with the woman at the well in Samaria. But neither could her mind, unilluminated by the Spirit of God, apprehend such spiritual realities. She understood the impressive figures used by Christ only in their lower material sense. But scriptural figures are employed to represent realities, and not something fanciful. This spiritual life of which Christ spoke was not unreal but actual—even more real and substantial than the natural life of man. Observe Christ's approach:

"If thou knew the gift of God [eternal life through Christ], and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou would have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water [hudor zo.ri]. . . . Whosoever drinks of this water shall thirst again: but whosoever drink eth of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well [pege, "fountain," "spring"] of water springing up into everlasting life" (John 4:10-14).

5. CENTRAL DOCTRINE OF JOHN'S GOSPEL

The Gospel of John is pre-eminent in setting forth this great doctrine of life eternal only through Christ. The
doctrine of a future life was definitely revealed in the ancient Hebrew Scriptures. And in their earlier centuries—during the time of the living Hebrew prophets—Israel had generally held thereto. But in the later inter-Testamental period, under the impact of Greek philosophy, the Jewish religion had been gravely marred and corrupted.

The Pharisees had come to hold the philosophical doctrine of the natural immortality of the natural life of man as the peculiar inheritance of the children of Abraham. This blinded their eyes to the truth that Christ brought to them. Their minds were closed, their understanding darkened, so they could not comprehend.

That was the great barrier. Then when Christ showed the fallacy of their hopes in any immortality except through Himself, and that there was nothing in the Old Testament Scriptures—which they meticulously invoked—to justify their philosophical hopes and expectations, they were affronted and angered. If they would but "search the scriptures," Christ said wistfully, going to the heart of the

issue, they would find no doctrine of immortality for man, save through the promised Life-giver. That was the stumbling block.

6. CONTROVERSY OVER BREAD FROM HEAVEN AND RESURRECTION

In the sixth chapter of John, Christ's prolonged discussion with the Jews is recorded, designed to prove that He is indeed the Bread of Life, that while the fathers actually ate manna in the wilderness, nevertheless they died; but that He is the life-giving Bread that came down from Heaven that, should a man eat thereof, he would not

die the second, or final, death (John 6:50). This basic declaration He iterated and reiterated to them in various ways.

But He was actually pressing upon one point—that His work on earth was to give life, everlasting life, and to prevent men from ultimately dying and perishing in the second death. He declares that whoso eats His flesh and drinks His blood, "hath eternal life"; and that He "will raise him up at the last day" (v. 54).

"As the living Father hath sent me," Christ declared, "and I live by the Father: so he that eats me, even he shall live by me." And "he that eats of this bread shall live for ever" (vs. 57, 58). He insists, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you" (v. 53). This vital discourse, delivered in Capernaum, presents the crux of the conflict with the Jews, and discloses the basic battle ground of the entire controversy. What is said beyond this is but a repetition of what is here declared, only with a persistence and fullness that aroused great consternation and marked antagonism on the part of the Jewish leaders. Now let us get the setting.

7. JEWISH CHALLENGE OF ADVENT, RESURRECTION, DAMNATION

Christ was at Jerusalem at one of the feasts, and had healed the impotent man at the pool. He declared that the power of raising the dead and giving them life rests with Him self. Heated controversy ensued, ostensibly because it was the Sabbath day, and the Jews challenged Christ's right and authority to heal on that consecrated day. Observe it in some detail, in the precise words of John, for here is the heart of Christ's continuing controversy with the Jews. Here He leads on into His second advent, and the "resurrection of life" and the "resurrection of damnation." Note His bold claims and searching declarations:

"For as the Father raises up the dead, and quickens [zoopoied, "make alive," gives life to] them; even so the Son quickens whom he will" (John 5:21).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that hears my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation [krisin, "judgment"]; but is passed from [out of] death unto life" (v. 24).

"For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself" (v. 26).

But under the impact of Greek philosophy, such life as a special gift from God had been wholly obscured by the pervasive false hope of Innate Immortality. They were therefore offended at Christ's declaration that there was life only in Himself. But, He said:

"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves [not in Heaven or Hell] shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation [kriseos, "judgment," condemnation unto death; cf. v. 24]" (vs. 28, 29).

"[Ye] Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they [the Scriptures] are they which testify of me [the Life-giver]. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life" (vs. 39, 40).

8. BUNDED BY PLATONISM, JEWS REJECT LIFE-TRUTH

There was no abatement in Christ's continuing emphasis. He proclaimed the same truth after the miracle of the loaves and fishes, with its feeding of the five thousand (John 6). Here again Christ presses on His persistent theme of life and death. He declared that man cannot of himself "live for ever." This emphatic assertion is repeated twenty-eight times in the first six chapters of John.

"Labour not for the meat which perishes, but for that meat which endures unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you" (John 6:27).

As the life of the body is sustained by material food, so this higher life—this spiritual life which He gives— must likewise have its spiritual life and nourishment, and from the same divine source. This physical life cannot be sustained forever, even if manna were supernaturally given from Heaven, as of old. The Jewish fathers, who ate the manna in the wilderness, were all dead (vs. 49, 50). So Christ's immediate hearers must die not only a natural death but also the second death if they have no higher, divine principle of life ingenerated into them. And this new life, received from Christ, can be maintained only by the closest union with Him. To such a life there will be no end.

9. MANY FOLLOWERS TURN AWAY BECAUSE OF CLAIMS

This entire chapter 6 is remarkable for the constant reiteration of this one basic truth. But the Jews could not, or would not, receive it. Christ's bold—and to them brazen—claims as to being the Divine Giver of the higher, supernatural life were abhorrent to them. The concept of the Innate Immortality of the soul had so captivated and possessed their minds as to block completely their understanding of the great gospel truth of the life and immortality received solely by a new birth through a Divine Saviour. And not only were the scribes and Pharisees affronted, but many also of Christ's former followers were of fended at His doctrine (v. 61). Be it particularly observed that it was this emphasis that caused the final break with the Jews and the separation of numerous disciples.

"From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life" (John 6:66-68). Here is the Biblical recital. Though it might appear tedious, it is the heart of the testimony of the New Testament gospel witness. Read the inspired words:

"And Jesus said unto them, I am1 the bread of life [artos tes zoes]: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst" (v. 35).

This is the first of a series of "I am" utterances—I AM the bread of life (John 6:35, 41, 48, 51); the light of the world (8:12; 9:5); the door of the sheep (10:7); the resurrection and the zoe-life (11:25); the true and living way (14:6); and the true vine (15:1, 5)

"And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which sees the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day" (v. 40).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath ever lasting life. I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die" (vs. 47-50). "I am the living bread [ho artos ho zon, the Living One] which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh [Myself], which I will give for the life of the world" (v. 51).

Bread is figurative of the maintenance of substance. That is what Christ came to supply.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh [Hebrews idiom for believing and receiving] of the Son of man, and drink his blood [blood, symbol of life], ye have no life in you. Whoso eats my flesh, and drinks my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day" (vs. 53, 54).

"As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eats me, even he shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eats of this bread shall live for ever [opposite of second death]" (vs. 57, 58).

"It is the spirit that quickens [zoopoieo, "to make alive," "to give life to," especially eternal life]; the flesh profits nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (v. 63). That was Christ's unwavering witness to the Jews in His crisis hour.

"Last day," used only in John, and appearing six times—6:39, 40, 44, 54; 11:24; 12:48—meaning at the end of the age, and coming of Christ.

E. Rejection Comes Over Amazing "Zoe-Life" Claims

1. CONFLICT DEVELOPS INTO SUPREME CRISIS

It is in John 8, after Jesus had declared, "I am the light of the world: he that follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (v. 12), that His claims were sharply challenged. Nevertheless He again affirmed that God in Heaven was His Father. And now He stressed the matter and relation ship of death, life's opposite and redemption's alternative. And such death would, He declared, result from rejection of Him. Solemnly He said:

"I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins [losing the true, eternal life]: whither I go, ye cannot come" (v. 21).

"Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he [the sole Giver of life], ye shall die in your sins" (vs. 23, 24).

Christ's declaration of His deity, and pronouncement of judgment, aroused their deepest indignation. After they had maliciously charged Him with being "born of fornication" (v. 41) instead of "from above" as He claimed (v. 23), and Christ had reaffirmed that He indeed "proceeded forth and came from God" (v. 42), He next sternly charged them with being children of "your father the devil [the accuser and traducer]" (v. 44). And He added with penetrating significance: "He was a murderer [for death came through him] from the beginning [of the human race], and abode not in the truth. . . . When he speaks a lie, he speaks of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it" (John 8:44).

Christ thus harked back to the original lie in Eden—"Ye shall not surely die" (Genesis 3:4)—with all its train of unutterable woe. Then follows Christ's tremendous declaration, "If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death" (John 8:51). That is, he shall not be visited with the forever-death, eternal death, the "second death," from which there is no resurrection.

Jesus' final affirmation was, "Before Abraham was [came into existence, or was born], I am" (v. 58). It was following this incredible utterance that they took up stones to cast at Him.

2. AGAIN SOUGHT TO STONE HIM BECAUSE OF CLAIMS

The same truths are enforced in chapter 10, under the metaphors of "the door of the sheep" (v. 7)—by which they were to enter into life—and the "good shepherd" (v. 11). Of the door Christ said:

"I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. ... I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (vs. 9, 10).

Christ, then, is the solitary door to eternal life. Through Him mortal man again has right of access to the tree of life (Revelation 2:7).

Then as to the Good Shepherd: "I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knows me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life [psuchen, the natural life, and not, be it noted, zoe] for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd" (John 10:14-16).

"And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand" (v. 28).

It was for this bold twofold claim that they "took up stones again to stone him" (v. 31; cf. 8:59) for "blasphemy," because, they said, Thou "makes thyself God" (chap. 10:33). "They sought again to take [arrest] him: but he escaped out of their hand" (v. 39). The crisis was on in dead earnest. Thus there was deep significance to Christ's outspoken utterances on the nature and destiny of man.

3. MIRACULOUS RAISING OF LAZARUS FROM DEATH

This great truth of Christ as the Life-giver is next graphically illustrated in chapter 11, in the dramatic episode at the grave of Lazarus. Mary and Martha had some knowledge of the doctrines of the resurrection, the judgment, and the life to come. They did not share the views of the Sadducees. So when Jesus came, Martha said to Him, "Lord, if thou had been here, my brother had not died" (v. 21). Then Jesus assured her, "Thy brother shall rise again [anistemi, "stand up"]" (v. 23). And when she boldly confessed that she knew that her brother would "rise again in the resurrection at the last day" (v. 24), Jesus immediately uttered another of His great "I am" sayings: "I am the resurrection, and the life [he zoe]: he that believeth in me, though he were dead [even though he should die], yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth [or is alive at My second coming] and believeth in me shall never die [never perish in the final, irrevocable second death"]" (vs. 25, 26).

So, according to Christ it is not conscious survival of those who believe on Him that occasions immortality, but their future resurrection from the dead. Those who have died the first, or natural, death, believing in Christ, will be raised. And those believers who will be alive at His coming again shall be changed, transformed without dying. And together both shall simultaneously enter upon that life that shall never end, and over which the second death has no power—when they shall have received their immortality.

This declaration by our Lord brought the recognition and confession from Martha, "I believe that thou art the Christ [the Messiah], the Son of God, which should come into the world" (v. 27; cf. Matthew 16:16). Then it was that Jesus, at the tomb, lifted His voice and commanded, "Lazarus, come forth" (John 11:43), just as if He were arousing him from a deep sleep. "And he that was dead came forth" (v. 44). Lazarus, receiving life, heard and obeyed the summons. Lazarus, it should be noted, was sleeping in the grave (v. 44), not singing praises in Heaven, when Christ called him. [The first death is only a relatively short sleep (Psalm 146:4; 1 Corinthians 15:20, 21, 51-
55; 1 Thess. 4:13-18.]

It was a startling exercise, while Jesus was here on earth, of the divine, life-giving power He claimed to possess. There is no hint that any "soul" had left Lazarus' body and had ascended to Heaven, thence to be brought back. Jesus did not address an independent, conscious "soul." He did not say, "Soul or spirit of Lazarus, come back down to earth, and live again in the flesh." The four days in the tomb were to Lazarus a period of oblivion and unconsciousness (Psalm 146:4). He gave no account of the glories and activities of Heaven—for Lazarus had nothing to relate. He had been asleep, in unconscious sleep. Now he was awakened.

Death might be denned as the great hiatus, the appointed break between the initial probationary earthly life, and the life that is to come following the resurrection. It is the little period of quiescence before the full immortal life for eternity for the redeemed.

As a result there was a large increase of disciples (John 11:45), which fact alarmed the Jewish leaders. Then comes the significant statement: "Then from that day forth [the day of the raising of Lazarus] they [the Jewish leaders] took counsel together [in their Council, or Sanhedrin, John 11:47] for to put him to death" (v. 53)— seeking some juridical pretext. They thus rejected the Life, refused the Light, and spurned the Love incarnate. And the record further states that thenceforth Jesus "walked no more openly among the Jews" (v. 54). So they sought for Him, "that they might take him" (v. 57).

It is specifically those who are "in their graves'* whom Christ will call forth and raise at the last day (John 6:39,
40, 44, 54; 11:24; 12:48).

4. BURDEN OF CHRIST'S HIGH PRIESTLY PRAYER

And just up before the close of His earthly life and mission, this same doctrine of Life Only in Christ was finally set forth in His intercessory high priestly prayer, recorded in John 17.

"These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: as thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gave me to do" (John 17:1-4). That was the climax of the remarkable and cumulative series of life incidents—Christ's unchanging burden and wit ness to the close of His life and ministry.

5. "LIFE SOLELY IN CHRIST" JOHN'S PARAMOUNT THEME

The foregoing leading citations are all from the Gospel of John, though there are other similar passages. The conclusion seems inescapable that this was one of the main themes of John's Gospel, as also of his Epistles. This
is evident from the fact that in the first six chapters of John he declares, in varying forms, in no less than twenty- eight times—and more than fifty times in his several writings—that Christ is the sole source of eternal life, of which our Lord testified so earnestly and with such constant reiteration during the brief period of His earthly incarnation.

This was the boon He came to bring to dying men. To provide this He gave up His own natural life (John 10:11,
14), which purchased salvation and restored the wondrous life that He freely offers to all who truly believe in
Him.

6. CONTINGENT IMMORTALITY GIVES HONOR TO CHRIST

This life is not something that men can rightfully claim as their own inalienable, or inherent, prerogative. Rather, it is a life

Christ has purchased back for man by the shedding of His own precious blood, that may be ours by gift. And it is to be remembered that man's immortality, even in the endless days of eternity, will ever and only be contingent immortality—dependent always upon God. There is consequently no place for pride, independence, or self-sufficiency concerning the divine provision of life.

This glorious doctrine of life and immortality, which illuminates the pages of John's Gospel, while humbling to the pride of man, extols the honor and glory of Christ. But ever since the days of Eden, Satan has sought to rob Christ of His peculiar glory as the Giver of eternal life to His followers. Christ indeed saves from sin, suffering, and misery. But He does in finitely more; He saves from actual, final death, perishing, destruction (Romans 5:9; 1 Thess. 1:10)—the "second death," from which there will be no awakening.

It is because Christ has risen triumphant over death, and ever lives, that we shall rise at His "trumpet" call (1 Corinthians 15:22; 1 Thess. 4:16, 17), to live forevermore with Him. And the life, which He bestows, is a life of unending joy and blessedness in His everlasting kingdom and presence. That is the fullness of the gospel of salvation, the more abundant life, the endless life for all eternity! Such is God's unspeakable gift. This revelation of the eternal life through Christ, in the Gospel of John, surely makes it luminous with new meaning and significance. It throws a fresh and radiant light upon these familiar passages that makes them central in our comprehensive survey of the testimony of the Supreme Witness concerning the nature and destiny of man.

Coordinates All Aspects of Life, Death, and Destiny

A. Significance of Christ's Life and Death in Plan of Redemption

Before we turn to another related truth, likewise taught by Christ and centering in Him, let us note again the foundational principles and provisions of salvation in, and only in, Christ Jesus. This is essential to the balanced understanding of all special out workings, manifestations, and teachings emanating from and centering in Him.

1. CHRIST—REVEALER OF GOD AND REDEEMER OF MAN

Jesus Christ came as the revealer of God, and the redeemer of man from the power both of sin and of death. And both of these enemies He overcame in His own person, and made His victory effective for us through His triumphant resurrection, and thus brought "life and immortality to light" and made them operational "through the gospel" (2 Tim. 1:10). That, in a word, is the tremendous scope—the height, depth, length, and breadth of salvation through Jesus Christ our Saviour and Sacrifice, Priest and Judge, and coming King.

We have already noted the foundational incarnation side. Now let us observe its outworking in Christ's atoning death. Christ's sinless life and vicarious atoning death met all the just and holy requirements of the divine law (Romans 7:12), in order that divine love and grace might be poured forth freely, and reclaim and forgive sinful, dying man, and restore him both to holiness and to his forfeited life. In accomplishing this, Christ lived sinlessly and died voluntarily as our atoning Substitute. As another has impressively put it, He bore the full consequences of the sin in which He had no personal part, that we might share the full benefits of His triumph in which we had no personal part.

It was a case of complete substitution. It is therefore all of grace. And efficacious, atoning grace not only accounts righteous but actually makes righteous all who receive it, through justification and then sanctification. And these will be followed in turn by glorification at Christ's return. Such righteousness, it must be added, is the prerequisite for seeing God (Hebrews 12:14) and dwelling in His presence forevermore. To provide these for man was the primary purpose first of Christ's incarnation and then specifically of His passion. That is the wonder of His love and the marvel of His grace. Let us now look at the death side more closely.

2. LIFE-GIVING SCOPE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF CHRIST'S DEATH

Christ's atoning death, with its vast significance, was all foreordained, foretold, and then actualized in Christ.
The fateful history of sin and death, and the antithetical righteous ness and life, may be summarized thus, as attested in both Testaments. This is the Biblical foundation for our hope and confidence. Here is an epitome in six points:

1
Christ is the source of all life (Job 12:9, 10; Psalm 36:9; 66:8, 9; Jeremiah 2:13; John 5:27; Acts 17:24, 25, 28).

2
Life from God was imparted to man in the original creation (Genesis 2:7; Job 33:4; Isaiah 45:12; Jeremiah 27:5).

3
This life was forfeited through sin (Genesis 2:17; 3:19; Romans 5:12, 15, A.R.V.).

4
The Son of God has life in Himself, and came to bring that life back to lost man (John 1:4; 5:21, 25; 6:33, 47-51; 10:10, 27, 28; 14:6; 17:2; Romans 6:23; Colossians 3:4; 1 John 1:1-3).

5
This life is acquired by accepting and receiving the Son of God for all He offered Himself to be (John 3:15, 16, A.R.V.; 3:36; 4:14; 6:40; 20:31; 1 Tim. 1:16; 2 Tim. 1:1; 1 John 5:11-13).

6
Every sinner who truly turns to Christ is thus saved from merited death—Christ dying in his stead (James 5:19, 20). And the repentant sinner is restored to life, and destined to receive glorious immortality at the resurrection or translation day.

3. CHRIST'S DEATH SUMMIT OF SACRIFICE FOR MAN

Note that death phase in greater depth. The laying down of His life, by Christ, was the consummating act in His transcendent self-sacrifice for man. This act of satisfaction and submission, in behalf of the race, to the full death penalty deserved by the race because of sin is truly unfathomable to the human mind. It scales the summit as well as plumbs the depths of divine love and grace. As to its central importance, 33 per cent of Matthew's Gospel is devoted to the record of the last week of Christ's life; of Mark's, 37 per cent; and of John's, 42 per cent. That is the proportionate emphasis given by Inspiration.

Let it never be forgotten that Christ did not choose between dying at one time rather than another, but instead, between dying and not dying for man. He died voluntarily, vicariously, and victoriously. He died to cancel the curse, to lift the ban, to bestow divine grace, to purchase pardon, to ransom sin's captives, to restore life—and to once and for all defeat and end Satan's malign work of rebellion, enslavement, and murder of the human race. Christ died as the representative of man—His death, as we have seen, being voluntary, vicarious, sinless, and sacrificial. It was purposeful, propitiatory, reconciliatory, once-for-all, and all-sufficient. It afforded complete atonement for all who will accept it, and thus come under the application of its provisions.

4. REJECTION OF CHRIST'S REDEMPTIVE PROVISIONS SUPREME SIN

In the light of all this, it therefore follows that, in as much as Christ is the supreme revelator, mediator, sole propitiator, and the reconciliator of God and man, the most fearful and fatal form of sin and rebellion is willful rejection of Christ as our atoning sacrifice, and of what He has done and what He offers Himself to be as the restorer of the lost life, and the sole giver of Immortality. The rejection of Christ and His teaching on this supreme provision of love is therefore the gravest of sins, and the rejector deserves and will experience everlasting death. That is the gravity of the ground we are traversing.

B. Pivotal Place of Christ's Teachings on Life, Death, and Destiny

Christ came both to restore obscured and lost truths and to enunciate new truths that confirmed, explained, expanded, and completed the original truths of the Old Testament—much of which concerned the origin, nature, and eternal destiny of man. These truths had first been enunciated after Creation and the Fall and were increasingly revealed during the patriarchal period. They were further developed during the Mosaic dispensation, and continued to be clarified and unfolded during the period of the prophets.

But in the two centuries preceding the birth of Christ false philosophical teachings regarding man's essential nature and destiny made

fatal inroads into large segments of Jewish thought. These Innate Immortality concepts came directly out of Greek paganism, as we shall see, through the channel of Platonic philosophy, and profoundly affected the Hebrew concept of man and his destiny and his relationship to God and immortality.

1. PROCLAMATION OF TRUTH AND CONFUTATION OF ERROR

Much of Christ's great mission was the proclamation of truth and the confutation of error concerning the basic relation ships between God and man. And the truth He proclaimed was personalized and embodied in Himself.

He was the predicted hope and Redeemer of Israel. He was the way, the truth, and pre-eminently the life. There was no other. He was the door of the sheepfold and the shepherd of life. He was the bread and the water of life. And significantly enough, He placed special emphasis during His incarnation on life—eternal life, vested in Himself—with immortality for man dependent upon the acceptance of Himself as atoning Saviour, transforming

Life-giver, and immortal King of the coming age.

But the Jewish mind had become obsessed with the Platonic concept of the universal Innate Immortality of the soul, and the contingent and corresponding Eternal Torment of the incorrigibly wicked. So it was that Jesus, as we have seen, sought to correct these gross misconceptions and to point out the imperative necessity of man's acceptance of Him as the Life-giver.

Christ's death on the uplifted cross was the transcendent fulfillment of the Old Testament types of the Divine Substitute offered in the sinner's stead—dying that he might not die but have life. And Christ's triumphal resurrection was not only a vindication of His astonishing claims but the divine guarantee of the resurrection at

the last day of all who believe in and receive Him for what He offered Himself to be. That is man's only guarantee and security.

2. KEY TO UNDERSTANDING CONFLICTS OF CENTURIES

Consequently, the mission of Christ on earth was tied in inextricably with the restoration of the truth and the

divine provision of assured eternal life now, vested in Christ, with actual and realized Immortality at the resurrection and Second Advent. A realization of these sublime truths and provisions is essential to a recognition and understanding of the ceaseless conflict of the centuries over the nature and destiny of man—whether conditional or innate, contingent or natural—and of death as ultimate utter destruction, or eternal life in torment. That is the essence of the issue.

This constitutes the key that unlocks the most crucial controversies of the centuries concerning Hell, Purgatory, indulgences, invocation of saints, spiritual resurrection, Universalism, Spiritualism, and kindred issues that have wracked the church across the centuries. That is why Christ's infallible testimony is not only ultimate but also indispensable in this field.

That is why we need to know not only His express teaching on life (already surveyed) but also His express teachings on the first, or natural, death as a sleep, with its inevitable resurrection awakening, and on the punishment of the wicked through utter destruction by means of the second death. Every major teaching of Christ is related to these basic considerations. His teaching on the "last things," for example, makes them luminous with new and larger meaning. To this we now turn.

C. Sets Pattern for Eschatological and Chronological Sequence

Let us now examine another related facet of our Lord's many-sided teaching emphasis. As would naturally be expected, Christ, the Supreme Preacher and Master Teacher of all time, set the eschatological pattern for all His followers to sense and follow. He presented the foundational truths of life, death, and destiny, not as isolated abstractions but always in their basic eschatological perspective and orderly sequence. They were always set forth in vital relationship to the last things, the end events, the judgment scenes and finalities. They were ever presented in the light of the climactic Second Advent with its tremendous accompaniments—its final rewards and punishments, and its resurrection unto eternal life and happiness for the righteous and its resurrection unto damnation and utter destruction for the sinful rejectors of salvation and truth. In other words, the eschatological overtone could always be heard in His utterances. That was one of the distinguishing characteristics of His message to men.

More than that, Christ presented these end events as the culmination of the impelling sweep of the centuries. No events are merely isolated and unrelated. Christ outlined the over-all life history and vicissitudes of the church He was founding, tracing its course clear across the Christian Era. But, to make the picture more comprehensive, He portrayed the church in the midst of the outer turbulence and

oppressions of the nations and the world, along with her own inner departures from the faith.

And still more significant, He tied them in with the great outline prophecies of Daniel (Matthew 24:15), that reach to the end of the age and the setting up of the kingdom of God, when the nations are to be overthrown by divine interposition at the end of the age. Such is the unity of the Old and the New Testament eschatology, brought into focus by Christ.

1. PROPHETIC REPETITION FOR EMPHASIS AND AMPLIFICATION

True to the characteristic pattern of Bible prophecy, Christ thrice goes back over the Christian Era, and retraces in part, each time with increasing fullness and greater detail the closer He carries us, in His portrayal, to the end of the age and to His own second advent in power and glory, which will terminate the affairs of mankind. There were diversions, but there was an undeviating progression. The continuity is unmistakable.

However, Jesus left to John the revelator and to Paul and Peter and others the portrayal of the tremendous multiple events of the coming day of the Lord, which is introduced by the Advent—along with the accompanying conditions and contingent events of the subsequent millennial period, which follows the Second Advent and the cataclysmic end of the age. And all this is, in turn, succeeded by the oft-foretold establishment of the everlasting kingdom of righteousness, presented under the term the "new heavens and a new earth" (2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1), to continue forevermore.

2. REPETITION—CLEARLY ESTABLISHED PATTERN OF PROPHECY

It is generally recognized that Daniel the prophet presented four paralleling lines of prophecy, depicting different approaches and emphases, in his multiple comprehensive outline of the world history of the centuries. These are recorded in chapters 2, 7, 8, 9, 11, and 12—each in the series climaxing with the establishment of the kingdom of God. And in the Apocalypse, John the revelator likewise presents a series of paralleling prophecies covering the Christian Era—the seven churches, the seven seals, the seven trumpets, and the consecutive beasts of Revelation 12-14 and 17-19—each prophetic outline going back and repeating, and all ending at the Advent, prior to the unique period of the millennium, set forth in chapter 20.1

Each and all are followed by the final destruction of sin and sinners, along with the author of sin, at the millennium's close. In the same way Christ, the fountainhead of prophecy, three times covers the Christian Era with cumulative force in His master prophecy of Matthew 24. His portrayal thus harmonizes with the characteristic pattern of all Bible prophecy. This reiteration was all necessary to bring out and unmask the fatal penetration of apostasy from within, along with persecution from the nations from without, and the complex conflicts between the two, reaching their close only at the Second Advent and final disposition of all things. This multiple portrayal was necessary, in order comprehensively to compass it all—just as four Gospels were required in order adequately to portray the matchless single life of Christ. This master prophecy is all presented in Matthew 24, and the paralleling recitals recorded in Mark 13 and Luke 21.

3. FIRST COVERAGE LEADS UP TO THE "END."

The first coverage of the Christian Era appears in verses 3-14 of Matthew 24. Beginning with the destruction of Jerusalem, in A.D. 70, Christ carries us through the early period of the appearance of "false Christs" and their deceptions, and the "wars and rumours of wars" that were to characterize the break up of the Roman Empire, and then into the Middle Ages. Christ here adds this cautionary note, "These things [that He had just depicted, up to this point] must come to pass, but the end is not yet" (v. 6).

Comprehensively covered in L. E. Froom, The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers, volumes 1-4.

Next He portrays the subsequent wars, uprisings, famines, pestilences, and the dreadful betrayals and religious persecutions that would mark the subsequent centuries. Then comes another outbreak of false prophets and deceivers. But now He reaches the significant time when some would "endure unto the end," and be saved. The "end" is now near. And finally comes the "end," ushered in with this identifying feature: "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come" (v. 14). - That is the supreme sign of the "last days," or "time of the end."

4. SECOND COVERAGE LIKEWISE LEADS TO ADVENT

Christ then reverts to the time of Daniel's prophecy of the great "tribulation," under the gross ecclesiastical apostasy of the Middle Ages and subsequent centuries. So devastating was its decimation that the days of religious persecution had to be "shortened," else no flesh would be saved (v. 22). Next comes the final irruption of false christs and

false prophets, and another attempt to deceive the very elect. But none need be deceived by sensational claims of Christ's coming in the "desert" or in the "secret chambers" (through the latter-day phenomena of Spiritualism). Thus the second time Jesus leads up to the "end," and the Second Advent. "For as
the lightning cometh out of the east, and shines even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man
be" (v. 27).

5. CELESTIAL SIGNS ARE CHRONOLOGICALLY PLACED

Finally, in the third recapitulation, Christ presents a series of unconcealable celestial signs that would slightly
precede His actual advent. He places the first of these chronologically just after the terrible "tribulation" part of "those days" (near the close of the fateful 1260 years of Daniel 7, extending from A.D. 538 to A.D. 1798), as He declares:

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days [ending mid-eighteenth century] shall the sun be darkened [May
19, 1780], and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven [Nov. 13, 1833], and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (Matthew 24:29, 30).

See L. E. Froom, Prophetic Faith, volumes 1-4, for documented evidence.

Ibid., volume 4, chapter 13, app. H.

Thus we are brought up the third time to the climactic "end" and Advent when "he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other" (v. 31).
And that gathering of the elect is by means of the resurrection of the righteous from among the dead and by the translation of the living righteous. Hence this over-all portrayal is tied in inextricably with our theme and quest, and deals with the final, eternal destiny of all men.

6. "HOUR" NOT KNOWN, IMMINENCE CAN BE KNOWN

As a reinforcing postscript Christ tells how, in the closing days before His coming, conditions similar to those
preceding the Flood will be repeated, with its sudden, unexpected, universal destruction:

"But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be" (vs. 37-39).

But "no man" will know beforehand the "hour" or precise time of Christ's coming—not even the angels (v. 36). But all men can know when it is near (vs. 37-44). That is why Christ gave this chronological outline prophecy— to disclose the proximity, so men can prepare for the coming event. Nevertheless, the "hour" will come as an unexpected surprise, when the "Son of man cometh" (vs. 44, 50). Especially searching is Christ's denunciation of those appointed as spiritual guardians and teachers in the church, who will nevertheless be unaware of the proximity of the time and the certainty and the crucial outcome of the impending Advent. Such, our Lord solemnly says, shall be cut off, or cut asunder, amid "weeping and gnashing of teeth" (v. 51). Here again is disclosed the fate of the wicked and the doom of the hypocrite.

That, in brief, is the Master's great eschatological prophecy of the Christian Era and the consummating end of the age. It is the "Master Outline of the Centuries" of the Christian Era. There is nothing comparable to it in the Word. It is the foundation portrayal for the diversified but eventful details added by Paul, Peter, John, and others, who wrote under inspiration, and in conformity therewith, as we shall see in subsequent chapters.

D. Transcendent Events Mark "End of the World"

1. PREPARATORY EVENTS, COMING IN GLORY, FINAL SEPARATIONS

As we have just seen, in discussing His second coming and the "end of the world" (Matthew 24:3), Christ tells of identifying preparatory events and movements to take place in the last days, and declares, "Then shall the end
come" (v. 14)—not simply the ending of an expiring state but really the beginning of a new and perfect state. That is highly significant.

It is in this connection that Christ says: "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (v. 30). As we have seen, that involves and necessitates separation of the good from the evil, among the living as well as the dead. Here is the inspired portrayal:

"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them [autous, masc., individuals, not ethne, neut., nations] one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats" (Matthew 25:31, 32).

Then Christ depicts the purpose of the final separation:
"Then shall he [the "Son of man"] say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (v. 41).

"And these [the wicked] shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal" (v. 46). Such are the events that follow the ripened "harvest" at the world's end. "When the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come" (Mark 4:29). This compasses the final destiny of all mankind.

2. "WHEAT" INTO GOD'S GARNER; "TARES" INTO FIRE

In His paralleling parable of the tares, Christ elaborates and defines His terms: "The harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels" (Matthew 13:39). And the twofold result of the reaping is this:

"Let both [the wheat and the tares—vs. 24, 25] grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers [angels], Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn" (v. 30).

The Old Testament portrayal of the harvest, in Joel 3. is in connection with the retributive scenes of the "day of the Lord": "Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come; get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision ["threshing" (margin day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision" (vs. 13, 14).

And the Master's inerrant "end of the world" explanation is this:

"The harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares ["children of the wicked one"] are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father" (vs. 39-43).

Such are the opposite eternal destinies of the two groups. And that stupendous reaping time predicted by Christ is portrayed in actual fulfillment in Revelation 14.

E. Apostles' Descriptions Agree With Christ's

The basic harmony between Christ's eschatology and that pictured by Paul and John is impressive. In His prophetic discourse of Matthew 24, answering the disciples' inquiry as to "the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world" (Matthew 24:3), Christ leads His listeners up to His "coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (v. 30), and declares:

"And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect [eklektous, chosen] from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other" (Matthew 24:31).

1. SECOND ADVENT USHERS IN "DAY OF THE LORD."

And now observe how Paul's description agrees with that of Christ: "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent [phthano, "to precede"] them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thess. 4:15-17).

And this is presented by Paul in immediate connection with the transcendent scenes of the "day of the Lord." "The day of the Lord so

cometh as a thief in the night. For when they [the wicked] shall say, Peace and safety;
then sudden destruction cometh upon them, . . . and they shall not escape" (1 Thess. 5:2, 3).

2. SECOND ADVENT IS DAY OF SEPARATION
Christ further describes the momentous events at His coming in these words in the parable of the talents. Note them again in greater detail:

"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and be fore him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left" (Matthew 25:31-33).

And the King's sentence from the throne, to those on His left, will be:

"Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire [to pur to aion-ion, age-lasting fire], prepared for the devil and his angels." "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal" (vs. 41, 46).

But mark that "everlasting punishment" is not everlasting punishing, but is eternal in results, and is analogous to the "eternal judgment" of Hebrews 6:2 (not eternal judging), "eternal redemption" of Hebrews 9:12 (not eternal redeeming), "eternal salvation" of Hebrews 5:9 (not eternal saving). That is, it is the eternal effect of an act. The act here in Matthew 25:46 is an act of punishment, as in Matthew 3:12, where "he will burn up [katakausei, "consume entirely"] the chaff with unquenchable fire."

3. ETERNAL RESULTS OF FINAL REAPING
The harvest, or reaping time, tersely pictured by Christ, is portrayed in full by John in Revelation 14. Note it:

"And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped. And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God" (Revelation 14:14-19).

First, the second advent of the Son of man is pictured, then the garnering, or gathering, of the ripened harvest of the golden grain of earth. Finally comes the climax—the gathering of the ripened clusters of grapes of wrath for casting into the "great winepress of the wrath of God" (v. 19). Thus are the transactions of the great "day of the Lord" portrayed by John. There are consequently two distinct developments, or phases: First, the gathering of the righteous, represented by the fully ripened grain; and second, the gathering up of the wicked, as fully ripe grapes, which are cast into the wine press of the fury of His wrath. Thus they are brought to an utter end. That is John's elaboration of Jesus' basic prophecy. Now let us turn to Christ's portrayal of man's condition in death, pictured as a "sleep." In this He is strongly buttressed by Paul.

F. "Sleep" of Death Followed by Resurrection "Awakening"

Jesus and then Paul are the principal New Testament witnesses to the truth that the "sleep" of the "first" death embraces both saints and sinners, and is an unbroken slumber until the resurrection morn, when the sleeping saints will awaken to the call of the Life-giver. The Biblical concept of unbroken rest, or sleep, accentuates the necessity of the Second Advent and its concurrent resurrection. Holy Writ repeatedly declares death to be an unbroken sleep, from which none will awake until Jesus comes to summon forth the righteous dead. It was because of this that the Second Advent was the radiant hope of the Early Church, the goal of all holy expectation.

We repeat, the first death, as a "sleep," comes upon all men alike, irrespective of character, whereas the "second death" is the retributive

punishment for willful, unrepented sin, and is executed only after the due determination of the judgment. And it is also to be remembered that the awakening of the sinner for that retribution comes a thousand years after that of the righteous—in other words, at the close of the millennium, instead of at the beginning. They are not synchronous or simultaneous.

1. CHRIST AND PAUL BOTH EMPLOY METAPHOR OF SLEEP

As we have seen, Jesus spoke definitively of death as a "sleep." Thus: "Our friend Lazarus sleeps [koimao, "to lie down in sleep"]; but I go, that I may awake [exupnizo, arouse] him out of sleep. . . . Howbeit Jesus spake of his death" (John 11:11-13).

The two expressions, sleeping and awakening, thus stand out in logical antithesis. On another occasion Jesus said, "The maid is not dead [in the sense of being beyond the summons of the Life-giver], but sleeps" (Matthew 9:24). And the record adds, then "he ... took her by the hand, and the maid arose" (v. 25). In this connection it is interesting to note that our English word "cemetery" comes from the Greek koimeterion, a sleeping chamber or burial place (from koimad, to put to sleep). Paul likewise uses the same metaphor of "sleep" with telling force:

"If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain. . . . Then they also which are fallen asleep [keomaomai, to fall asleep involuntarily] in Christ are perished. . . . But now is Christ risen from the dead, and be come the first fruits of them that slept" (1 Corinthians 15:17-20).

In John 12:1, 9, 17 the variant verb egeiro s (to rouse from sleep, to raise) is used by John in referring to the "raising" of Lazarus.

According to Companion Bible, of the 141 uses of egeiro (to awaken, wake up, arouse from sleep) 70 usages refer to the resurrection. (For example: Matthew 10:8; 27:63, 64; Luke 20:37; 24:10, 34; John 12:1, 9, 17; Ephesians 1:20; 5:14, et cetera.)

Anastasis is one of the most common Greek terms for "resurrection." It was often used by Christ, as in discussing the resurrection with the disbelieving Sadducees (Matthew 22:23, 28, 30, 31), and in referring to the "resurrection of the just" (Luke 14:14). It was likewise used by the apostles in referring to Christ's own resurrection (Matthew 27:53; Acts 1:22; 2:31; etc.), and by Paul in the great resurrection chapter (1 Corinthians 15:12, 13, 21, 42), as well as by Peter (1 Peter 1:3). The noun anastasis (a standing up, as from the dead; hence, resurrection), occurring 42 times, is always translated "resurrection," except in Luke 2:34. The verb anistemi occurs 111 times, 35 of which refer to resurrection. (For example: Matthew 17:9; 20:19; John 6:39, 40, 44, 54.)

2. NO CONSCIOUS LAPSE OF TIME BETWEEN DEATH AND RESURRECTION

Death as a deep unbroken sleep is the inspired depiction, enshrining a wondrous and blessed truth. For the sleeper himself there is no perceptible interval, no conscious lapse of time, between the moment of falling asleep in death and the instant of awakening, or resurrection. The closing of the eyes in the death slumber is succeeded immediately, as far as he is concerned, by the hearing of the sound of the last trump and the awakening call of Christ on the resurrection morn. Thus the passage of time is annihilated. It is more rapid than the lightning's flash across the sky. It will be like the "twinkling of an eye."

It cannot be overstressed that there is complete unconsciousness during the entire interval. The saints are not in Heaven, but in gravedom. Though thousands of years should elapse—as with righteous Abel (Hebrews 11:4)—there is no wearisome, frustrating passage of time. A long or a short period is identically the same to the one who is insensible. The moment of loss of consciousness is, to him, immediately followed, the next moment, by the regaining of consciousness, only now with the body in glorified, immortalized form (1 Corinthians 15:52-54). In the light of this comforting fact of the sleep of the saints, the second coming of Christ is as near to every in dividual in the embrace of death, and to every generation, as to any and all others. That should never be forgotten.

3. PREMISE OF "SLEEP" ONLY WAY OF UNDERSTANDING PAUL

Paul, in comforting the Thessalonians, along with all other Christians, always speaks of the dead as sleeping, and holds out the assurance of glorious final awakening, or resurrection. Indeed, the only way the apostle can be understood in all of his many statements is on the premise of a state of sleep between death and the resurrection. And as in natural sleep there is suspension of the senses, so in death there is cessation of all the functions of life.

We therefore believe it to be clearly established that the state of death is, in the New Testament, set forth as one of unconscious sleep between death and the resurrection—that unconsciousness continuing until the actual moment of awakening, which is the resurrection.

Hence the Greek verb egeiro, we repeat, commonly rendered "to raise," may, when used in the context of those who have died, be properly translated "to awake," "arouse," "rouse up." This is strikingly set forth in 1 Corinthians 15, the great resurrection classic, where the "waking" is frequently placed close beside the "sleeping" expressions of death. Thus:

"That Christ died for our sins . . . ; and that he was buried, and that he rose [egeiro, "hath been raised," or "awakened"] again the third day according to the scriptures: and that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: after that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep [koimao]" (1 Corinthians 15:3-6).

And now read verses 12-18, and 20, where egeiro may be uniformly rendered "awakened," and is, in fact, the alternative reading in various translations:

"Now if Christ be preached that he rose [egeiro, "awakened"] from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of [from among] the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen [awakened]: and if Christ be not risen [awakened], then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up [awakened]

Christ: whom he raised [awakened] not up, if so be that the dead rise [wake] not. For if the dead rise [wake] not, then is not Christ raised [awakened]: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished [from which there is no awakening]. . . . But now is Christ risen [awakened] from the dead, and be come the first fruits of them that slept [or, have fallen asleep, from koimao]" (vs. 12-20). Awakening is clearly the converse of falling asleep.

4. SLEEPING DEAD DO NOT PRECEDE THE LIVING

Another point should be noted. 1 Thessalonians 4:15—"We which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent [anticipate, precede, or go before] them which are asleep"—assures us that those who are still living and remain at the coming of the Lord shall not precede those who "are asleep" in death. Obviously Paul is not saying, "before those who have been before us in glory for centuries." Neither the "quick" (living) nor the "dead" (sleeping) shall precede or be gathered, before the other. But the changed living and the awakened "sleepers," both immortalized at one and the same time, "shall be caught up together," to "meet the Lord in the air," thenceforth ever to be "with the Lord" (1 Thess. 4:15-17).

5. INTENT OF THE "QUICK" AND THE "DEAD."

It should be added that the term "quick" appears thrice: Acts 10:42—Christ was "ordained of God to be the Judge of quick [zonton, "the living," from zao, "to have life"] and dead [nekron' persons once living but alive no longer]." 2 Tim. 4:1—"the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead." 1 Peter 4:5—"him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead."

No passage of Scripture employing this metaphor of sleep says that it is merely the body, or any single part of man, that sleeps, but always the person himself—the man as a man, or personality (see Job 7:21; Deuteronomy 31:16). Thus Jesus said, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth." And Paul declares, "Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." It is the dead who sleep, not simply their corpses.

Nekros denotes the person who was once living but who is alive no longer, that is, dead persons as distinct from merely dead bodies. (See Matthew 22:32; Acts 26:23; 1 Corinthians 15:12, 13, 15, 16; Hebrews 13:20.)

G. The Resurrection Provision Pivotal in Christ's Teaching

In both the private and the public teaching of Jesus the resurrection was set forth as pivotal—both for Himself and for His followers, with the latter contingent upon the former. More than that, the resurrection of all who have died is emphasized. But there are two resurrections, Jesus declared—that of the "good," unto "life"; and that of the "evil," unto damnation" (John 5:29). All the dead will hear the resurrection call of our Lord (v. 25). Thus, "All that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth" (vs. 28, 29). And all will come forth (1 Corinthians 15:22) as surely as all men die the first, or natural, death. The determination of which resurrection—that of the "just" or the "unjust"—is conditional, just as immortality is conditional. But not the fact and certainty of a resurrection; that is absolute and universal.

1. CHRIST'S RESURRECTION PREREQUISITE TO OURS

Resurrection was necessary for Jesus Christ. If He had remained the prey of death, He could not have opened the way to immortality for man, and the plan of redemption would have been aborted. Moreover, Christ's resurrection was a bodily resurrection, just as is to be that of His faithful followers. It was actual, and real—albeit a glorified, spiritual body. When the disciples saw Christ after His resurrection, the record is:

"They were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit \pneuma, here "a spirit being"]" (Luke 24:37). But Jesus said: "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit [pneuma] hath not flesh and bones ["body," v. 3], as ye see me have" (v. 39).

It is only the risen and living Saviour who can and will raise to eternal life all who have become united to Him by faith (1 Corinthians 15:42-44; Phil. 3:21). Indeed, He declares from Heaven:

"I am he that lives, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for ever more, Amen; and have the keys of hell [hades, the grave] and of death" (Revelation 1:18).

These keys He will use on the resurrection morn. Our sole hope of immortality is bound up with this supernatural, consummating act of resurrection. There is no immortality apart from the resurrection assured by

Christ's resurrection, and bestowed upon us at the time of Christ's return (1 Corinthians 15:52, 53). Clearly, then, the safety and assurance of those who are "in Christ" is bound up with the resurrection as the consummation of life, and the sole exit from death and the grave.

"This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day" (John 6:39; cf. v. 40; chaps. 11:25; 14:6; Colossians 3:4).

2. RESURRECTION IS OF THE WHOLE PERSON

Jesus left to Paul and to John the unfolding and development of many great truths centering in and about the resurrection. But He laid the complete groundwork therefore, and established the certainty. He declared the truth that the resurrection is a bodily resurrection. The definition and the nature and the actuality are fixed by Christ's own resurrection. It cannot signify one thing for Christ and another thing totally different for us. Both Old and New Testaments alike speak of the person as being buried. "David ... is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day" (Acts 2:29). Said the angels at Christ's tomb, "Come, see the place where the Lord lay" (Matthew 28:6). The Lord Himself lay there until the moment of resurrection. They laid Jesus in the tomb. They "took him down, and wrapped him in the linen, and laid him in a sepulchre" (Mark 15:46). "There they laid Jesus" (John 19:42). Jesus was in the grave.

3. CERTITUDE OF RESURRECTION RESTS ON CHRIST'S INFALLIBLE WORD

Jesus predicted not only His own death on the cross but His triumphant resurrection from the dead, His return to His Father, and His coming again for His followers, that they might be with Him forevermore (John 14:3). Declaring Himself to be "the way, the truth, and the life" (v. 6), and repeating His prediction, "I will come again, and receive you unto myself" (v. 3), He added, "Because I live, ye shall live also" (v. 19). He likewise said:

"I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever lives and believeth in me shall never die [the second death]" (John 11:25, 26).

The second death is the only real death, eternal death, from which there is no awakening. The first death is but a sleep, from which there is a certain and a universal awakening. Again and again Jesus says of all who believe on the Son that they may have "everlasting life" now, in Christ, and three times asserts, "I will raise him up at the last day" (John 6:40). So the certitude of the resurrection rests upon the formal and inviolable promise of the Son of God: "This is the will of him that sent me, that every one which sees the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day" (John 6:40).

His resurrection becomes the unbreakable pledge of our own. If Christ was not raised, there would be nothing to guarantee a life beyond the grave (1 Corinthians 15:13-23). Buried in the profound slumber of she'61 (or hades), the saints would never awaken from that heavy sleep, apart from the resurrection.

4. NOT UNINTERRUPTED SURVIVAL BUT RESURRECTION
Let there be no confusion, then, over the issue of uninterrupted survival.

"Fear not 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 [Gehenna]" (Matthew 10:28).

This categorical statement, that God is able to destroy both soul and body in hell, rules out the thesis of innate indestructibility or indefeasible immortality of man. Though one be slain by human hands, God will raise him up, soul and body, at the resurrection day. This was the argument that Christ used to silence the Sadducees—not the uninterrupted survival of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but resurrection (Luke 20:37, 38). So the resurrection is the second of the two fundamental truths of the gospel—next to, following upon, and joined inseparably to, the atoning death of Christ.

Christ's Great Parable of the Lost Opportunity

A. Problem Text (Luke 16:19-31): Parable-Fable of Dives and Lazarus

The parable of the rich man and Lazarus is often cited as the chief cornerstone in support of the postulate of man's inherent immortality and the endless duration of the incorrigibly wicked in sin and misery. It is frequently invoked to silence all dissent or question as to Immortal-Soulism. It is persistently set forth as proving beyond all peradventure that the souls of both the godly and the ungodly continue to live on uninterruptedly after death, separate from the body—but which, as we shall presently see, is simply Plato's contention that death is identical with life, only in another sphere. This Platonic concept presents retribution as beginning immediately upon entering the state of death.

The parable depicts Lazarus as already safely in "Abraham's bosom," and Dives as already suffering the tormenting flames of "hell"—and all this before the resurrection, and prior to the judgment. It is alleged that the portrayal establishes three things: (1) That the dead are all keenly conscious; (2) that the souls of all men are immortal; and (3) that upon leaving this world all men go at once either into a state of blessed joy forever or to unchangeable Eternal Torment. That is the common contention based on this passage. The story of the rich man and Lazarus is the only passage in the New Testament in which a person, said to be in hades, is supposedly suffering the torments of the eternal flames of Hell. That in itself is so startling as to warrant special care in checking the recital from all angles. Is this an exception to the general rule? Does this constitute determining evidence? The case necessitates careful investigation, not only of all key expressions of the text, in their context, but of ascertaining contemporary backgrounds and side lights that have a bearing thereon.

1. CLEARLY ONE OF CHRIST'S MANY PARABLES
To begin with, Christ uttered some forty or fifty major parables to illustrate God's mercy and justice, the plan of salvation, the reception or rejection of truth, the transformation of character, prayer, humility, the utilizing of present opportunities, relation to fellow men, His own return, the final judgment, and eternal reward—and especially the kingdom of Heaven. It was His characteristic form of teaching in the latter part of His ministry. That the story of the rich man and Lazarus is a parable has been widely recognized across the centuries. But not by all.

The Parable-Fable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, Appearing in a Sequence of Parables, Taught a Vital Spiritual Truth Concerning This Life, Not Historical Events of Life After Death.

While Jesus usually introduces His parables by saying they are parables (or likening them to "such-and-such"), He does not always do so. For example, there is the universally recognized parable of the prodigal son, in the preceding chapter of Luke's Gospel, introduced by the phrase, "A certain man . . ." (Luke 15:11-32). This is followed, in chapter 16, by the parable of the unjust steward, which likewise begins with "There was a certain rich man . . ." (chap. 16:1-13).

Even on the basis of such an identical beginning, in this next recital of the rich man and Lazarus—"There was a certain rich man ..." (vs. 19-31)—we might make bold to say that in such a sequence this story would likewise logically be a parable, unless proof were forthcoming to the contrary. All three are recorded in succession by the same writer (Luke), and he is obviously using the same expression in the same parabolic sense.

2. UTTERED WHEN JEWS DERIDED HIS TEACHINGS

As noted, Jesus had just presented the parable of the unjust steward (v. 12), as stressing the principle that the use of present opportunities determines future destiny. Christ was not condoning the unethical schemes of the unjust steward, only emphasizing his foresight and applying the principle of preparation for the life to come. But the Pharisees had refused to accept His teachings. Now He presses the point that man's future destiny is settled forever in this present life. But "the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things: and they derided him" (v. 14).

But because they openly scoffed at Him, Christ gives them a parable based on one of their own well-known beliefs. Many expositors believe that, for one thing, it was designed' to show to the proud, self-righteous Pharisees, to whom high religious privileges had been accorded, how completely their condition and that of the despised Gentiles would later be reversed. The rich man of the narrative erred in thinking that salvation is based

on Abrahamic descent rather than on character. Under stood in this light, it will be seen to be strikingly prophetic—fulfilled to the very letter. But the lesson is deeper and very important. Let us first search into Christ's extensive and in tensive use of parables.

B. Significant Place of Parables in Christ's Teaching

1. "PARABLE" AND "FABLE," DEFINITIONS AND DISTINCTIONS

The line of demarcation between parable, simile, metaphor, legend, folklore, and fable cannot always be sharply drawn. Often they merge and blend. A parable is a figurative illustration, an extended proverb or metaphor. It is more than a similitude (in which two things are compared), or a metaphor (suggesting a likeness or comparison). It is a word picture, an illuminating story.

Technically, a parable signifies a complete and often imaginary story from which a moral or lesson is to be drawn. Etymologically, a parable (parabole, "a placing alongside") signifies the placing of two or more objects, or events, or circumstances alongside each other for the sake of comparison, and to illustrate and inculcate some moral lesson or higher spiritual truth. Parables are often based on folklore, or fables. And in this case of Dives and Lazarus, it is a trenchant story, based on contemporary Jewish belief and employed by Christ to admonish and rebuke the smugness of the Pharisees.

Christ's parables deal with the majesty of truth. Our Lord used parables to unfold great verities, placing a simple story "alongside," to illuminate a profound truth. But that truth conformed to fact and reality and to Scriptures, though not always to all aspects of the illustration that was employed. Beneath the outward form, or framework, is always to be found the inward meaning; beneath the visible, the invisible; be neath the temporal and passing is the eternal and abiding. The intended meaning is not always expressed in the words used, but becomes clear by the intent of the comparison. A parable, therefore, conceals from one group what it reveals to another, as will later be noted. Parables must be rightly interpreted, or erroneous conclusions will be drawn.

A fable, or apologue, is likewise a fictitious narrative—a legend, myth, or bit of folklore—similarly designed to enforce some wholesome truth. But it is usually a story in which unusual actions are ascribed to animate or inanimate objects—and which could not actually happen—but which nevertheless reflect a helpful truth or principle. A fable builds the case in point upon an artificial setting—and, as noted, one in which it could not actually happen. Consequently its design and meaning are often the more easily discerned.

The story of the rich man and Lazarus was not specifically called a parable, evidently because it was really a parabolic fable based on contemporary Pharisaic tradition, but brought over into Jewish usage, according to Bishop Joseph Lightfoot, from pagan backgrounds. It is obviously a blending of parable and fable—the truth of the teaching not being in the precise words or setting employed but in the designated lesson of the comparison. With this as a setting, let us turn to Christ's parables in general. These were spoken with such frequency that Matthew wrote, "Without a parable spake he not unto them" (Matthew 13:34).

2. PARABOLIC METHOD ADOPTED TO CIRCUMVENT PREJUDICE

At the outset of His ministry Christ used direct teaching methods and plain-spoken discourses. He uttered beatitudes, sayings, laws, promises, prophecies, and similitudes that explained themselves. He thus began the proclamation of His gospel message. But a change came after His first year of direct teaching, which was met with scorn, unbelief, and rising resistance. He then began to adopt the

parabolic form of teach ing, which had been in vogue for a century or so among Jewish teachers.

This astonished His disciples, as He changed from proclaiming the kingdom of Heaven in His former fashion. But He continued to employ, increasingly, the familiar form of rabbinic teaching—parables and "dark sayings," such as they had reserved for their own chosen disciples.

Christ evidently chose this medium because the Jews were spiritually blind and deaf (Matthew 13:10-13), and had now braced themselves against His direct teachings. There was a penal element in this. The Jews had set themselves against the light, or truth, as it was in Jesus. Therefore it was hidden informs not easy for His antagonists to recognize. He deliberately withdrew light from those who "loved darkness rather than light" (John 3:19, 20; 1:5; 12:35, 36). And the Platonic concept of the soul was now one of their cherished positions, molding their thinking.

J. B. Lightfoot, Works, vol. 12, pp. 159-168.

Thus it was that truth was protected from the mockery of the scoffer. But the genuine seekers for truth asked the meaning of His parables, and the Master Teacher explained them step by step until they understood them. Thus truth was advanced despite the untoward circumstances. The underlying laws and principles governing parables were a sufficient safeguard against misunderstanding in their day. And they should be in ours. The disciples understood the Master's teachings on death and destiny, which ran counter to those of the Pharisees. They were aware of the sharp divergence.

So it was that the parable searched out the sincere hearers and led them on into the increasing light of truth. Christ's objective was unchanged, but His mode of communicating truth was altered to meet the changed conditions. Truth was now wrapped in a parabolic veil. In this way He surmounted the barricade of prejudice, reached the honest in heart, and instructed His circle of disciples. More than that, Christ was speaking for all classes and conditions to the end of time. Such was the paramount place of the parable in the climactic period of our Lord's ministry.

3. REVEALED TO DISCIPLES; CONCEALED FROM HOSTILE JEWS

As stated, by the second year of Christ's ministry, the leaders and the bulk of the people had refused to accept Him for what He offered Himself to be—the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Christ then directed His teaching increasingly to His followers, and in so doing adopted the parabolic form of presentation, and became the supreme Teacher by the parabolic method. The purpose was obviously both to reveal to His disciples and to conceal from the hostile Jews. Here are Christ's words to the twelve after He had uttered the parable of the sower:

"And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand" (Luke 8:10; cf. Matthew 13:11-17; Mark 4:9-12). It is therefore established that Christ adopted a method of teaching truth that concealed it from those unwilling to be molded by it. And in this method it is not the circumstantial setting or staging of the parable that is significant, but the higher spiritual lesson springing there from, which constitutes its essence. For this we must watch in the parable we are about to survey. But first note another angle.

4. NUMBER AND SCOPE OF CHRIST'S PARABLES

As to the number and scope of Christ's parables, Adam Fahling, in his Harmony of the Gospels (page 228), lists fifty-six parables uttered by our Lord. Others—such as Orville Nave, in his Topical Bible—tabulating only the major ones, list but thirty or forty.

Some say seventy or more. But there is actually no conflict. The variation simply depends upon whether minor instances are included. And the distribution is interesting. They are confined to the three synoptic Gospels, with Matthew (32), Mark (14), and Luke (36). Next note another factor that is vital in our quest.

5. PARABLES NOT A SOUND BASIS FOR DOCTRINE

For centuries hundreds of the most discerning scholars have recognized that parables, although rich in spiritual truth, do not form a proper basis for doctrinal faith or argument, because of their circumstantial settings and indirect character. The Latin expression, Omnia similia claudicunt ("All comparisons limp"), is applicable to parables. We repeat, No point of doctrine can safely be established on figurative passages of Scripture. Its doctrinal value lies only in its accordance with the non figurative declaration of Scripture, clearly expressed else where. That is particularly true of this parable. Bloomfield declares that

"the best commentators, both ancient and modern, with reason consider it a parable."

See R. C. Trench, Notes on the Parables of Our Lord; cf. Terry, Biblical Hermeneutics.

Accordingly, scholarly Dr. Alfred Edersheim, in Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, wisely says that doctrine cannot be derived from this parable (the rich man and Lazarus), concerning either the other world or the character or duration of future punishments, or the moral improvement of those in Gehenna. Prebendary. Henry Constable calls such a position the "general sentiment of Christians." And Dr. William Smith insists: "It is impossible to ground the proof of an important theological doctrine on a passage which confessedly abounds in Jewish metaphor."

But, it is to be observed, if this passage is conceded to be but a parable, then it clearly cannot be used to prove the eternal conscious torment of the wicked, for, as noted, no doctrine can safely be built upon, or buttressed by, a parable or allegory—especially when it squarely confutes the plain and uniform teaching of Scripture.

William Smith, Dictionary of the Bible, vol. 2, p. 1038.

C. Doctrinal Dogmas of Pharisees in Time of Christ

1. PLATONIC POSTULATES EMBRACED BY TIME OF CHRIST.

Before we proceed to the parable, let us observe that this narrative was addressed to the Pharisees in particular, who were by now fully committed to the twin Platonic postulates of the immortality of the soul and the Eternal Torment of the wicked. The acceptance of these dual principles of Platonic philosophy and the consequent revolution in the theology of the Pharisees had transformed she'ol (and hades, its Greek equivalent) into an animated abode of disembodied spirits. It was now accepted as a place of throbbing life, instead of sterile death. And along with this, two characteristic terms used by the Pharisees—"Abraham's bosom" and "Paradise"—were now tied into this Platonic picture.

Under the insidious inroads of Platonism such Jews had become declared Immortal-Soulists, as seen in several of the inter-Testamental apocryphal and pseudo graphical books, and pre-eminently in Philo of Alexandria. (See pp. 718-740.) But neither the Old nor the New Testament ever speaks of she'ol (or hades) as a realm of life. Only in the poetical imagery of Isaiah 14 in the Old Testament as clearly stated, and here in this parable of the rich man and Lazarus in the New, are those committed to she'ol, or hades, said to perform the acts of the living. And by this time there was grave confusion over the distinctions between Hades and Gehenna. Such was the contemporary setting for the parable.

Christ was not, it should be added, necessarily supporting the pagan concept of death as life, that had now corrupted the Jewish faith. He was simply using a current concept to instil a totally different spiritual lesson.

2. PARALLELING ALLEGORIES IN OT IMAGERY

It should also be noted that the nearest Old Testament parallel to the Dives-Lazarus parable is the parabolic imagery of Isaiah 14:4-11, which represents dead kings, though actually in their graves, as rising up and sitting on thrones in she'ol. They were there portrayed as conversing and rejoicing over the downfall of Nebuchadnezzar, the great Babylonian conqueror who had put them to death, and was then on his way to take his throne among them in the nether regions. (See pp. 170, 171.)

Then there was Jotham's parabolic story of the trees, the vine, and the bramble engaging in animated discussion (Judges 9:8-16; 2 Kings 14:9)—but never, of course, taking place in reality. It was purely and clearly figurative—a fictional narrative. As someone has phrased it, it presented a "substantial truth" in the framework of "circumstantial fiction." So there is no determinative help from the Old Testament. Here, in the parable of Luke 16:19-31, the unconscious dead are represented as carrying on a conversation—but without necessarily involving the actual consciousness of the dead, according to Old Testament precedent.

3. NOT BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH BUT PARABOLIC FABLE

This New Testament portrayal is obviously an illustrative parable, not a biographical sketch. It is to be understood and treated as a parable—designed to portray and enforce a moral lesson. Its personages—the rich man and Lazarus—were not actual historical figures, but imaginary characters representing classes of people. And, we repeat, one

cannot admit certain portions to be parabolic, and at the same time insist that other portions are literal. The narrative is a unit and stands or falls together. In a parable the various details do not have individual significance in themselves. They simply constitute an appropriate setting for the story. Consistency,
reasonableness, or truthfulness are not prerequisite. But it is vastly different with historical narratives. Conflict
with fact is fatal there.

The fundamental principle illustrated in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus is unquestionably that eternal destiny is decided in this present life; and that there is no second probation. It clearly declares that there can be no alteration or improvement of the condition of those who die outside the provisions of salvation. Moreover, if this story were historical, it would have to be in harmony with the general teaching or tenor of Scripture. But, as we have observed, the idea that good and bad alike enter upon their reward at death is not in harmony with the general tenor of Scripture. These parabolic details and divergences have nothing to do with any basic doctrinal

teaching on the intermediate state; nor do they bear on the character and duration of the future punishment of the wicked. Such do not come within its scope. These principles are determinative.

We should also recognize that a parable may illustrate some fundamental aspect of truth based upon current customs or contemporary sayings, however erroneous such may be in themselves. And such parables must always be understood in the light of the truth they are designed to teach. In reality this parable has no reference to future punishment or to the condition of man between death and the resurrection. And not a word is said as to the duration of the flame in Hades, in which the scene is placed. Yet Eternal Torment is the main point of the contender for the immortality of the soul.

D. Christ's Great Parable of the Lost Opportunity

The story of Dives and Lazarus was the last in a series of moving stories, addressed primarily to the Pharisees, as recorded by Luke. The fact that Jesus talked with outcasts and sinners drew sharp censure from the Pharisees, who murmured, "This man receives sinners, and eats with them" (Luke 15:2). These narratives were the stories of the lost sheep, the lost coin, the lost son, then of the unjust steward, and finally that of the lost opportunity.

1. REJOICING IN HEAVEN; RESENTMENT BY PHARISEES

The same underlying lesson runs through them all—"more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over
ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance" (v. 7, R.S.V.). There is obvious satire in Christ's reference to the "righteous" persons. As with the lost coin and the lost son, there is heavenly rejoicing over the recovery of the lost—but resentment by the Pharisees. More than a hundred times the expression "kingdom of God," or "kingdom of heaven," appears in the Gospels, often stressing joy and rejoicing over the reclaiming of the sinner. But the Pharisees, with their stultifying rules and repressive regulations and traditions and smug racial arrogance, found no place for rejoicing over the recovery of the lost. In the parable of the unjust steward Christ emphasized the necessity of building friendships for the future, drawing a lesson even from this man's questionable shrewdness concerning his earthly future. How much more important to prepare for the life to come. But these important lessons were all spurned by the Pharisees, and they "derided" Christ (Luke 16:14).

Their perverse attitude and actions drew a stern rebuke. They were seeking to "justify" themselves before men, but their attitudes were an "abomination in the sight of God" (v. 15). Thus it was that "the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presses into it" (v. 16). Outcasts, without a knowledge of the law and the prophets, were pressing into the kingdom of God, while those who exulted in having the Sacred Oracles committed into their hands concealed cancerous sin in their hearts. Meticulous over professed piety, they were exceedingly lax as to morals, such as with divorce (vs. 17, 18).

2. LOGICAL CLIMAX OF "LOST OPPORTUNITY" PARABLE

The timing of these parables is also significant. They were spoken near the close of Christ's public ministry. He
was making His last appeals, based on the shepherd's love, the woman's diligent search, the wonderful love of the father over his way ward son, then preparation for the life to come. And now the Master brings forward His last parable in the series—the necessity of being ready for the day of death and the futility of counting on a second probation. Its burden was the tragedy of the lost opportunity and the eternal fixity of man's destiny when life ends.

It was likewise to show that riches, instead of assuredly leading into the "everlasting habitations" of the saved (Luke 16:9), might prove a fatal barrier against salvation. So the story of the rich man and Lazarus logically belongs where it is —at the end of this series.

E. Salient Points and Perplexing Problems Outlined

1. TERSE OUTLINE OF THE PARABLE

Let us first get the story before us in a few broad strokes. Two scenes are portrayed: (1) life in the present world, and (2) eternal destiny in the nether world. First, there was a "certain rich man" who "fared sumptuously" on earth (Luke 16:19). Then there was Lazarus, a poverty-stricken beggar, in hunger and misery, and covered with sores (vs. 20, 21). Death came to both, Lazarus being "carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom" (v. 22). The rich man was "buried," but finding himself in torment, lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham in the distance, with Lazarus "in his bosom" (v. 23).

Addressing "Father Abraham" rather than God—thus relying on his relationship to Abraham—Dives pleaded for mercy, asking that Lazarus "dip the tip of his finger in water" to cool his tongue, and thus relieve his suffering, for he was "tormented in this flame" (v. 24). But Abraham refused, reminding Dives that in his earthly lifetime he had the "good things," while Lazarus suffered "evil things." But now this is reversed, Lazarus being "comforted" while Dives is "tormented" (v. 25). And Abraham further reminded Dives of the "great gulf fixed" between them, which made any passage or relief impossible (v. 26).

The appeal for himself failing, Dives next asked that Lazarus be sent to his five brethren still on earth, to warn them "lest they also come into this place of torment" (vs. 27, 28). But Abraham's significant reply was, "They have Moses and the prophets [the OT Scriptures}; let them hear them" (v. 29). Then Dives protested that if only "one went unto them from the dead, they will repent" (v. 30). But Abraham reiterated his position: "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead" (v. 31).

Dives's very request was, of course, a reflection upon God —"If Thou had more adequately warned me, I would not now be here." Anyway, that was the tale. And the Pharisees had many such folklore stories of imaginary conversations.

2. KEY TERMS AND EXPRESSIONS EXAMINED

Now let us examine the key expressions in this parabolic fable. The narrative takes in earth, Hades, and Paradise—a large coverage. The rich man was the Pharisees' ideal. He fared sumptuously —lived in abundance. The translation of plousios ("rich") by dives in the Latin Vulgate, gave rise to the notion that his actual name was Dives, as he is frequently dubbed—and which we here use for brevity.

There was nothing flagrantly blameworthy in the rich man's outward life. He was not voluptuous or debauched. He was philanthropic in his way, and permitted Lazarus to beg at the gate of his beautiful mansion. In the concept of the Pharisees, Dives's place in the hereafter, with Abraham and the other worthies, was assured. But when his account was closed an impassable gulf separated him from Abraham. His whole life had been lived in false security. Now he was outside the kingdom of God forever.

The "beggar" was named Lazarus. The Pharisees held the beggar in disdain, and gloried in the success of the rich Dives. While both died, the record does not say the beggar was buried. At that time, unknown and unclaimed beggars who were overtaken by death along the roadside were carried to Tophet, outside of Jerusalem, and flung into the perpetual fires, kept burning there to destroy the offal, and corpses and carcasses such as this. Although nothing is said about an intangible immortal soul having left the body at death, these two characters are, by proponents of Innate Immortality, commonly regarded as disembodied spirits.

Thus Van Osterzee, and various other commentators, maintain that the story teaches the uninterrupted continuance of the soul separate from the body, in eternal blessedness or woe.

As to the "angels," the Pharisees taught that there were sets of angels—one for the wicked, the other for the good. And "Abraham's bosom" was, of course, not literal, but a figure of speech—a Jewish idiom meaning Paradise, with Abraham welcoming the newcomers at their death, just as many modern Christians conceive of Saint Peter as welcoming the righteous at the gate of Heaven. The reference to the "bosom" can perhaps be understood in the light of Christ's statement that He dwelt "in the bosom of the Father" (John 1:18).

Lightfoot, op. cit., vol. 12, pp. 159-163.

Curiously enough, the Pharisees also taught that in life two men may be "coupled together," so that one sees the other after death, and they converse together. In fact, the Pharisees had numerous legends and tales of similar imaginary situations, according to Bishop

Lightfoot.

3. SUFFICIENCY OF SCRIPTURE; UNWILLINGNESS TO BELIEVE

Then Dives lifts up his eyes and strangely sees Abraham afar off. But consistency is not called for in a parable.

The narrative here puts Heaven and Hell within seeing and speaking distance—but with a yawning, impassable gulf between. It is a curious situation. Mark it: This "gulf" was too wide and too deep to cross over, but narrow enough to see and converse across. (It was such a concept, incidentally, that gave rise to Jonathan Edward's strange contention that the sight of the agonies of the damned enhances the bliss of the redeemed. Think, however, of a godly mother eternally witnessing the excruciating agonies and pleadings of a lost son or daughter!)

"Father Abraham" is addressed as if he were God, with Lazarus at his beck and call. The question inevitably arises for Christians, Can those who die in Christ, forever converse across the dividing chasm with those who have died out of Christ? But, for our consolation, Christ was not teaching the geography of the underworld. The question of the future world was not under discussion. It was not a theological but an ethical problem—the right use of opportunity and of wealth (for the chapter opens with the parable of the unjust steward). The introductory principle was, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (see Luke 16:11-13). And the climax of the parable is, What saith the Scripture?

Rather, the parable represents the irrevocable separation, fixed by death, between the good arid the evil at the close of their earthly probation. Each must remain in the class in which death finds him, until the great assize. And no one is assigned to the last fearful second death prior to the judgment. Today, in life, one may pass from condemnation to pardon (John 3:18). But when death comes it is forever too late. The gulf is "fixed." The obvious purpose of the parable was to influence the living, and was adapted to the misconceptions of the Jews at the time. It was actually an argumentum ad hominem ("to the man")—an argument directed at, and appealing to, their prejudices rather than to their intellect.

Dives demanded additional evidence—extra Biblical evidence—for his brothers. But Abraham's firm answer was, "They have Moses and the prophets [common designation for the Old Testament Scriptures]; let them hear them" (Luke 16:29). That is the source of ample information. The Scriptures are declared to be a true and sufficient guide to salvation. They are the authoritative source of information, available in this life, here and now, concerning human destiny and the future life. That is where we too must go, not to human tradition.

Gravity of Ascribing False Teachings to Christ

A. Josephus Illuminates Dives-Lazarus Story

Most fortunately for our investigation, Josephus left on record a "Discourse to the Greeks Concerning Hades," which illuminates Jesus' Dives and Lazarus story. Not only does it parallel Christ's narration, showing that it was based on a current Jewish belief, but it amplifies and explains the contemporary concepts and expressions of the Jews, frankly drawn from Platonism.

But it does more. It reveals at the same time how Christian advocates of Immortal-Soulism and Eternal Torment have, in their ardor, gone beyond the specifications of the parable, and read into it present eternal suffering for the wicked in the unquenchable fires of Gehenna, and this prior to the judgment—neither of which is justified by the original record. An epitome of Josephus' "Discourse on Hades," as currently held in the first century A.D., is here given rather fully because of its importance to our analysis. But first let us note the pertinency, relevancy, and admissibility of Josephus' testimony. An extract out of Josephus' "Discourse of the Greeks Concerning Hades." in The Works of Flavius Josephus (Whiston tr.).

1. REPRESENTATIVE CHARACTER OF JOSEPHUS' DEPICTION

Flavius Josephus (died c. A.D. 100), celebrated Jewish priest and historian, was a Pharisee. He was not only highly trained in Jewish law but recorded the contemporary Jewish teachings, sayings, and traditions of the times. In fact, his writings constitute the most comprehensive Jewish history of the century. He was an enthusiastic admirer of Rome and its institutions, and basked in the sunshine of the favor of the emperors Vespasian and Titus, becoming adviser to Vespasian and serving as interpreter to Titus during the siege of Jerusalem, in A.D. 70—which act aroused the antipathy of the Jews. But this did not alter his

competence as a witness.

Josephus' autobiography appears at the outset of his Works. Of priestly descent, he came from the "first of the twenty-four courses." He first studied the teachings of all three major sects—Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes and finally identified himself with the Pharisees.

Josephus received Roman citizenship, together with a pension, and adopted the name Flavius, after that of the imperial family. Thenceforth he devoted himself solely to writing. His works were highly esteemed by the Church Fathers, especially Jerome. And he was ever loyal to the Jewish customs and religion, as then held— particularly that of the Pharisees, in whom we are most interested. His works are still the most comprehensive source of information on the times and the beliefs and teachings of the Jews in the period of Christ and the apostles. Such is his competence and credibility as a firsthand witness.

2. MULTIPLE FEATURES OF HADES DESCRIBED

Josephus explains that Hades is considered to be a "subterraneous region," where the "souls of righteous and unrighteous" are alike "detained," and wherein there is "perpetual darkness." It is a "place" for the "custody of souls," where "angel" guardians distribute "temporary punishment." In an adjacent but separate section is a "lake of unquenchable fire"—but into which, Josephus explicitly adds, "we suppose no one hath hitherto been cast." That is significant, and should be remembered. It is prepared for a "day afore-determined by God," "in which one righteous sentence shall deservedly be passed upon all men." The "unjust" and "disobedient" will then, and only then, be assigned to "everlasting punishment" while the "just" will obtain an "incorruptible and never- fading king dom." Both groups are "confined in Hades, but not in the same place."

3. "JUST" GUIDED BY "ANGELS" TO "BOSOM OF ABRAHAM."

There is but "one descent into this" subterraneous region, "at whose gate . . . stands an archangel with an host" of angels. All who pass that way are "conducted down by the angels appointed over souls." "The just are guided to the right hand," which is a "region of light," with a "prospect of good things" to come. There is for them no toil, heat, or cold.

They ever look upon the "countenance of the fathers and of the just." Here they wait for "eternal new life in heaven." And now comes the climactic sentence—"This place we call The bosom of Abraham." That is unmistakable identification, and must be remembered.

4. "UNJUST" DRAGGED TO "NEIGHBORHOOD" OF HELL

Turning next to the "unjust," Josephus says that they are "dragged by force to the left hand by the angels allotted for punishment." He refers to such souls as "prisoners driven by violence." The angels "reproach" them, "threaten" them, and "thrust them still downward." In fact, they are dragged "into the neighborhood of hell itself [Gehenna]," "hard by it," where they "continually hear the noise of it," and where they are near "the hot vapour itself." They have a "near view of this spectacle, as of a terrible and exceeding great prospect of fire," and are in "fearful expectation of a future judgment," and are "in effect punished thereby," in a preliminary way.

5. IMPASSABLE GULF SEPARATES THE TWO GROUPS

But that is not all. They "see the place of the fathers and the just," which sight in itself is a punishment. And here is the second telltale parallel—"a chaos deep and large is fixed" between the two groups, so that neither can "pass over" to the other side. That is the next major point to be remembered. And this, Josephus declares, is Hades, wherein the souls of all men are confined until a proper season, which God hath determined. Then He will "make a resurrection of all men from the dead," "raising again those very bodies," which the Greeks erroneously think are "dissolved" forever, and will not be resurrected.

Then, declaring that "according to the doctrine of Plato" (who is thus frankly named), the Greeks believe that the "soul is created" and "made immortal by God," Josephus asserts that God is also able to make "immortal" the "body" He has "raised" to life. So, he continues, the Jews believe that the "body will be raised again," and although it is "dissolved, it is not perished." Again, "to every body shall be its own soul restored."

6. ETERNAL TORMENT FOR WICKED AFTER JUDGMENT

So, Josephus concludes, after just "judgment" at the "judgment-seat," the righteous will have an "everlasting fruition." But the wicked will then be allotted to "eternal punishment"—"unquenchable fire, and that without end, and a certain fiery worm., never dying." But that, according to Josephus, is still future, not present. The fire and the worm will not destroy the body, and the worm will continue its erosion with "never-ceasing grief." "Sleep" will not afford relief. And "death will not free them from their punishment"—which ideas again bear the earmark of Platonism. "Nor will the interceding prayers of their kindred profit them."

That, in careful epitome, is the portrayal of Hades, by Josephus. The startling similarity to circumstances in the parable of Dives and Lazarus is inescapable. Missing details are here supplied. Hazy points are here clarified. Jesus was clearly using a then-common tradition of the Jews to press home a moral lesson in a related field. And this Jewish concept of Hades was frankly derived from Platonism, through Apocryphal writers, but climaxing with Philo.

7. DEFLECTING INROADS IN INTER-TESTAMENTAL PERIOD

Several pertinent points should here be noted. This period was critical. It was the Jewish transition hour. PHILO JUDAEUS (d. c. A.D. 47), of Alexandria, had lived in the generation just prior to Josephus. Under Philo the inroads of Greek Platonism reached their peak in deflecting the faith of a large segment of the Jews from the primal Mosaic teachings on Conditional Immortality and its inseparable corollary, the ultimate destruction of the wicked.

Over a period of some two hundred years prior to Christ, tangent positions had been developing under the impact of Platonic philosophy. Thus the concept that Hades contained two chambers appeared in 4 Ezra 4:41, along with the idea that the righteous inhabit one chamber (Wisdom of Solomon 3:1), while the wicked are accursed, scourged, and tormented in the other (1 Enoch 22:9-13). The Midrash (on Ruth 1:1, Proem) likewise assigns one chamber to the righteous, with the other to the wicked. The Talmud (Erubin 19") also tells of the torment of the wicked.

The visibility of one company to the other, in the respective chambers, is similarly in the Midrash (on Eccl. 7:14). And the wicked see the angels guard the righteous (4 Ezra 7:86). Both the Talmud (Kethuboth 104") and 4 Ezra 7:85-87, 91-95, tell of the welcoming of the righteous by companies of ministering angels. And 4 Maccabees 13:17 mentions the righteous as welcomed in Hades by Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And finally, the righteous, as part of their reward, are privileged to sit "in Abraham's lap" (Talmud Kiddushin 72"). That is the third major point that should be borne in mind.

In his Antiquities, Josephus also gives this terse added testimony:
"They [the Pharisees] also believe that souls have an immortal vigour in them, and that under the earth there will be rewards or punishments, according as they have lived virtuously or viciously in this life; and the latter are to be detained in an everlasting prison, but that the former shall have power to revive and live again."

It is therefore obvious that the principal points in the parable of Dives and Lazarus were based upon current Jewish folklore, which had infiltrated from Platonic philosophy. Christ met them on their own familiar ground and drew a fundamental moral lesson there from, capitalizing upon their preconceived opinions.

8. ADVOCATES INJECT UNWARRANTED ADDITIONS

But the construction placed upon the parable of Dives and Lazarus by many modern proponents of Immortal-Soulism, who invoke the sanction of this parable by reading into it what is neither there in the original narrative in Luke nor sanctioned by Josephus' definitive elucidations, is both regrettable and unethical.

Please note the following in Josephus' discourse: First of all, Hades, in the section for wicked souls, here under discussion, is not Gehenna (which is defined as the "lake of fire"), but is only near Gehenna, or in the "neighborhood of hell." Second, according to Josephus, no one had yet been cast into the lake of fire. That is important and decisive. Third, any contemporary "punishment" is but "temporary," as the wicked may feel the breath of the "hot vapour." It is not eternal envelopment in the fires of Hell, as often pictured. Fourth, at the appointed time there will be a resurrection of the body, which will then be made immortal. In that feature the Jews differed from the Greek Platonists, as well as on the concept of transmigration. And fifth, according to Josephus' elucidation, the eternal punishing and the visitation of unquenchable fire will come only after the future judgment and its just sentences—which he declares had not yet taken place.

Antiquities of the Jews, book 18, chapter 1, section 3.

That is a vastly different picture from the eisegetical portrayal of those who build present Eternal Torment for the immortally damned on this passage. Such are the regret table lengths resorted to in an attempt to find Biblical sup port for an alien, pagan philosophy.

B. Literalism Violates Consistency, Vitiates Christ's Witness.

Overturns Scripture Testimony

1. SCOFIELD MAKES PASSAGE WHOLLY LITERAL

Before we survey critically the inconsistencies of a literal interpretation, let us note one representative example of champion ship of the literalistic exposition, and its involvements. Dr. C. I. Scofield, in his well-known Scofield Reference Bible, in his note on Luke 16:23, says that the "hell" of this text—the Greek hades, and its Hebrew equivalent she'ol—is the "unseen world," "the place of departed human spirits between death and the resurrection." He then sharply distinguishes between hades (1) "before the ascension of Christ," and (2) hades "since the ascension of Christ." Advocating the literalistic interpretation, Scofield states that these passages "make it clear" that "hades was formerly in two divisions, the abodes respectively of the saved and the lost." The "former" (the "abode of the saved") was then "called 'paradise,' and 'Abraham's bosom.' " Scofield then states that "both designations were Talmudic, but adopted by Christ in Luke 16:22; 23:43." And he declares, "the blessed dead were with Abraham, they were conscious and were 'com forted.' " Then he adds:

"The lost were separated from the saved by a 'great gulf fixed' (Luke 16:26). The representative man of the lost who are now in hades is the rich man of Lk. 16:19-31. He was alive, conscious, in full exercise of his faculties, memory, etc., and in torment." (Italics supplied.)

In his "Hades since the ascension of Christ" section, Scofield says: "So far as the unsaved dead are concerned, no change of their place or condition is revealed in Scripture. At the judgment of the great white throne, hades will give them up, they will be judged, and will pass into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:13, 14)." But henceforth (since the ascension of Christ) Paradise has been changed to the "third heaven" (citing 2 Corinthians 12:1-4). Now, "during the present church-age," the saved who have died are "absent from the body, at home with the Lord" (citing Ephesians 4:8-10). And he concludes: "The wicked dead in hades, and the righteous dead 'at home with the Lord,' alike await the resurrection."

2. INCONSISTENCIES INVOLVED IN LITERAL INTERPRETATION

This story of Dives and Lazarus is either the narrative of a literal, historical episode or it is merely a fictional parable. It cannot be both, or half and half, as some seek to make it. If literal, it must be true to fact and consistent in detail. If it be a parable, then only the primary moral truth to be conveyed need concern us, with the narrative subject to the recognized licenses and limitations of an imaginary illustration.

However, many insist on its literality. But a literal application breaks down under the weight of its own absurdities and contradictions, as will become apparent under scrutiny, and when cited to support the popular concept of the Innate Immortality of the soul. For example, contenders for literalism hold Dives and Lazarus to be disembodied spirits; that is, destitute of bodies. Here, then, we have two ghosts, or shades, devoid of bodies and bodily organs—though there is not the remotest reference to the soul or spirit of man. Yet Dives is here represented as having "eyes" that see, a "tongue" that speaks, and as seeking relief from cooling water by means of the "finger" of Lazarus—real bodily parts. That surely must be an embarrassing inconsistency to the literalist who treats them as historical and literal. But that was all part of the Jewish tale.

Further, an unbridgeable, material gulf is incomprehensible on the hypothesis of immaterial spirit beings in the nether regions. Disembodied "souls," or "spirits," are supposed to penetrate or pass everywhere. Again, if "Abraham's bosom" is figurative, then "Abraham" cannot logically be literal. It would surely be the height of incongruity to have Abraham literal but his bosom figurative! As to Abraham, in Scripture record he died and his sons buried him (Genesis 25:8, 9), and there is no account of his resurrection, as was the case with Moses (Deuteronomy 34:5; Jude 9; Matthew 17:3). According to Hebrews 11:8-19, like all the patriarchs, Abraham has not yet received the promise, but is awaiting that "better resurrection" at the second coming of Christ (vs. 35, 39, 40).

Among other incongruities, literalism places Heaven and Hell within geographical speaking and seeing distance of each other—with saints and sinners eternally holding futile converse. (Ponder once more the case of a husband and wife so situated, or a parent and child.) Again, Dives lifted up "his eyes, being in torments," and said, "... I am tormented in this flame" (Luke 16:23, 24), but nothing is said in the parable as to the duration of his torment. But according to clear statements of Scripture, any such torment occurs only in connection with the second death, and follows, but never precedes, the Second Advent (2 Thess. 1:7, 8).

Such a conflicting literalistic contention clearly goes too far. The fires of Gehenna do not precede the Second Advent. And in this parable, Dives is in Hades, not in Gehenna. But when the figurative and fictional character of the parable of Dives and Lazarus is recognized, then the plaguing incongruities as to time, place, space, distance, et cetera, all vanish. The story, with all its inconsistencies, is simply told to convey an important moral or spiritual truth.

3. LITERALISM CONTRADICTS CHRIST'S EXPLICIT DECLARATIONS

But that is not all. To use this parable as proof that men receive their rewards at death is squarely to contradict Christ Himself, who explicitly states that the righteous and the wicked receive their reward "when the Son of man shall come in his glory" (Matthew 25:31-44). He definitely placed the recompense at the resurrection, the time of harvest, and end of the world—when the "wheat" of God's people are gathered unto His garner, and the wicked, like "tares," are bundled for burning (Matthew 13:30, 49; Luke 14:14). As elsewhere seen, Jesus referred to "hell" (Matthew 10:28), "hell fire" (Matthew 5:22), the "resurrection of damnation" (John 5:29), the "damnation of hell" (Matthew 23:33), and "eternal damnation" (Mark 3:29). But He always put them as future, not present, and as following, not preceding, His second coming (Matthew 25:32, 33, 46). And Jesus declared that He was going to prepare a place for us in the "many mansions" of His "Father's house" (John 14:2). But He states that He will not "come again" to "receive" us until His second advent (v. 3).

4. LITERALISM CONTRADICTS INSPIRED REVELATION'S DICTUMS

Furthermore, if the narrative is literal, then the beggar received his reward and the rich man his punishment immediately upon death, in the interim before the judgment day and the consequent separation of the good and evil. But such a procedure is repugnant to all justice. Paul said that God "hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness" (Acts 17:31). That was still future in apostolic times. And the day of separation will not come until "the Son of man shall come in his glory . . . : and before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another" (Matthew 25:31, 32).

Christ's own promise is, "Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be" (Revelation 22:12). That tallies with His promise, "Thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just" (Luke 14:14). That also was Paul's personal expectation: "There is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day" (2 Tim. 4:8). And, as seen again and again, literalism squarely contradicts the uniform testimony of the Old Testament—that the dead, both righteous and wicked, without reference to character, lie silent and unconscious in the sleep of the first death until the resurrection day. In the Biblical Hades there is no speech, sight, or pain. It is not a place of torture. But the Pharisees had made God's Word void, as concerns the condition of the dead,6 by their "traditions" derived from pagan Platonic philosophy, which in turn had been borrowed from Egypt, Babylon, and Persia. So it was that

Dives is here pictured as in a place of torment, living in insufferable flames. It was simply Hebraized Platonism, and was in no way condoned or endorsed by Christ.

See Psalm 6:5; 31:17; 88:11; 115:17; 146:4; Eccl. 9:6, 10; 12:7; Isaiah 38:17-19, et cetera.

C. Gravity of Ascribing False Teaching to Christ,

Embodiment of Truth

1. USE OF PARABLE NOT ENDORSEMENT OF ITS THEOLOGY

The question arises, Did not Jesus' use of this Jewish belief make Him endorse the fictitious plot of the parable? Rather, is it not like the Christian story of the man who dreamed that he died and went to the gates of Heaven? Saint Peter supposedly met him there, and gave him a long piece of chalk. He told him to climb to the top of some marble stairs, and there he would find a blackboard on which he was to write down all his sins. Making his way slowly up the stairs, he met a friend hastening down. In his surprise he asked his friend where he was going, and the friend replied, "I'm going down for more chalk." Now, we ask in all seriousness, would the telling of that story commit one to believing the literality of the theology of the illustration, or rather the point it was designed to convey?

2. GRAVITY OF IMPLIED CHARGES AGAINST CHRIST

The seriousness of charging that Christ personally believed, publicly sanctioned, and actually set forth as truth this Greco-Jewish parable involving Immortal-Soulism, is to charge Him with gross inconsistency, neutralizing His own testimony, playing false to truth, and contradicting His own eighteen illustrations, from animate and inanimate life, concerning the doom of the wicked. Without exception, He taught the utter, ultimate destruction of the wicked. It is likewise to put Christ in total conflict with His own seven references to the complete destruction and disappearance of being, for the wicked, in His definitive descriptions of the relentless fires of Gehenna.

More than that, to attribute belief and endorsement of this fable of Dives and Lazarus to Christ is to make Him deny His own uniformly consistent and multiple teachings on Hades—the term actually used for "hell" in this parable—as a state of unconscious sleep for all men, good and bad, between death and the resurrection (as in John 11:11, 14), from which there must be an awakening before there is any return of conscious ness, thought, or activity, and where none of the wicked are at present undergoing torment.

It likewise puts Christ in the position of endorsing the contention that Hades is eternal, whereas according to the Apocalypse, it is at last to be destroyed (Revelation 20:14). And even the fires of Gehenna are ultimately to burn out and disappear when they have done their appointed work, and the wicked are no more, and all pain and death and torment end forever, as the new heavens and new earth supersede the present world that is to be destroyed in the coming lake of fire (Revelation 21 and 22; 2 Peter 3:10-13).

3. MAKES CHRIST GUILTY OF PURVEYING ERROR AND PERVERSION

Such a charge makes Christ guilty of endorsing all the multiple inconsistencies of a literalistic interpretation of a then-current Jewish fable in which the fictional figures comport with notions of retribution during the period of "death" clearly adopted from Platonism, which makes death but a continuation of life in the after world. It would thus charge Christ with guilt in the purveyance of error and perversion. It would put Him into direct conflict with the all-sufficiency of Scripture, and of His own timeless admonition: "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead" (Luke 16:31).

4. DEMANDS OF RESURRECTION BROUGHT ON CRISIS

To accept the Platonic dogma of Immortal-Soulism is to cast over board all that Moses and the prophets have written—God's appointed witness, as well as all that Christ taught. Moreover, one did actually rise from the dead a short time later and bore his testimony (Lazarus, in John 11). Christ's carping critics there proved the futility of such an appearance. In fact, it was this very episode—Christ's last and crowning miracle—that brought on the crisis in the rejection of Jesus as the life-giving Messiah. It was this very miracle, demanded by Dives, that spurred the priests on to plot and accomplish Christ's death (John 11:47-54). Christ's words were eternally true—they were neither persuaded by Lazarus' resurrection (John 11) nor by His own, which climaxed it all (Matthew 28:1-6). They were not at all persuaded (Luke 16:31), much less did they repent (v. 30).

D. Major Area of Disagreement Between Christ and Pharisees

We must not conclude this survey without stressing the fact that the nature and destiny of man was a major area of disagreement between Christ and the Pharisees. He was a Scripturalist, sustaining the unvarying teaching of Moses and the prophets on the nature and destiny of man. They were Platonists, having left the scriptural platform and espoused the Innate-Immortality postulate of Platonic deduction and philosophy. Christ was a Conditionalist, proclaiming eternal life and immortality as a gift, restricted to those only who should believe and receive Him as the Life and the Resurrection. They were Immortal-Soulists, holding to the natural, inherent, constitutional immortality of the human soul. To that position they were now irrevocably committed.

1. DIFFERENCES AS OPPOSITE AS LIGHT AND DARKNESS

As to the destiny of man, Christ taught the ultimate and utter destruction of the willful sinner. Man, as a rejector of life, truth, and light, is mortal, and hence susceptible to death and destruction. But the Pharisees taught that the soul of man is innately and indefeasibly immortal and indestructible, and that therefore the damned will live on forever in excruciating torment. The difference was sharply drawn and mutually exclusive. The contrast was as fundamental as the difference between light and darkness.

This matter of the soul and its destiny was an area of fundamental disagreement between Christ and the Pharisees. On this issue their positions were diametrically opposed and irreconcilable. But they were not only totally opposite, they were mutually destructive. If Christ was right, they were wrong. If Christ's teachings were true, theirs were erroneous —and vice versa. Obviously, if Christ was victorious, they were defeated. There was no escape from such a conclusion. It was over this basic issue that the culminating crisis came in their relationships, as they rejected His truth and chose to cling to their own error. It was the irreconcilability of the two positions, among other things, that finally led them completely to reject Christ and His distasteful teachings on the life, death, and destiny of man. They would have none of His life program. On this there could be no compromise, no capitulation. That meant that He must be silenced, put out of the way. His witness must be crushed—otherwise their own position was doomed. It was a question of stark survival, for they saw the outcome with crystal clearness. He must go.

2. CHRIST MUST NOT BE ARRAYED AGAINST CHRIST

That is why it is inconceivable that Christ, in this controverted parable based on the fictitious but representative characters of Dives and Lazarus, in their fabled converse, cannot logically, scripturally, or ethically be made to support the Pharisaic position on an error that Christ came to counteract and over throw. To do so is to array Christ against Himself (Matthew 12:25; Mark 3:24, 25; Luke 14:17, 18), and in this instance the Dives-Lazarus narrative against the total emphasis and weight of His whole message and mission.

It is to take the unthinkable position of siding with the Pharisees against Christ. And it is to place Christ in the in conceivable position of adopting the false reasoning of Platonic pagan philosophy as against the inspired revelation of the Scriptures of truth. It is unquestionably to take the path of deviation from the straight and narrow way of truth and life.

And it involves charging Christ with supporting the gross absurdities inherent in a literalistic, Immortal-Soulist interpretation of the story of Dives and Lazarus. It is virtually to undo His entire life's testimony in a sell out to the Pharisees. That cannot be! But it must here be added that this same issue persists, in varying degrees, to this day, propelled by the great medieval Latin apostasy, and perpetuated in many Protestant circles. Hence the confusion and conflict over this question in these modern times.

In the light of these sobering facts and fundamental principles, and in the light of Christ's impeccable truthfulness and His own personification and embodiment of truth, we must therefore deny and reject the validity of the literalist interpretation of this parable-fable as supporting the Innate Immortality of the soul and the Eternal Torment of the damned. Christ, we maintain, was consistent and truthful, and unwavering to the end in His adherence to, and enunciation of, the truth as to man and his destiny.

We must not place Christ in the unthinkable position of endorsing the Platonic error that was so repugnant to His very nature as the Fountainhead of life and truth. He must not be betrayed in the house of His Christian friends. He must not be crucified upon a cross of Innate-Immortality error.

E. Conclusion: Immortal Soulism Collapses Under Scrutiny

1. FOURFOLD CASE AGAINST POPULAR CONTENTION

In the light of the full-rounded evidence here surveyed, we reject the story of Dives and Lazarus as in any way proving the continuing consciousness of the dead or as establishing the postulate of the Eternal Torment of the wicked. Such a dual contention is wholly without logical justification, and, as seen, flatly contravenes both the testimony of Christ and the consistent witness of Scripture. Death is consistently set forth throughout the Old Testament as a condition of silence, darkness, and unconsciousness, not of life and activity, and joy or agony.

In the light of all the facts and factors, we must consequently conclude:

(1) That the characters in this dialogue, with its parabolic personifications, were wholly imaginary. The legendary episode did not happen literally, and could not happen;

(2) That the timing was likewise fictitious, for it clearly antedated the Biblical sequence, and is consequently in conflict with Bible truth in this area; and

(3) That, as this is the only place in the New Testament where Hades is portrayed as a place of torment, in this fable form—just as in the Old Testament Isaiah raises dead kings in she'ol to utter a taunt upon Babylon (Isaiah 14:4-11)—it can not and does not nullify the whole galaxy of positive, explicit, non figurative and inescapable Bible teaching upon which alone Christian doctrine is to be built and sustained. Pagan Platonism, polluting the Jewish faith, which Jesus cited but did not endorse in this legendary fable-parable, should never be allowed to corrupt sound Christian doctrine, which Christ came to establish and protect.

2. SPECIFIC COUNTS AGAINST ACCEPTANCE ARE DETERMINATIVE

We should therefore reject the contention that the sleeping souls of the damned are presently alive in torment, for that implies that man's reward is received at death. But that fallacy— (1) Nullifies the judgment by anticipating its appointed time.

(2) Completely contradicts the clear testimony that the dead are asleep.

(3) Represents disembodied spirits as inconsistently possessing bodily members.

(4) Puts the spirits in full view of each other forever in the future world—another example of the infiltration of Persian Dualism into Platonism, and thence into Jewish thinking.

Or, to put it in another way: (1) God's appointed time of grace for man is before death and the resurrection— which is the main point and purpose of the parable; (2) retribution comes only after the resurrection; and (3) life after death is always contingent and consequent upon the resurrection. These determinative principles are violated in a literal interpretation. The story of Dives and Lazarus was never designed to teach conditions on the other side of death. That is an extraneous contention that has been introduced without warrant. It is fallacious as an argument and is unworthy of the name of sound exegesis. The literalistic "problem" of the passage collapses under the weight of its own inconsistencies.

Christ's Majestic Answer to the Penitent's Plea

A. Problem Text (Luke 23:43): Penitent Thief—"Today"—and "Paradise"

We now turn to the second "problem text" in the Gospels—the solemn promise made by Christ to the penitent thief on the adjacent cross at Calvary. This passage is always brought forth by proponents of Innate Immortality as "proof positive" of the uninterrupted immortality of the soul—as demonstrating that both Christ and the repentant thief went that very day to "Paradise" (some intermediate place between the grave and the resurrection), and thus that their condition must have been one of continued consciousness and intelligent fellowship after death. However, it is not that simple or conclusive. Let us examine the evidence.

1. SETTING OF THIS AMAZING EPISODE

The background briefly is this: Two malefactors (or "thieves," Matthew 27:38; Mark 15:27) were led, along with Christ, to Calvary, and crucified with Him there, one on the right hand and the other on the left amid the taunting throng. The trilingual superscription, "This is the King of the Jews," was placed upon Christ's cross (Luke 23:38). Then one of the anguished malefactors railed on Christ, saying, "If thou be Christ, save thyself and us" (v. 39). But the other rebuked his criminal companion, saying:

"Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss" (vs. 40, 41).

It was at this point that he turned in agonizing contrition and reverently said to Jesus, "Lord, remember me when thou comes into thy kingdom" (v. 42). Then it was that Jesus replied (as punctuated in most English versions), "Verily I say unto thee, To day shall thou be with me in paradise" (v. 43).

2. ACQUAINTED WITH CHRIST'S CLAIMS AND OFFERS

That is the scene. The penitent thief had evidently been in the crowd that had witnessed Jesus' miracles. His words attest that he must have listened to Christ's marvelous teaching about His coming kingdom. He must have heard His gracious invitations to come unto Him and find the longed-for forgiveness and peace that he craved. Perhaps he had seen Jesus raise the dead. Possibly he had heard Jesus say that He must be crucified, but would rise again in triumph.

It is inconceivable that anyone would make such a request without such a background, for here were a dying thief and a dying Christ in paralleling positions on adjoining crosses. He might even have been a follower for a time, before he had turned under pressure of evil companions to the crimes for which he was now paying the bitter penalty. In any event, he knew Christ's claims and offers. And in his -eleventh-hour extremity he turned in contrition to Christ, recognizing His sinlessness and believing in His claims. But let us probe into the intent of the penitent's request, and especially into the import of Christ's reply.

3. WHAT, WHERE, AND WHEN Is "PARADISE"?

Let us observe at the very outset that one of the chief deterrents to the popular contention is the dual fact (1) that the thief did not die that day, and (2) that Christ did not go to Paradise that day, irrespective of where it is. But this leads us directly into the what, where, and when of Paradise (Paradeisos). The word "paradise" occurs but three times in Scripture—twice in addition to this use in Luke 23:43. Note carefully the first one: Paul was caught up, in vision, into the "third heaven" (2 Corinthians 12:2), which in verse 4 is expressly affirmed to be "paradise." Paradise, therefore, is, first of all, clearly

in the third heaven. The second usage is in our Lord's promise in the Apocalypse, "To him that overcomes will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God" (Revelation 2:7).

This establishes the fact that Paradise is likewise where the tree of life now is. And in Revelation 21 and 22, in the description of the New Jerusalem above, we read of—"a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it [the city], and on either side of the river [of life], was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month" (Revelation 22:1, 2).

In the Septuagint, the "garden" of Eden is described as the "Paradise in Eden" (Genesis 2:8). So the tree of life grows in the midst of the Paradise of God, the Holy City, on the banks of the river of life, which proceeds from the throne of God.

That was the Paradise of the Old Testament, of which the prophets of old foretold in glowing terms. That is likewise the Paradise of the New Testament—in the third heaven, where the tree of life is, and where God maintains His throne. Who ever, therefore, goes to Paradise goes into the presence of God. Paradise is emphatically not Hades, nor any part of Hades, as some contend. So if Christ and the thief went to Paradise on the day of the crucifixion, they must have gone into the presence of God the Father. But let us go back to certain basic considerations.

B. Three "Heavens and Earths"—Past, Present, Future

To understand the problem of the thief in Paradise, it is necessary first to understand the background of the three heavens and earths. First of all, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Genesis 1:1). Then Peter tells of two heavens and earths: The antediluvian heaven and earth—"The heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished" (2 Peter 3:5, 6). These were the first. Those that followed the Flood, Peter calls "the heavens and the earth, which are now" (v. 7), the next matching pair.

1. NO CONFLICT BETWEEN PETER'S AND JOHN'S VERSIONS

John the revelator, however, groups these two—the antediluvian and the postdiluvian—together and simply calls them "the first heaven and the first earth" (Revelation 21:1), or the "former" heaven and earth (v. 4), in historical perspective, in contra distinction to the coming new heaven and new earth. The present earth, Peter tells us, is "kept in store, reserved unto fire." Then, at the close of the day of the Lord., "the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up" (2 Peter 3:10). And "the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved" (v. 12). That will mark the passing of the present heaven and earth.

That which follows the present heaven and earth Peter likewise calls "new heavens and a new earth" (2 Peter 3:13), just as John tells of the same as "a new heaven and a new earth" (Revelation 21:1). So there is complete harmony between them on the new heaven and earth. Even Isaiah of old, in God's ancient prophecy, twice declared, "Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth" (Isaiah 65:17; cf. 66:22).

Thus we actually have three heavens and earths: (1) "The heavens [that] were of old, and the earth," or the antediluvian "world that then was" (2 Peter 3:5, 6); (2) "The heavens and the earth, which are now" (v. 7); and finally (3) the "new heavens and a new earth" to come (v. 13; Revelation 21:1). Thus there is perfect harmony in the Inspired Record. And it may truly be said that the course of these three worlds constitutes the compacted history of the human race, and framework for the outworking of the plan of redemption.

2. PARADISE OF FIRST EARTH RESTORED IN THIRD EARTH

Paradise, with its tree of life, was in the first heaven and earth, but disappeared by the time of the Flood. Hence it is totally absent in the second, or present, heaven and earth. But it reappears in the third, or new, heaven and earth, with its tree of life restored (Revelation 2:7; 22:1, 2, 14).

Paradise is Eden restored—and that is still future, when Sate in the Eternal City o£ God, the Redeemed Will Eat o£ the Tree of Life and Drink of the Water of Life in Paradise Restored Forever. Christ will come into His kingdom. But we repeat, Paradise was not entered either by Christ or the thief on that crucifixion day, as we shall see. And there is no reference to an intermediate state. Rather, Christ's promise is to what lies beyond—a joyful resurrection reunion for the penitent and his being forever with Christ in His coming kingdom.

C. Penitent Neither in Kingdom Nor in Paradise That Day

1. DID NOT DIE ON SAME DAY

The soldiers broke the legs of the penitent thief (John 19:31-33), because he was still living as that fateful crucifixion Friday was drawing toward its close. This was so that he could not escape. But, because Jesus was already dead, His legs were not broken. So the crucifixion day ended at sunset with the thief still alive and Jesus already dead. Clearly they could not have been in Paradise together on that same crucifixion day.

2. "TOGETHER" THAT DAY ONLY ON ADJOINING CROSSES

We would press the point that the penitent's request to Jesus was, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom" (Luke 23:42). The thief evidently understood that Jesus claimed He would return to set up His kingdom. Later, at Pentecost, Peter said, "And he [God] shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began" (Acts 3:20, 21). And as the Saviour has not yet returned to restore all things, the prayer of the thief has not as yet been realized.

Furthermore, Jesus could not return from Heaven that day, for the simple and conclusive reason that He did not go to Heaven that day. On the third day after His crucifixion, Christ said to Mary, who was about to embrace His feet in accordance with the ancient custom of deference or worship, "Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father" (John 20:17) in Paradise, and that was on the third day after His crucifixion. Forty days thereafter He did ascend to God (Acts' 1:3, 9), where He has remained till this present time. So, had the thief actually gone to Heaven that day (Friday)—which he did not—he would have had to wait forty-three days before Christ came to be with him. Therefore Christ and the penitent were not together any where that day, except on the crosses on Golgotha.

3. JESUS WENT TO THE GRAVE, NOT TO PARADISE, THAT DAY

Let us now note where Christ went that crucifixion day. The Scriptures expressly teach that instead of going to Paradise that crucifixion day, Christ went into the grave—she'ol, hades, gravedom. Referring to the first coming of Christ and His atoning death, the psalmist David prophesied, "For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell [Hebrews she'ol, "the grave"]; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption" (Psalm 16:10). And Peter, at Pentecost, confirms this: "For David speaks concerning him [Christ] . . . ; thou wilt not leave my soul in hell [Gr. hades], neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One [Christ] to see corruption" (Acts 2:25-27).

The Scriptures explicitly teach that "there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave [she'ol], whither thou goes" (Eccl. 9:10). "In that very day [of death] his thoughts perish" (Psalm 146:4). On the contrary, the Immortal-Soulist makes hades (or OT she'ol) a place of life and joy; and Paradise some part of hades. But the Biblical hades could not have been the Paradise wherein the thief and his Saviour were to meet and rejoice.

As noted, the Paradise of God, with its tree of life, is clearly not in the grave, but in Heaven—to be entered by the door of the resurrection. It would be utterly unscriptural to say that Joseph's new tomb, wherein Jesus was laid, was Paradise. But when the full teaching of Scripture is adopted, this episode is in perfect harmony with the rest of the Bible on the intermediate state. That is the beauty and majesty of truth.

4. NOT IN HEAVEN DURING "THREE DAYS AND NIGHTS."

Our Lord Himself was in the grave from the time He died and was buried in Joseph's new tomb until He rose. If anyone contends that Christ's "spirit"—which at His death He commended into His Father's hands (Luke 23:46)—was the actual, the real Christ, that notion is precluded by Christ Him self, when He said that just as surely as the prophet Jonah was "three days and three nights in the whale's belly" (Matthew 12:40), so was the Son of man to be "three days and three nights in the heart of the earth"—Hebraism for the earth, the sepulcher, or tomb (Matthew 27:60; Mark 15:46; Luke 23:53; John 19:40-42).

To those who came to the sepulcher on the resurrection morn the angel said, "I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen" (Matthew 28:5, 6). He was not in the tomb because He had risen. That is clear. But He was in the tomb until He left it by rising from the tomb, and thus leaving its precincts. And even after His resurrection, and before His ascension, it will be recalled, He declared that He had not yet ascended to His Father (John 20:17). Jesus was not in Heaven during those three days.

D. Meaning Completely Altered by Position of Comma

1. PUNCTUATION CONSTITUTES EXEGESIS — RIGHT OR WRONG

But the main problem, technically, is whether the adverb "to day" [semeron, "this day," or "today"] qualifies "say," or "shalt be." If it qualifies "say," all is harmonious; but if it qualifies "shalt be," there is sharp discord with the rest of Scripture. We would stress the point that there were absolutely no punctuation marks in the original. And as punctuation marks were not introduced until many centuries after the New Testament was written, it is evident that the punctuation of the Bible is therefore entirely human and variable, and not inspired. But that is not all. The meaning of a text may be completely changed by the wrong position of a comma.

Take for example: "But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God" (Hebrews 10:12).

If the comma is wrongly placed after "sins," the passage says that Jesus "for ever sat down on the right hand of God" —and thus will never come again to this world. But when it is rightly placed after "for ever," then the passage says that after Christ had offered Himself as the final, once-for-all sacrifice, He then "sat down on the right hand of God; . . . till his enemies be made his footstool," when He returns at His second advent.

Similarly with Luke 23:43. If the comma be placed after "to day," the text is in harmony with the rest of Scripture, and no longer teaches that the thief went to Heaven that day to be with Christ—who, be it again noted, did not ascend un til some forty-three days after the crucifixion. It is thus obvious that punctuation is a definite factor in exegesis. And in this instance (of Luke 23:43) the comma makes the exegesis contradictory and controvertive. In fact, it is, instead, an unwitting case of eisegesis. But one part of God's Word must never be arrayed against another.

2. PLACING OF COMMA DETERMINES MEANING

We now present the problem sentence in three contrasting forms: (1) as it appeared originally, that is, without any man-made punctuation; (2) as it appears in the A.V. and most English translations, and is made to support the Innate-Immortality concept, because of the position of the comma, injected by the Immortal-Soulist translators, between "thee" and "to day"; and (3) as the sentence is punctuated with the comma following "to day." Thus the text conforms to the general teaching of Scripture. In this way, by the simple shifting of the man- made comma, harmony, beauty, and truth are re-established. Compare the three:

(1) "Verily I say unto thee to day shall thou be with me in paradise." (2) "Verily I say unto thee, To day shall thou be with me in paradise." (3) "Verily I say unto thee to day, Shall thou be with me in paradise."

We need have no hesitation in shifting the comma from the place in which the human transcribers and translators saw fit to place it—when it avoids the contradiction of a doctrine God has so clearly revealed. And there is no rule of the Greek language to prevent the placing of the comma after, instead of before, "to day," when so required to avoid a contradiction. And the Scriptures themselves demand just that in order to preserve the unity of the Word.

E. Determining Evidences on the Technical Side

This particular text (Luke 23:43) differs from all other problem texts in that it presents a technical side, involving not merely semantics (or the question of meanings of terms and the signification of the inspired words or forms), but also (1) the mechanical element of punctuation, which is purely man made, and was not in any way a part of the original manuscripts; (2) the position of the Greek adverb semeron ("to day," or "this day"). First note the matter of punctuation.

1. PUNCTUATION BASED ENTIRELY ON HUMAN AUTHORITY.

Punctuation, as we have it today, was entirely absent in the original New Testament Greek manuscripts. The earliest manuscripts (the Rylands Fragment and the Bodmer Papyri) have only an occasional dot, or point, on a level with the top of the letters, sometimes a space. The text continues without any divisions between letters or words until manuscripts of the ninth century, when in the Codex Augiensis (in Cambridge) a single point appears separating each word—this dot being placed in the middle of the line. Often it was omitted.

Inasmuch as none of our modern marks of punctuation appeared until the ninth century, it is therefore evident that the punctuation of all modern editions of the Greek Text rests entirely on human authority." It was the work of transcribers and translators, inserted in accordance with their best judgment, but influenced at times by their theological concepts. Punctuation, as we know it, therefore has no rightful weight in determining, or even influencing, the interpretation of a single passage. (Nor is there authority for capital letters.) Consequently no legitimate argument can be made on the position of the comma in Luke 23:43. Rather, it is to be placed where it comports with the demands of Scripture.

2. PUNCTUATION NOT INTRODUCED TILL TIME OF RENAISSANCE

And, as stated, there is no rule of the Greek language that determines the placing of a comma. It must be placed so as to be in harmony with the general tenor of the Word, and so as not to produce a conflict in its teachings. One part must never be arrayed against another. Modern punctuation, developed after the introduction of printing, was attributed to Aldus Manutius, learned printer of Venice, of the fifteenth century. So these markings are destitute of any determining authority. Punctuation, we must therefore conclude, has no weight whatever in determining the original intent of a single passage,

The dating of the leading printed editions of the Greek text are: Erasmus (1516),
Stephens (1546-1549). Beza (1624),
Elzevir (1624), Griesbach (1774-1775), Scholz (1830-1836),
Lachmann (1831-1850),
Tischendorf (1841-1872), Tregelles (1856-1872), Alford (1862-1871), Wordsworth (1870), Reviser's Text (1881),
Westcott and Hort (1881-1903), Scrivener (1886),
Weymouth (1886), Nestle (1904)
See Companion Bible, Appendix 94, p. 136.

George R. Berry, editor of Interlinear Literal Translation of the Greek New Testament, says, "There is no authority anywhere for the punctuation." "We are anxious that our readers should remember that [even] paragraphs have no authority" (Introduction, p. ii).

3. RELATIONSHIP OF GREEK ADVERB "SEMERON" TO PROBLEM

It should also be borne in mind that the Greek adverb semeron ("today") stands between the verbs lego ("I say")
and ese ("you will be"), and might apply to either. It is also to be noted that this adverb, semeron ("today," or better, "on this day"), occurs in the Septuagint Old Testament and the Greek New Testament 259 times. It is used as an adjective 24 times, and without a verb to qualify, 14 times. Of the remaining 221 times, it precedes the verb it qualifies 51 times but follows it 170 times.

Thus even from the angle of usage the preponderance is in favor of placing the comma after "today." It is also to be noted that lego soi ("I say to thee") is reversed in the Tischendorf and Tregelles texts to soi lego ("to thee I say"). But these are side lights.

In Luke 23:43 the "to day" should be connected with the Hebraism, "I say to thee," to emphasize the solemnity of the occasion, not with the "shalt thou be." Thus, instead of merely a remembrance of the penitent when Christ should come into His kingdom, Jesus pledges a presence and participation, then, in association with Himself. This explains why Jesus seemingly did not answer the penitent's request merely on its own terms. It embraced much more.

The thief was not concerned primarily with when he would reach Paradise, but whether he would have a place in Christ's kingdom—not when but whether. Jesus' answer was an assurance that however undeserving he might be, or how ever impossible it might appear for the dying Jesus to bring His promise to pass, he was assuredly to be there. Indeed, it was Christ's presence and approaching death on the cross that assured the fruition of such a hope. Thus the problem text (Luke 23:43) harmonizes with the many texts of the Old Testament, declaring, "I say to you this day, . . ."; "I testify to you this day, . . ."; et cetera.

See Deuteronomy 6:6; 7:11; 8:1; 10:13; 11:8, 13, 28; 13:18; 19:9; 27:4; 31:2, et cetera, where it is to be particularly noted, the Septuagint corresponds to the usage in Luke 23:43. Here are two examples from the Septuagint: "I command thee this day, to love the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his ordinances" (Deuteronomy 30:16). "I declare to you this day, that ye shall surely perish" (Deuteronomy 30:18).

Moses did not mean that they should surely perish that day, but that they would surely perish if they turned away from the Lord.

F. Most Sublime Episode of Christ's Redemptive Career

And now, with the evidence all before us, picture the scene again. Jesus had for three years been preaching to the listening multitudes concerning His coming kingdom of glory. A part in that kingdom had been promised to all His followers. But now the powers of death pressed in around Him. Darkness and failure seemed destined to triumph, crushing down His lofty promises to the depressing prospects of the grave. He who was to have been king in the coming triumph was now expiring in agony and reproach. Moreover, His innermost disciples had forsaken Him and fled. None stood with Him in the crisis hour. Never had the outlook seemed so bleak and blasted.

1. RECOGNIZED IN JESUS THE COMING KING

But it was amid that enshrouding darkness that divine illumination flashed into the mind of that stricken thief on the adjoining cross. Conviction of the truthfulness of Jesus' claims as the Messiah, the Son of God, pierced his heart. He had seen the superscription upon Christ's cross, "The King of the Jews." He recognized in the outcast, anguished Jesus, the King of the coming age. He realized that Jesus must first be resurrected, as He claimed He would be, if He were to reign as king. Nevertheless, vaulting all obstacles, and accepting Christ for what He claimed to be, the penitent then and there placed his trust and his future into the hands of the dying Jesus.

"Lord," he petitioned, "remember me" in the day when Thou comest into Thy triumph and glory—"when thou comest into [possession of] thy kingdom." It is one of the highest acts of faith ever recorded. And then it was that Jesus, the suffering Saviour, the cross-nailed Christ, in the hearing of that mocking, jeering multitude, majestically declared, "Verily, I say unto thee today"—today, in this My hour of darkness and shame and agony, when the cross is seemingly defeating all My claims; today, amid all these forlorn prospects and blighted hopes, so far as the natural eye can see—"Verily, I say unto thee today, Thou shalt be with Me in Paradise," the new-earth home o£ the saints, with Me—yes, "with" Me—when My kingdom shall indeed be established in triumph and glory for evermore!

2. SYMBOL OF MULTITUDES IN EARTH'S ELEVENTH HOUR

Such is the beauty and force of these words of our Lord, uttered toward the close of that crucifixion day. But the scattered disciples missed their impact, for they had fled, and had heard them not. And the taunting multitude paid no heed. Only the penitent thief heard and understood their import. Now, in the light of that act of faith, no separating veil of darkness could long be cloud Christ's vision. His agony over the feared forsaking by His Father (Matthew 27:46) passed. His prophetic foresight penetrated the physical darkness (27:45) and fixed itself upon the destined coming victory over death. Lifted up from the earth on Calvary's cross (John 3:14, 15), He had drawn one of His companion sufferers unto salvation and life in that climactic hour. He died with His trust in His Father (Luke 23:46).

In this last convert ere He died—symbol of multitudes who would yet believe, many of them in the eleventh hour of human history (Matthew 20:6-16)—He saw the travail of His soul and was satisfied (Isaiah 53:11). He was comforted by the faith of a penitent thief. And the sharer of the suffering of Golgotha would be with Him in Paradise restored, and that forever. Such is the grandeur of that day—the thief and the King side by side, and the thief not ashamed of the Crucified One, of whom apostles were ashamed; the thief trusting in the One whom His closest disciples had temporarily ceased to trust.

3. PROBLEM REMOVED BY SHIFT OF COMMA

Thus by the simple shifting of the man-made comma—misplaced many centuries too late by the misguided translators because of their Platonic misconceptions—the problem of this text is removed, harmony is established with the general tenor of Scripture, and the beauty and significance of that majestic utterance stands out in its true grandeur in one of the most sublime episodes of Christ's redemptive career on earth. Christ died, conscious of the trust of His fellow sufferer on the adjoining cross. And because He died, the thief will live forevermore in the coming kingdom.

4. BEWARE OF PUTTING FALSEHOOD ON LIPS OF CHRIST

Let us beware lest we commit the audacious act of putting upon the lips of Truth Incarnate, in the solemn hour before death, a mocking echo of the lie of Eden, which He came to confute and expose. Let us be on our guard lest we place the dying Son of God in the unthinkable position of offering a mocking hope to the repentant thief—of being together some where that day, in some Platonic, Jewish, papal, or Protestant paradise—a deception that would not only be totally untrue but utterly repugnant to Jesus, the inerrant and impeccable embodiment and exponent of truth.

That would be a sacrilegious, yes, a mendacious act, fearful in its implications, and for which the perpetrator would assuredly be held accountable. Never should we forget the solemn dictum of Holy Writ, "It was impossible for God to lie" (Hebrews 6:18), and the paralleling truth that He never deceives. Christ would never reverse the infallible utterance of Eden that He came to sustain.

Christ Portrays Doom of Wicked as Utter Destruction

A. Seventeen Graphic Illustrations of Doom of Wicked

In concluding the witness of Christ, let us examine His inerrant testimony on the fate of the wicked. Christ ever "taught them as one having authority," and "not as the scribes" (Matthew 7:29; cf. John 7:26). These learned men always deferred and referred to tradition or to what some noted teacher had said. But Christ—Creator, Saviour, Priest, Judge, and returning King—is the supreme authority of all time in this field. He knows man's frame and man's destiny. He cannot err and will not mislead. Let us reverently hear and believe His witness. Here is what He says:

1. ILLUSTRATIONS FROM INANIMATE LIFE

Jesus gave seventeen graphic illustrations, drawn from both inanimate and animate life, to portray comprehensively the doom of the wicked. They are strikingly conclusive. (Some are repeated, evidently for emphasis.) Christ's terse allusions were both vivid and inescapable. They divide themselves into two all-en compassing groups. Here is the initial group, in their English rendering. In eight different figures Christ declares the single truth.

A house built on sand falls (Matthew 7:26, 27). Tares are gathered and burned (Matthew 13:30, 40). Bad fish are cast away (v. 48). Harmful plants are rooted up (15:13). Worthless trees are cut down (Luke 13:7). Withered branches are burned (John 15:6). Debtor is held in prison (Matthew 5:26; 18:34).1
Offender is cast into outer darkness (8:12; 22:13; 25:30).

In each case (save the last two, given for another purpose) the destruction is declared complete, leading to utter and final disintegration. The doom of the wicked was never portrayed by Christ as an endless life in torment. The "tree which bringeth not forth good fruit," He declares, "is hewn down, and cast into the fire" (Matthew 3:10). That signifies its final and complete destruction and disappearance.

2. SECOND GROUP BASED ON HUMAN LIFE

In His second group of illustrations, based upon human life—thus obviating any misunderstanding or evasion—the Master declares:

The wicked husbandmen are destroyed (Matthew 21:41; Luke 20:16). The rejector is ground to powder, scattered as dust (Matthew 21:44). The evil servant is cut asunder (Matthew 24:51).
The wicked will perish like the Galileans (Luke 13:2, 3).
They are slain like those crushed by Siloam's tower (vs. 4, 5). They are destroyed like the victims of the Flood (17:27).
They are destroyed by fire like men of Sodom and Gomorrah (17:29). They will die, as in the fate of Lot's wife (17:32).
The rebellious "citizens" are slain (19:14, 27).

These portrayals, individually and collectively, all denote capital punishment. They signify sudden, swift, violent death — attended with greater or less suffering. They are set forth as fit illustrations of the coming second death for the stubbornly recalcitrant sinner.

The debtor, cast into prison (Matthew 5:26; 18:34), indicates that the debt is inescapable and irrevocable. And the offender cast into outer darkness (Matthew 7:12; 22:13; 25:30) indicates that there is weeping and gnashing of teeth—conscious suffering. (Weeping and gnashing of teeth is used seven times by Christ—Matthew 8:12; 13:42;
13:50; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30; Luke 13:28.) The "gnashing of teeth" precedes the lapsing into final unconsciousness. But Jesus does not say this gnashing and weeping is without end. We repeat: There is nothing to suggest endless continuance in either case. The total evidence of Scripture rebuts such an inference.

All, both animate and_ inanimate evil things, come to final retribution. The doom of Gehenna, for the unrepentant sinner, is final and irrevocable, ending in total destruction.

3. ALL PORTRAY TOTAL AND FINAL EXTINCTION

Thus of the seventeen different illustrations employed by the Saviour to depict the doom of the wicked, all but two portray utter and ultimate destruction, or dissolution, under the second death, whereas the other two indicate the certainty of that doom. Here is a case in point: "When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen? . . . He will miserably destroy [apollumi] those wicked men" (Matthew 21:40, 41).

According to the witness of Christ, then, there is eternity of result but not of process, of punishment but not of punishing of men. Apollumi and apoleia and the cognate Greek terms Christ employs all involve complete destruction. The lesson is obvious: As rivers separated from their source, as trees with neither roots nor branches, as dry bundles of tares, as corpses eaten by worms, so the incorrigibly wicked will go to destruction in Gehenna—the refuse heap, as it were, of lost men. Christ asserts, then, without qualifications, the final and total extinction of the entire man in fire that cannot be quenched, as the fate of the impenitent.

B. Christ's Meaning of "Eternal" Fire, Punishment, Damnation

Christ thrice speaks of the doom of the wicked as being, or involving, something "eternal." His three important warning statements are:

Mark 3:29—"He that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost ... is in danger of eternal damnation2 [aidniou kriseos, "eternal judgment"]."

Matthew 25:46—"These shall go away into everlasting punishment [kolasin aidnion]: but the righteous into life eternal [zden aidnion]." (Cf. Paul, 2 Thess. 1:9.)

Matthew 25:41—"Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire [to pur to aidnion], prepared for the devil and his angels."

In the first instance there is a distinct and consummating act, coupled with endless duration of result—the sentence being everlasting in its consequences. It is the sin that throughout the ages remains unpardoned." In the second, the "punishment" and the suffering are not identical—the punishment is like wise eternal in its effects whereas the suffering ends in utter abolition, or cessation, of being. And in the third, the fire is called "everlasting" because its results are everlasting. It is not simply a fire, but "the fire"—the one "prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matthew 25:41). It ends in destruction and ashes.

Some manuscripts read "eternal sin."

See R. F. Weymouth, New Testament in Modern Speech (3d ed.), Mark 3:29, n. 10.

1. MEANING DETERMINED BY NOUN TO WHICH ATTACHED.

In each of these passages the Greek word for "everlasting," or "eternal," is the adjective aidnios—derived from the noun aion, an "age" or "era"—the word itself leaving the time limit of the age undefined. The late Bishop H. C. G. Moule, of Durham, in his Outline of Christian Doctrine, soundly declared that the term of duration expressed by aidnios must always be sought in the noun to which it is attached, not in the modifying aidnios itself. Therefore, to determine its true meaning we must carefully trace its usage in Scripture, and seek out the noun it modifies.

God, and things divine, are incontestably endless—thus involving the full and unrestricted meaning. But earthly things will not last beyond the earth in its present age or form. Thus the aidnion Mosaic statutes and the aidnion Aaronic priest hood belonged to a passing dispensation—and ceased. The adjective aidnios there obviously stood for a limited time only—"age long"—the noun it modified determining the term of duration.

On the contrary, "life eternal" (zden aidnion), for the righteous, is used more than forty times. That life will be unending. But in contrast, the runaway slave, Onesimus (Philemon 15), who was to serve his master "for ever" (likewise aidnion), was to serve only as long as he lived. Clearly the substantive, or noun, determines the meaning.

2. DIVINE ACTIONS OR ACTIVITIES MAY BE TERMINABLE.

Christ clearly taught that divine conditions or Persons abide unendingly, whereas divine actions or activities

may be terminable, for example, punishment (Matthew 25:46); judgment (Hebrews 6:2); sin (Mark 3:29); destruction (2 Thess. 1:9); salvation (Hebrews 5:9); redemption and fire (Matthew 18:8; 25:41; Jude 7). These expressions obviously do not mean endless punishing, judging, sinning, destroying, saving, redeeming. Endless salvation is not endless saving, but represents a completed work of grace.

The fire that destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah was not endless in its process, but was completely endless in its results. The "unquenchable fire" that "burns up" the chaff, will not keep that chaff forever burning. Again we see that the noun to which the modifying aidnios is attached, automatically determines the unlimited or the limited meaning—such as "eternal inheritance" (Hebrews 9:15), or "everlasting [eternal] gospel" (Revelation 14:6).

Thus in Matthew 25:46 the living state of the righteous is endless, and the death-punishment state, or condition, of the wicked, produced by the process o£ destruction, is a death state as endless as the contrasting life state is endless. But the process is not eternal, only the result. We must therefore con cur with Bishop Moule and other recognized scholars that the noun to which aidnios is attached is the determinative factor. In one case it is terminable; in another it is interminable.

C. Christ's Explicit Teachings on "Hell" Examined

In considering the ultimate destiny and doom of the wicked, we must likewise note Christ's definitive teachings on Hell. Confusion in understanding was introduced, at the time of translation, by the unfortunate rendering into the one English word Hell, the three different Greek words, Gehenna, hades, and Tartaros (from tartardo), although each has a wholly separate and distinctive meaning. (Christ, however, does not Himself deal with Tartaros. That appears only once, and then in verbal form, in 2 Peter 2:4, and is considered in chapter 20, pp. 383-385.)

Singularly enough, the most striking and forceful language in the entire Bible as regards Hell and the punishment of the wicked, fell from the lips of Christ Himself. Nevertheless, these expressions are entirely compatible with His character as Incarnate Love. It is only when invested with the theological deviations of the centuries that they take on the terror and cruelty that is as foreign to Christ's own heart as they are a distortion of the language He used. John 3:16 presents the simple but comprehensive dual truth of God's tender love and His holy judgment. To "perish" (apollumi) means nothing less than the "destruction" unquestionably taught in Scripture. It is the terminus of the "wide gate" and the "broad way," against which He warned.

1. TWO TERMS USED BY CHRIST

We now turn to the two terms used by Christ.

(1) Gehenna, or the "hell fire" ("Gehenna of fire")
(Matthew 5:22; 18:9), Christ used to describe the place of future, final punishment of the wicked. Gehenna, Ge Hinnom, or the Valley of Hinnom, was a ravine south of the city of Jerusalem. According to tradition, it was a place of fire and destruction for refuse. Fires were kept burning constantly, and maggots bred freely and fed upon the filthy and putrefying carcasses. Such was the familiar figure used by Christ for the coming destruction of all the unclean things of the universe. It symbolized the coming "lake of fire" mentioned in Revelation. Dr. R. F. Weymouth, in a note on Matthew 5:22, states:

"Gehenna of Fire Or 'Hell.' The severest punishment inflicted by the Jews upon any criminal. The corpse (after the man had been stoned to death) was thrown out into the Valley of Hinnom (Ge Hinnom) and was devoured by the worm or the flame."

(2) Hades (Gr. equivalent of Hebrews she'ol) is recorded as used by Christ only three times: in His condemnation of Capernaum (Matthew 11:23; Luke 10:15); in His reply to Peter's confession (Matthew 16:18); and in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:23). The parable of the rich man and Lazarus has already been treated, and the rest of the New Testament usages of hades will be noted separately later.

2. CHRIST'S SPECIFIC TEACHINGS ON GEHENNA

Christ's allusions to Gehenna occur in seven passages—the only other New Testament reference being in James 3:6. We note them here:

(1) Matthew 5:22—"shall be in danger of hell fire"

(2) 5:29, 30 (2)—"that thy whole body should be cast into hell" (3) 10:28—"able to destroy both soul and body in hell"
(4) Luke 12:5—"Fear him, which . . . hath power to cast into hell" (5) Matthew 18:8, 9—"Cast into everlasting fire"; "cast into hell fire"
(6) Mark 9:43, 45, 47—"go into hell"; "cast into hell"; "cast into hell fire"
(7) Matthew 23:15, 33—"twofold more the child of hell"; "How can ye escape the damnation of hell?" (In each case the "hell" is from

Gehenna.)

Ibid., Matthew 5:22, n. 12.

3. EXPLANATORY NOTES ON THE SEVEN TEXTS

Under No. 1 (Matthew 5:22), Dean Alford states that there were three degrees of guilt: First, those coming under the cognizance of the local synagogue council of three; then came those of the supreme council or Sanhedrin— meted out by the sword, or stoning, and often followed by the disgrace o£ the fire of Gehenna. And after the first two came the final Gehenna of the fire (ten geennan tou puros, "hell of fire"), wherein the corpse of the malefactor was cast into the Valley of Hinnom, to be devoured by the worm and reduced to ashes by flame—an intensification of the horrors of simple death. But the final punishment in each case was death.

Under No. 2 (Matthew 5:29, 30) is stressed the preference of the perishing of an eye (choicest possession), or hand, to that of the whole body when cast into the Gehenna of fire.

In No. 3 (Matthew 10:28) the killing of soul and body is man's complete abolition, or destruction. Apollumi, and its cognate apdleia, translated into English as "destruction" or "perdition," gives us the key to our Lord's meaning. And this is corroborated by Peter and Paul, each of whom gives self-interpreting passages in which they use the terms "destroy" and "perish." Christ first cites the terrible fate of the Galileans who perished under Pilate. Then He warns, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish [apollumi]" (Luke 13:3). Next He adds the episode of those killed by the falling of the tower of Siloam. And again He warns, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish [apollumi]" (vs. 4, 5).

Such is the doom for the impenitent—swift, tragic, fatal, complete. Be it noted, however, that there is not a syllable about being kept alive forever in endless conscious torment. Peter subsequently said to Simon Magnus—when he offered money in an endeavor to purchase the power of the Holy Spirit for his own use— "Thy money perish [apollumi] with thee" (Acts 8:20). The doom of both Simon and his money was destruction.

No. 5 (Matthew 18:8, 9) stresses the preference for entering into the resurrection life, or life eternal, rather than being cast into "everlasting fire" (v. 8), or "hell fire" (v. 9)—the Gehenna of fire.

In No. 6 (Mark 9:43-48) Christ four times speaks of those who "go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched" (v. 43). This is repeated in verses 45 and 46 as the fire that shall never be quenched. It is the same expression used by John the Baptist, who spoke of the Coming One as gathering the "wheat into the garner; but he will burn up [katakaid] the chaff with unquenchable fire [puri asbesto]" (Matthew 3:12). The rendering "unquenchable fire" is unfortunately translated. It is fire that "shall not be quenched."

The inspired New Testament interpretation of pur aion-ios is given by Jude, who describes the judgments that over took Sodom and Gomorrah, as "set forth for an example," of "suffering the vengeance of eternal fire" (Jude 7). Jude joins the experience of Sodom and Gomorrah with that of the Israelites who died in the wilderness, and of Korah and his companions who were swallowed up by an earthquake. These all signified total destruction.

4. INSPIRED KEY TO EXPRESSION "ETERNAL FIRE."

Then to these Peter parallels the words: God, "turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly" (2 Peter 2:6). Then he adds, "The Lord knoweth how ... to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished" (v. 9). So the "eternal fire" (pur aidnios) is not still feeding on its victims, for the waters of the Dead Sea mark the site of the cities whose inhabitants perished in the dreadful flames. Thus the "eternal" of Jude is not an endless process but a result. This is the inspired key to the tremendous phrase "eternal fire."

The "unquenchable fire" of Matthew 3:12 will "burn up" (katakaid) entirely the chaff. And nothing is more swiftly consumed than chaff. It creates a blaze that nothing can extinguish until its work is done. Then, the chaff burned up, the fire ceases for lack of material to feed on. Consequently, the example of Sodom and Gomorrah

signifies the total destruction and disappearance of the thing consumed. The pur aidnios and as bestos, which do the obliterating work, are the Master's definitive description of the fires of Gehenna.

And the undying worm and the quenchless flame feed upon their victims until the whole is consumed. Thus again the work of the "worm" and the "fire" are eternal in results, but not in process or duration. Hence we must distinguish sharply between Hell as Gehenna, the place of final doom and the second death, in contrast with Hades, the place of the dead (gravedom) between death and the resurrection.

5. NOT MISERY BUT "DESTRUCTION" IS ETERNAL

As to the punishment of the wicked, be it noted that it is neither the sinfulness nor the misery of which the eternity is predicted (Matthew 25:41, 46). It is the punishment—"kolasis" (v. 46)—the end less result, not the transitory penal process. It is the eternal effect of the divine act of cutting of} from life. It is the penal deprivation of what otherwise might be enjoyed, the forfeiture of its joys and privileges. This is specifically the death penalty for sin, everywhere set forth in God's Word from Genesis to Revelation—the wicked shall be punished with "everlasting destruction" (2 Thess. 1:9). That is the punishment of Matthew 25:46.

Here, then, is the contrast—not the incidence of happiness or misery but the life that is awarded to the righteous, in contradistinction to the deprivation of that life, the cutting off, the extinction, the capital punishment by death of the other. And both are here declared to be equally final and irreversible. "Everlasting punishment" is clearly not the same as being everlastingly punished. It is eternal loss of being. Such is the testimony of Christ, the Supreme Witness of all time, and the Infallible Authority in the realm of the nature and destiny of man. Whoso controverts His inerrant dictums must settle it with his Lord.

D. "Hades"—True Understanding Based on NT Usage, Not Pagan-Romanist

1. PAGAN ORIGIN AND INFLUENCE OF "HADES."

While the Hebrew word she'ol" (gravedom) comes to us largely from Old Testament Scripture, the Greek equivalent, hades, is of pagan origin, and came down to New Testament times tinctured with centuries of pagan tradition. It is essential that this fact be borne in mind.

More than that, the term hades reached the modern Christian church tinctured with the ideas of a divergent Judaism and Romanism. That is the second significant fact. The New Testament meaning of hades must be drawn neither from the human imaginations of the heathen nor from the later traditions of the Jews and Romanists. Instead, the true meaning must be derived from the actual usage of hades, as it appears in the New Testament, compared and checked with the Old Testament usage of she'ol.

2. ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS MOLDED BY ROMANIST BACK GROUNDS

In the original pagan sense, hades was used by Homer to designate the god of the unseen, in the nether world.
Later it came to mean the abode of departed spirits. The Vulgate renders hades by infernum (the lower regions). Ever since the rise of Romanism Hell has been popularly considered as the place for punishing departed spirits. But according to Scripture, hades and gehenna are not identical.

There is no confusion in the original tongue. The confusion came through the English rendering of both words as "hell." Here again traditional backgrounds have exerted their molding influence upon translation.

She'ol occurs 65 times—rendered as "grave" (35), as "hell" (27), and as "pit" (3). See Part I, pp. 160-165. Therein lies the key.

As noted elsewhere, gehenna occurs twelve times in the New Testament,' and is uniformly rendered "hell" in the A.V., R.V., and A.R.V. In the Vulgate it is transliterated Gehenna. And Gehenna exactly fits the modern concept of Hell—a place of burning, especially for the punishment of the wicked—except that Gehenna is not presently active, but is simply the coming lake of fire.

3. HADES CONNECTED WITH DEATH, NEVER WITH LIFE.

Hades occurs 11 times in the New Testament, and is rendered "hell" in every case save one (1 Corinthians 15:55, where margin is "hell." The Koine and the Syriac give hades here.). Hades is invariably connected with death, never with life; always with dead persons, never with the living. Hades is also the place of "corruption" (Acts 2:31; cf.

13:34-37), from which resurrection is the only exit.

4. HADES CLEARLY THE GRAVE, OR GRAVEDOM

The Hebrew she'ol of the Old Testament is the equivalent of the Greek hades of the New Testament and both are identical or synonymous with the grave, or gravedom, the state of death. That is the inescapable witness of Scripture. And only with such an understanding can we deal safely with any particular single passage of Scripture, for the meaning of death does not vary in the two great divisions of the Word. And, equally important, the general sense must govern the interpretation of any individual disputed passage.

The New Testament expressly states that in death the individual, the person, rests in the grave. Thus "devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him" (Acts 8:2). Stephen was in the grave, not in Heaven. Peter, likewise speaking under inspiration, said of the eminent Old Testament believer David, "David is not ascended into the heavens" (Acts 2:34). But the supreme example is Christ.

Matthew 5:22, 29, 30; 10:28; 18:9: 23:15, 33; Mark 9:43, 45, 47; Luke 12:5: James 3:6.

The eleven occurrences of hades in the New Testament are: Matthew 11:23; 16:18; Luke 10:15; 16:23; Acts 2:27, 31; 1 Corinthians 15:55; Revelation 1:18; 6:8; 20:13, 14. The R.V. always transliterates it "hades," except in 1 Corinthians 15:15, where it is rendered "death."

Be it remembered that the death of Christ was identical with the death of His people, whether before His resurrection or since.

Christ tasted death for us all (Hebrews 2:9). And Scripture speaks of His death and that of His people as one and the same in kind. Apart from the atoning aspect, only in one respect did they differ—and that does not concern the nature of the state in death. That difference was the duration of the death state. Christ's death was for so short a time that His "flesh" did not "see corruption" (Acts 2:27, 31). And even this distinction was noted in prophecy (Psalm 16:10; cf. Acts 2). But Christ's death was itself the same as that of all of His followers. And in that death Christ went into hades (the grave, gravedom, or realm of death), and remained there until His resurrection.
And, we repeat, as with Him so with us.

5. ALL SOULS REMAIN IN GRAVEDOM UNTIL RESURRECTION

The very nature of the resurrection attests, beyond doubt, that each one of Christ's people is in hades (gravedom, realm of death) until the resurrection. That was affirmed by Peter at Pentecost. And the apostle Paul succinctly declares that the resurrection of Christ was like that of His believing people (Romans 6:5; 1 Corinthians 15:20-23). It therefore follows that upon resurrection, Christ's people come out of hades, or grave dom, just as Christ came out of hades (gravedom) upon His resurrection.

It is explicitly affirmed by Paul, in his description of the resurrection of believers (in 1 Corinthians 15), that hades continues to retain its power over those entering its domain, until the Second Advent and its attendant resurrection. In fact, in Paul's exclamation in 1 Corinthians 15:55 ("O death, where is thy sting? O grave [hades], where is thy victory?"), he was but paraphrasing from Hosea, who wrote, "O death, I will be thy plagues; Q grave [she'of], I will be thy destruction" (Hosea 13:14)—with only such change as would comport with the New Testament diction.

6. GRAVEDOM: PLACE OF REPOSE THROUGHOUT DEATH-SLEEP

Paul's teaching in 1 Corinthians 15 is reiterated by our Lord in the Apocalypse:

"Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell [hades] and of death" (Revelation 1:17, 18).

This teaching is unequivocal. Christ died, and He was placed in the grave (hades). Then follows the resurrection, when He left hades (gravedom). He then comforts the believers with the assurance, "I have the keys of hades and of death." That is, "I will open hades [gravedom] for My people, even as I opened it for Myself." So hades is clearly the state of death, identical with gravedom. It should also be noted that in the Apocalypse death and hades are thrice thrown together:

"I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell [hades] followed with him" (Revelation 6:8).

"And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell [hades, margin, "the grave"] delivered up the dead which were in them" (chap. 20:13).

"And death and hell [hades] were cast into the lake of fire" (v. 14).

Hades is not a dwelling place of departed living souls. According to Holy Writ it is the place of repose for the dead during their death sleep. This is uniform and conclusive.

E. Problem Text (Mark 9:43-48): "Their Worm Dies Not"

Much stress is placed by some upon the triple use by Christ Himself, in six short verses (Mark 9:43-48), of the expression "their worm dieth not." But "their worm" is not a soul, only a maggot (skolex), feeding upon a dead body—and not inhabiting a living one. Here is pictured the revolting end of a corpse flung out on the refuse heap. It is an awesome warning to all beholders—standing for dissolution, disintegration, with final disappearance. But it is not the process or duration but the result that is here emphasized.

The "worm" that "dieth not" is, like the "unquenchable fire," a symbol of death. So long as the corpse or carcass (cf. Isaiah 66:24), which is completely insensible, is gnawed by the worm, it cannot live again. If the worm never dies, there will be no possibility of life revitalizing the corpse. It thus excludes all hope of restoration. There is nothing here about the "sting of an accusing conscience," as often claimed. There are no "perpetual torments" or "endless sufferings" here, or else where in the Sacred Text—any more than there are "immortal souls."

"The use in the N.T. of such words as 'death,' 'destruction,' 'fire,' 'perish,' to describe future retribution, point to the likelihood of fearful anguish, followed by extinction of being, as the doom that awaits those who by persistent rejection of the Saviour prove themselves utterly, and therefore irremediably, bad."—Weymouth, The New Testament in Modern Speech, Hebrews 10:27, n. 1 (ed.).

The worm causes no suffering to the carcass, which is in sensible. It simply hastens the disappearance of what has ceased to live, and partially "replaces the gravedigger," as someone has phrased it. And the cremation in the fire that follows pulverizes the bones gnawed by the worm. The worm is essentially a gnawer, a carrion-eating destroyer. So the worm and the fire together actually indicate the utter impossibility of an eternal life in torment. The symbolism may be said to portray the eternal continuance of a state of death and utter extinction for the wicked. Beyond question, these agents of destruction are a figure of the utter impossibility of a return to life after death. In the passage there is not a scintilla of sup port for the contention of "eternal torment of the damned."

F. Sin's Punishment Does Not Continue Through All Eternity

The second death, as portrayed in Revelation 20 and 21, involves the termination of all sinful and estranged life. The punishment of the wicked ends in ultimate dissolution and obliteration, as "fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured [katesthio, "to eat down," denoting utter excision] them" (Revelation 20:9)." And when the "new heaven" and the "new earth" are established, the Divine Voice from the throne of Omnipotence declares:

"There shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" (Revelation 21:4).

This agrees with Paul's declaration, "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death" (1 Corinthians 15:26). Therefore the furiously raging lake of fire will not burn on endlessly, with the wicked eternally alive in torment. Christ did not condone the contention of an eternal dualism. Death itself, along with hades ("gravedom"), is cast into the lake of fire, denoting the utter end. The death principle itself is abrogated, abolished, and rendered completely and permanently inoperative. It will wholly cease to be. Thus will God ring down the final curtain on sin and death forever. That is Christ's inerrant testimony.

Theologian Paul on Life, Death, and Immortality

A. "Christ Our Life" Is Post-Pentecostal Theme

It was not until after the Holy Spirit was poured out with power upon the apostles and the early disciples of our Lord that their minds were fully opened to perceive the larger scope of the sublime truth of Life Only in Christ. But when they did perceive and receive it fully, and when they knew and experienced the "power of his resurrection" (Phil. 3:10), they were lifted completely out of their former mediocrity and filled with a compulsive power and a zeal that nothing could withstand.

1. PROCLAIMED FIRST TO JEWS, THEN TO GENTILES

The doctrine of life through Christ was the "unspeakable gift" that they were impelled to make known to all men. This was what the angel first charged Peter and the other apostles to preach when he was released from prison at Jerusalem. Here was his impressive commission, given just after the Jews had killed the Prince of life (Acts 3:15): "Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life" (Acts 5:20) —life in Christ, stubbornly rejected by the Pharisees, life through the resurrection, bitterly opposed by the Sadducees. Jesus' name and the power of His life must be made known to all men. This mandate they gladly obeyed. And this is precisely what Paul and Barnabas preached first to the Jews at Antioch. And when the chosen people reused to accept Jesus as the promised giver of "this life," the apostles solemnly said:

"It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy [by unbelief] of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles" (Acts 13:46).

Turning to the Gentiles, they boldly proclaimed:

"For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed" (vs. 47, 48).

2. PAUL PREACHES WITH FUTILITY TO PLATONIC ATHENIANS

Paul, the great accession to the apostles' roster, sought to preach this same doctrine to the Athenians. He spoke to them of God as the one who "giveth to all life, and breath, and all things" (Acts 17:25). But the minds of the Athenians were so filled with the fanciful notions of the Greek poets and philosophers concerning the spirit world and the Innate Immortality of all souls that they scouted the idea of Immortality solely by a resurrection from the dead through Jesus Christ. Had he preached to them the Platonic doctrine of a spirit life, an immortal soul, or eternal blessedness or misery for all men forever, they would not have called him "a setter forth of strange gods" (v. 18), and a proclaimer of "new doctrine" (v. 19). That would have been what their own Platonic philosophy had taught them. But the doctrines of the day of judgment and the incredible resurrection of Jesus "from the dead" (v. 31), and of the coming resurrection of all the dead, and of immortality only through Christ were no more agreeable to them than they were to the Jews.

3. ROMANS: IMMORTALITY A GIFT THROUGH CHRIST

This majestic truth runs all through Paul's epistles. It was the mighty cable, as it were, upon which all the other doctrines of the gospel were suspended. Thus to the Romans, Paul preached that all, whether Jews or Gentiles, were under one common sentence of death; for all had "sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). Those who had "sinned without law," must "perish without law" (Romans 2:12), while those who had sinned under the law must be judged by the law. Death had "reigned" over all the children of Adam (Romans 5:14).

But by the grace of God there was hope. The gospel, which he was sent to preach, was "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (chap. 1:16) in Christ, the Life-giver. Specifically—"to them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality [aphtharsian, "incorruption"], eternal life" (Romans 2:7). To believers he says:

"What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death [the second death]; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:21-23).

Thus the proclamation of eternal life was central. There is no such thing as either spontaneous generation or spontaneous regeneration. The children of God are "begotten" by God Himself, as verily as the children of Adam are begotten by their natural progenitors. This new life concerns itself not with carnal and perishable things, but with spiritual and eternal things. Those who experience it are "led by the Spirit of God" (Romans 8:14), and such are destined to be "glorified" (v. 17) through the "resurrection," with its "redemption

of our body" (v.
23). They will not come into the "condemnation" of the second death (v. 1; chap. 5:16; cf. Revelation 2:11). Nothing will be able to "separate" them "from the love of God, which is in Jesus Christ" (Romans 8:39), by whom and to whom they henceforth live as "heirs" of eternal life.

4. 1 CORINTHIANS: IMMORTALITY MUST BE "PUT ON."

The same emphasis on eternal life is equally marked in both of Paul's epistles to the Corinthians. In the first
epistle he shows how impossible it is for human reason alone to attain any true knowledge of the gospel. How foolish the truth of eternal life through a crucified Saviour seems to natural man—"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, be cause they are spiritually discerned" (1 Corinthians 2:14). But Paul was "determined" to know nothing among them but "Jesus Christ, and him crucified" (v. 2), and that through His death and resurrection we might have eternal life.

Finally, coming to the climax of the great and glorious doctrine of the resurrection, Paul dwells upon it at length, and shows how it is assured to us by the death and resurrection of Christ Himself. If this assurance of resurrection through Christ were taken away, we would be of all men the "most miserable" (1 Corinthians 15:19), for we would then have no hope of any life beyond the grave. All who have fallen asleep in Jesus would have "perished" (v. 18), become extinct—not in a state of endless sin and misery. Not a word to that effect. Paul attempts to tell the nature of the spiritual bodies we shall take on at the resurrection, to show how glorious and how incorruptible they will be, and how entirely different from our gross fleshly bodies (v. 37), which are fitted only for earthly natures, and could not possibly enter the coming kingdom of God.

"So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural Ipsuchikon] body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual [pneumatikori] body"1 (1 Corinthians
15:42-44). Then Paul shows how, simultaneously with the resurrection of the righteous dead, those who are alive at Christ's second coming will be changed:

"In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible [aphthartoi, "immortal"], and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal [thneton, "subject to death"] must put on immortality [athanasiari]. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" (vs. 52-55).

Mark the form of the expression, "This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality" (v. 53). Surely if incorruption, if immortality, must be "put on" (enduo, "to put on," as a garment), it could not have been possessed before.

5. 2 CORINTHIANS: CENTRAL THEME, CHRIST OUR LIFE

Paul's second Corinthian epistle is equally filled with Christ and Him crucified, as the source of eternal hope to
all His people. The great apostle is deter mined to know nothing else among them, waiting eagerly for the time when this mortality "might be swallowed up [kata- pino, "drink down," "swallow"] of life" (2 Corinthians 5:4).

6. "ETERNAL LIFE" THEME RUNS THROUGH REMAINING EPISTLES

And so with all his other epistles, eternal life is the central theme. Note it:
"Reap life everlasting" (Galatians 6:8).
"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 3:3, 4).
"Believe on him to life everlasting" (1 Tim. 1:16). "Lay hold on eternal life" (1 Tim. 6:12).
"Our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality [aphtharsian] to light through the gospel" (2 Tim. 1:10).
"In hope of eternal life, which God . . . promised before the world began" (Titus 1:2). "Heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (chap. 3:7).

7. PETER, JAMES, AND JUDE GIVE SAME EMPHASIS

And it should be added that Peter, James, and Jude follow on, offering salvation with the same "life" line—
exhorting all to fight the good fight of faith and lay hold on eternal life. "He shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath

promised to them that love him" (James 1:12). "Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life" (Jude 21). It is life, life, life! But let us examine Paul, and his theology on life and death, more closely.

B. Heart of Pauline Theology—Gift of Life Instead of Destruction

The apostle Paul was unquestionably the most powerful human personality in the history of the Christian church—truly a spiritual and intellectual giant. He was chosen to write a sizable portion of the New Testament. In his writings he gave a more fully developed theology than any other apostle. He probes the deepest depths and rises to the highest heights of the mighty plan of redemption. He sweeps in all of God's majestic provisions of grace and redemption. He presents the light of salvation for the believer and the darkness of doom for the rejectors of God's grace. One can feel the pulsating heartthrobs throughout his mighty epistles.

1. REDEMPTION OF MAN BRINGS LIFE AND IMMORTALITY.

Paul did not have the privilege of the three years enjoyed by the other disciples in the school of Christ, the master teacher of life and immortality. Saul the persecutor became Paul the apostle when he encountered Christ in a vision on the road to Damascus (Acts 9). He spent a period of study and readjustment in Arabia (Galatians 1:17). But his teaching is identical with theirs—and that of Jesus—on the nature and destiny of man. In fact, he surpasses other disciples in the fullness, clarity, and depth of his presentations. Paul was clearly God's unique apostle not only to the Gentiles but to the Diaspora as well. With Paul, Christ was not only the center but the circumference of his preaching and teaching, as well as of his personal faith and life. The essence of his message was humanity redeemed, justified by grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone, who by His life, death, and resurrection opened the way and provided the means for man's restoration and his reception of eternal life and Immortality in Christ, bestowed at the resurrection or at translation, at the Second Advent.

2. TREMENDOUS SCOPE OF SALVATION

The three foundational facts of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, in their relation to sin and redemption for man, clearly constitute the sum and substance of the teaching and preaching of the great apostle. In his writings there is clarity and certainty in the provision of Life Only in Christ. That is unquestionably the essence of Paul's gospel. Here the highest, broadest, and deepest lessons in the school of grace are set forth. Here is the culmination of revealed apostolic truth. Here is the powerful portrayal of the divine philosophy of salvation in contrast with all human foibles and sophisms.

3. OPENING MESSAGE Is ON ESCHATOLOGY

Paul wrote the Thessalonian epistles about A.D. 52. These epistles and the Corinthians, written some six years later, are replete with the message of life, death, and Immortality. This was the earliest Pauline emphasis. And Paul was the most explicit and extensive of all the New Testament writers in holding steadfastly to the original Biblical position that man is not naturally immortal. He maintains that man can become so only by a new in fusion of life. He is not so by nature; he becomes so by faith and transforming grace.

Paul had little success in Athens, the city of Socrates and Plato. He would doubtless have secured a hearing if he had proclaimed the immortality of the soul and its corollaries. Moreover, he demonstrated here the futility of meeting reason with reason, logic with logic, and philosophy with philosophy. Thenceforth he was a preacher of Jesus Christ, and Him crucified (1 Corinthians 2:2), risen, ascended, mediating, judging, and coming again to raise the dead, translate the living, reward the righteous, and punish the wicked with everlasting destruction.

4. PUNISHMENT OF WICKED Is TOTAL DESTRUCTION

Twenty times the apostle Paul declares that the wages of sin is death—absolute death, cessation of life. Twenty times he tells us that death is the punishment for sin—and also in a dozen places that life and immortality are special privileges, as in Romans 6:23 and 8:11. Twenty-five times Paul spells out the fate of the wicked, and constantly uses terms connoting total destruction such as:

"In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God . . . : who shall be punished with everlasting destruction [olethron aionion, "eternal ruin, death"] from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints" (2 Thess. 1:8-10).

Paul speaks once of the resurrection of the wicked, or "unjust" (Acts 24:15). But their survival will be of such short duration that he usually passes it over in silence. In his Epistle to the Hebrews' it is stated:

"We are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul." "For our God is a consuming fire" "which shall devour the adversaries" (Hebrews 10:39; 12:29; 10:27). That which God consumes He does not allow still to exist. After the execution of the judgment, death will have no more victories, but will itself be abolished (Revelation 20:14). Immortality, Paul asserts, cannot begin before "this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality" (1 Corinthians 15:54; cf. 1
Tim. 6:16), which change takes place when Christ comes the second time. Here is Paul's key declaration in his earliest epistle:

"The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thess. 4:16, 17). - That is a bird's-eye view of the Pauline witness. Now let us examine Paul's testimony from the eschatological side.

The present writer accepts the arguments in favor of Pauline authorship as more weighty than those for all other candidates put together.

C. Places All Messages in Graphic Eschatological Setting

Paul is careful even in his very first epistles to place his message in a graphic, well-defined eschatological setting. The Thessalonian epistles set forth the transcendent scenes of the Second Advent, with its glorification of the saints at the resurrection and subsequent destruction of all sinners. This is presented as the climax of the divine plan of the ages—the end events being the culmination of a sweeping outline that takes in the centuries and leads up to the devastating scenes of the day of the Lord. That is therefore the initial New Testament emphasis.

1. SECOND ADVENT INVOLVES RESURRECTION AND TRANSLATION

Paul leads into the Second Advent that closes the age. He depicts the Lord Jesus descending from Heaven and calling forth from their graves the sleeping saints, and catching up and translating the saints then living, to meet Him and thenceforth be together forever with their Lord. Such is Paul's earliest depiction.

2. "DAY OF THE LORD" BRINGS "SUDDEN DESTRUCTION" TO SINNERS

Paul then immediately refers to the "day of the Lord," as coming unexpectedly to many, like "a thief in the night." It brings "sudden destruction" (1 Thess. 5:2, 3) to the wicked. But he assures the spiritually alert that that day will not overtake them as a thief (v. 4).

3. ATTENDANT CIRCUMSTANCES OF ADVENT PORTRAYED

In his Second Epistle to the Thessalonians Paul picks up the portrayal at the same point, the Second Advent, adding details as to the manner of that coming, but this time he stresses the terror and destruction visited upon the living wicked when Christ appears, in contrast with the glorification and rejoicing of the saints:

"The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction [olethron aidnion, "eternal ruin, death"] from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe" (2 Thess. 1:7-10).

4. COMING APOSTASY PAUL'S GRAVE CONCERN

In Second Thessalonians 2, Paul continues his subject of the "day of the Lord." He warns against the illusion that this tremendous "day" is just at hand. First, he says, there will be a dread "falling away" (apostasia, foretold by Christ in Matthew 24 and Daniel 7) and the appearing, historically, of the "man of sin," or "son of perdition" (2 Thess. 2:3), the "Antichrist," whose activities he describes in these words:

"Who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God" (v. 4).

Paul reminds the Thessalonians that he had forewarned them orally of the great apostasy to come into the Christian church, which would be held back only by the iron might of a unified pagan Rome (vs. 5, 6). But that would pass and the apostasy would appear. He declares that the seeds of spiritual departure were already germinating in his own day:

"For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now lets [katecho, "to restrain," "to hold back"] will let [restrain], until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming' (vs. 7, 8).

This power would be characterized by signs and wonders and deceit, becoming an overpowering "strong delusion" (vs. 9-11). Appealing to the church to hold to the "truth" they had been taught, he solemnly warns that those who believe and receive this "lie" will be "damned" (vs. 11, 12). That is Paul's teaching on the "last things," in the setting of the antecedent great apostasy that would be established before the Second Advent, and would cease only with the second coming of Christ at the end of the age.

5. DIFFERENTIATES BETWEEN RESURRECTION OF RIGHTEOUS AND WICKED

The first Corinthian epistle likewise opens with a reference to "the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 1:7). Then man's usurping judgment will give way to God's just and sovereign judgment. Chapter 15 of 1 Corinthians is the great Second Advent and resurrection-translation classic. Paul first lays down this basic principle concerning the resurrection: "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (v. 22). The resurrection is universal. But the dead are raised in two groups. Paul explains that "they that are Christ's" come forth at His second coming (v. 23). But not all are Christ's. John the revelator says that the wicked will not come forth until the second resurrection (Revelation 20:5, 6). That is the resurrection of the "unjust" (Acts 24:15), or the resurrection unto "damnation" (John 5:29), as Christ expressly denominated it. Then, when the "end comes," all rule and authority and power is subjected to Christ (1 Corinthians 15:24-28). And this includes the "last enemy" of mankind, which is "death" (v. 26). Thus the fearsome reign of death will cease at the Advent and resurrection. As to these bodies of ours:

"It [the body of the saint] is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption [aphtharsia, immortality]: it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body [soma psuchikori]; it is raised a spiritual body [soma pneumatikon]" (vs. 42-44). Then we shall again bear the "image of the heavenly" (v. 49). And this is brought about through Christ, the "quick ening spirit" (v. 45). And now comes the tremendous passage concerning those who sleep in Jesus, together with those who are then living, who will be translated:

"Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep [koimao, here, the sleep of death], but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible [phtharton, "perishable"] must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory" (1 Corinthians 15:51-54).

The whole picture is there: (1) The "last trump," (2) the resurrection of the sleeping saints, (3) the changing, or translation, of the living saints, (4) and for both, the "corruptible" putting on "incorruption" and the "mortal" putting on "immortality." The transformation and the victory are all through Jesus Christ our Lord.

6. OUR VILE BODIES CHANGED AT ADVENT

In Philippians Paul declares:

"Who [Christ] shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself" (Phil. 3:21).

In 1 Timothy 1:16, 17 our believing in Christ unto "life everlasting" is coupled with the reminder that God alone is the "King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God." Only the Godhead has absolute, original, underived immortality. Man's immortality is derived and contingent, and is not received until the Second Advent.

7. SEDUCING SPIRITS IMPINGE ON GOD'S UNAPPROACHABLE IMMORTALITY

Then Paul turns to the characteristic developments of the "latter times," when "some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils" (chap. 4:1). This is reminiscent of the seductive lie and

liar in Eden that beguiled the mother of the human race. There will be a revival in the "latter times," characterized by the power and persuasiveness of that first fatal deception. But Paul admonishes us to "lay hold on eternal life," and to see that we are kept "without spot . . . until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ" (chap. 6:12, 14).

He goes out of his way to declare again that the "King of kings, and Lord of lords" is the one "who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto" (v. 16). And his parting admonition to Timothy is to "lay hold on eternal life" (v. 19). It was not his inherently.

8. IMMORTALITY BROUGHT INTO Focus THROUGH GOSPEL
In 2 Timothy, Paul again mentions the second "appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death,
and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (2 Tim. 1:10).

It is thus clear that immortality has not been the in alienable possession of the human family since the Fall. It is a provision brought to light through the gospel. And the apostle speaks of his own persuasion that Christ is "able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day" (2 Tim. 1:12). And once more he adverts to the "last days" and tabulates a list of some nineteen telltale specifications that will characterize them (chap. 3:2-5). He avows that the Lord Jesus Christ will "judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom" (chap.
4:1). Again he forewarns that—"the time will come [in the "latter days"] when they will not endure sound doctrine . . . ; they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (vs. 3, 4). Then he stresses his own personal belief, and confession, that—

"there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day:
and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing" (v. 8).

All rewards will be given together at the Second Advent. And in closing his letter to Titus, Paul twice refers to the "hope of eternal life" (Titus 1:2; 3:7), promised, he declares, "before the world began" (chap. 1:2). That is Paul's comprehensive testimony in its vital eschatological setting and frame work. In this he faithfully follows the pattern of Christ. And this is designed to be the pattern for every teacher of truth concerning the nature and destiny of man.

D. Pauline Portrayal and Usage of "Immortal" and "Immortality"

The term "immortality" is used but five times in Scripture, and "immortal" but once. All are in the New Testament, and all are Pauline.

1. ABSOLUTE IMMORTALITY Is ATTRIBUTE OF GOD ALONE.
Absolute immortality is an attribute belonging solely to God, along with His omnipotence, omniscience, and omni presence. These are exclusively His. "The blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of
lords; who only hath immortality [athanasian, "incorruption"]" (1 Tim. 6:15, 16; cf. 1 Corinthians 15:53, 54). The inescapable inference therefore follows that man does not possess the attribute of immortality by nature. It is not a natural characteristic of man. It is ever to be sought for (Romans 2:7), and is always and only to be received as a gift (Romans 6:23). In various passages the adjective "mortal" (thnetos) is applied to man (see Romans 6:12; 8:11; 1
Corinthians 15:53, 54; 2 Corinthians 4:11; 5:4), while "immortal" is applied only to God. And with this agrees the solitary use of "immortal."

"Now unto the King eternal, immortal [aphtharto, "not liable to corruption"], invisible, the only wise God" (1
Tim. 1:17). There is thus perfect agreement in the Pauline testimony and fundamental harmony with the testimony of Christ, the other apostles, and the prophets.

2. CHRIST THE REVEALER OF IMMORTALITY TO MAN
The second basic truth essential for our understanding is Christ's relationship to it all. "By the appearing of our
Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (2 Tim. 1:10). The eternal Son of God, then, has brought within the knowledge and grasp of man that everlastingness of perfect being, which is now the possession of God alone. Man is to share this at God's appointed time.

3. IMMORTALITY NOT PRESENT POSSESSION OF HUMANITY.
Immortality is someday erelong to be received by those who seek for it in God's way and upon whom He will
bestow it as a gift. "To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life" (Romans 2:7).

4. MAN, NOW MORTAL, TO PUT ON IMMORTALITY

That day of bestowal is drawing near: "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality" (1 Corinthians 15:53). Obviously one does not put on what he already has inherently. But when will this bestowal take place?

5. RESURRECTION IS TIME OF PUTTING ON IMMORTALITY

The resurrection day is not far away, with its glorious, eternal victory, and its transformation for man. "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory" (1 Corinthians 15:54).

It cannot be overstated that God is the sole present possessor of immortality. He is the source from which man, at present mortal, must obtain immortality. Christ is the revealer and channel of eternal life and immortality. He has brought to light the possibility and provision of attaining immortal life—it is provided in Him as the channel through which it may flow to us. Man is to seek for it, and the seeker will be rewarded. Man will put on immortality at the resurrection of the just. But it will always be derived, contingent immortality—not independent immortality. That is ever and only God's. And now let us look at the opposite side of the picture, through Paul's eyes.

6. THOSE NOT RECEIVING IMMORTALITY ARE DOOMED

Paul consistently refers to immortality as a goal, an objective, which lies before the righteous, who live in quest of immortality. On the contrary, the "wrath" (orge) of God inevitably awaits the unrighteous. And Paul faithfully depicts the awful doom of sin's retribution. Thus he contrasts the eternal life, which is the "gift of God" to man, with the final death, which is the "wages of sin" (Romans 6:23).

"Who [God] will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath [orge], tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil" (Romans 2:6-9).

The Greek word aphtharsia, here translated "immortality," is rendered "incorruption" in the Revised Version. Aphtharsia (literally "imperishability") and aphthartos (translated "incorruptible," "immortal") and their cognate opposites phthora and phthartos (translated "corruption," "dissolution," and "perishable") throw no small light on both the nature and the destiny of mortal man. All four words are related to the verb phtheird, translated "to destroy" in 1 Corinthians 3:17: "If any man defile the temple [body] of God, him shall God destroy [phtheiro]." That is the other, the somber, the tragic, reverse side of the picture of Life Only in Christ.

7. IMMORTALITY PREDICATED ONLY OF GOD

It is never to be forgotten that absolute, underived immortality is predicated only of God. With Paul this word "immortal" (aph-thartos), meaning not liable to corruption, as elsewhere remarked, is never joined with the Greek words for "soul" or "spirit," although pneuma (spirit) occurs 385 times in the New Testament, and psuche (soul) 105 times, a total of 490 times. Furthermore, in the Old Testament immortality is never once predicated of ruach, for spirit (occurring 400 times), or nephesh, for soul (used 752 times), a combined grand total of 1,642 times! It is predicated of one Being only—God. This is basic theology. It is the revealed message of God. (Cf. Romans 1:23; 1 Corinthians 9:25; 15:22; 1 Peter 1:23; 3:4. Also 2 Tim. 1:10.)

And athanasia ("immortality") is expressly declared to be possessed by God alone (1 Tim. 6:16). It is not "put on" by man until the resurrection, when mortality shall be "swallowed up in victory" (1 Corinthians 15:53, 54). Such is the beautiful unity, the inexorable logic, and sublime consistency of the theology of Paul, the master theologian of the centuries. "For this corruptible [phthartori] must put on incorruption [aph-tharsian], and this mortal [thneton] must put on immortality [athana-siari]. So when this corruptible [phtharton] shall have put on incorruption [aphtharsian], and this mortal shall have put on immortality [athanasian], then shall be brought to pass the saying . .. , Death [thanatos] is swallowed up in victory" (1 Corinthians 15:53, 54).

Paul's Leading Problem Passage

(2 Corinthians 5:1-9)

A. "Absent From the Body"; "Present With the Lord"

1. PERIL OF INVOKING THE ISOLATED VERSE

It is both illogical and unsafe to build any major doctrine on isolated passages, apart from the general tenor of Scripture. It is to be remembered that enormous errors have been built upon isolated verses. Thus the tender solicitude, "Compel them to come in" (Luke 14:23), was made the pretext for the cruel horrors of the Inquisition. And the symbolic expression concerning the Lord's Supper, "This is my body," was made the basis of the dogma of transubstantiation by the Roman Church.

Luther, progressing part way, saw in it consubstantiation, and refused the hand of Zwingle, who held the bread to be but an emblem and could not admit of Luther's strained explanation. Yet on a paralleling page, as it were, Jesus committed His mother unto John, saying to her, "Behold thy son!" (John 19:26), in other words, he would be to her a son. And all understood the use. Paul wisely admonished Timothy as a young minister to rightly divide the word of truth (2 Tim. 2:15).

2. CONTENTION: DEATH ONLY A "TRANSITION."

In the passage we are about to survey (2 Corinthians 5:1-9), the expression "absent from the body, . . . present with the Lord" (v. 8) is one of the Pauline statements most commonly drafted upon to prove that death is only a change of life for the believer—simply a transition, with the soul of the saint passing out of the body and going straight into the Lord's presence. This is because the accepted view of the Immortal-Soulist is that the "dead" in Christ are not dead at all. Rather, they are alleged to be radiantly alive in Heaven in a state of conscious bliss, with instantaneous transference at death to the immediate presence of Christ. The poet has aptly summarized the contention as, "There is no death; what seems so is transition."

One of the tragic results of the popular view is that the language and intent of Scripture have been largely forsaken. But according to Scripture, only in the future, after the Second Advent, will the time come when "there shall be no more death" (Revelation 21:4). Some have gone so far as actually to substitute "ascended" and "translated" for the term "death," in certain sermons, obituaries, and epitaphs.

3. CONTENTION: SOUL NOW ENJOYING CELESTIAL LIFE OF BLISS

This passage is not the easiest to understand. Peter refers to a few such difficult Pauline expressions "hard to be understood," which some wrest to their own ruin (2 Peter 3:16). So these verses are often taken as indicating that during the intermediate period, preceding the resurrection of the body, the soul is separated from the body and experiences a celestial life of disembodied bliss. Dr. A. T. Robertson, in commenting on the term "naked" (gumnoi), in 2 Corinthians 5:3, says, "That is, disembodied spirits, 'like the souls in Sheol, without form and void of all power of activity' (Plummer)."

But there is not a word about the soul in the whole account. Paul's words, however, must be understood in the light of his own uniform and repeated teaching on the nature of man, not on a concept never held either by Paul or by any of the other apostles, much less by any group in the Christian church for nearly two centuries thereafter. This mortal body does not enclose an immortal principle or entity, which is released by the stroke of death, and then flies away in glad release. That is simply thinly disguised Platonism.

Archibald T. Robertson, Word Pictures in the New Testament, vol. 4, p. 228.

This passage is considered so important to proponents of Immortal-Soulism, and such reliance is placed upon its words and phrasings, that we shall examine it with special care to see whether the dependence is justified. So we will approach it from a number of angles, diagraming its major phrases, so as to show their related intent, and even presenting a definitive glossary of terms as an aid. We shall look at it historically, contextually, linguistically, and exegetically. The question of semantics is definitely involved; hence a precise definition of terms and a study of usages are called for. Truth, it should be added, will always welcome searching scrutiny.

4. UNKNOWN IN CHRISTIAN CHURCH UNTIL NEARLY AD 200

Be it particularly noted that when Paul wrote his various epistles, the Platonic philosophy of a persisting immortal soul, such as had already devastated the Jewish church, had not yet penetrated the infant Christian church. Such an innovation did not intrude until nearly A.D. 200. None of the apostles so held. Therefore Paul did not, in A.D. 58, teach such a theory nor would any of his early Christian readers so construe his words.

That, we earnestly aver, was a deviation that developed in the third and fourth centuries, in time becoming the identifying dogma of the great Roman Church of the medieval centuries, and regrettably retained by many of the Protestant Reformation churches that revolted

from the Catholic communion but nevertheless retained various of the Roman departures. (See Part IV for foil documentation.)

B. Setting and Intent of Paul's Unusual Portrayal

First, let us get the setting. When the apostle Paul first went to Corinth he sought out and lived with Aquila and Priscilla, who were tentmakers. Then "because he [Paul] was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were tentmakers" (Acts 18:3). It was but natural, then, that Paul, in this Epistle to the Corinthians, should introduce a figure of speech in which he likens his body to a "tabernacle- tent"—later changing the figure to "clothing." He compares the human body to a transitory tent, or tabernacle, and stresses the fact that he does not want to be houseless, but wishes to exchange his present, transient tent- house for a new and glorious "eternal house," a "building of God"—the new and glorified body that he would receive at the coming of the Lord.

Or, changing the figure, he does not wish to be divested of his "clothing," and be "naked" (used as a figure for death)," but rather, to be "clothed upon" (by resurrection or translation) by his "house which is from heaven." This is in complete conformity with his message to the Philippians, where he speaks of "heaven":

"Whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory" (Phil. 3:20, 21, R.V.).

1. TWO LIVES FOR BELIEVERS—PRESENT AND FUTURE

Paul knew of no other life for the believer than (1) "the life that now is" and (2) "that which is to come" (1 Tim. 4:8)—just the two. The first is, of course, our present temporary mortal life, now possessed; the other is the future immortal life, of which we are heirs and for which we hope (Matthew 19:29; Titus 1:2). The present life is spent in a "natural" body; the future eternal life will be lived in a "spiritual" body (1 Corinthians 15:44). Neither Paul nor any other New Testament writer knew, or wrote, of any disembodied soul life. Such a concept was then held only by one wing of the Jews, and had been introduced from Platonism in the last two centuries before Christ by certain Apocryphal and pseudepigraphal writers. (See Part III, chaps. 36-38, pp. 632-680.)

Paul declared that we could not enter the Lord's presence in the natural body of our humiliation. On the road to Damascus he had had an overpowering glimpse of Christ's glory, and the sight had blinded him and struck him down to earth (Acts 9:1-9). John, too, who had reclined on the bosom [See Job 1:21 ("naked shall I return thither"); cl. Eccl. 5:15.] of Jesus when His glory was veiled during His incarnation, fell down at His feet as one dead when that same Jesus unveiled His glory to him in vision on the Isle of Patmos (Revelation 1:17). But John had confidence that he would yet look upon his glorified Lord without fear. And the reason was that "when he shall appear [at the Second Advent], we shall be like him" (1 John 3:2).

That would not be in the clothing of this present mortal flesh, but in a new and glorified body, for, as there is a "natural body," there is also to be a "spiritual body" to follow (1 Corinthians 15:42-44).

There must therefore be a change. And that change will take place on the glorious resurrection-translation day when this mortal puts on immortality (v. 53). Not death, then, but victory over death, was the apostle Paul's fond hope (v. 54). He knew that if the Lord delayed His return, mortality would be swallowed up in death for him. He longed not to be "unclothed" by death, but to be "clothed upon" by translation at the Advent, that "mortality might be swallowed up of life" (2 Corinthians 5:4).

If the Lord's return should find Paul "unclothed," or "naked," in the state of death, then his hope was in the resurrection, when death would be swallowed up in victory (1 Corinthians 15:54). But his ardent longing was for the other swallowing up—the swallowing up of this mortal life by a glorious immortality through translation, without dying at all (2 Corinthians 5:4). He longed to join the elect company of Enoch and Elijah.

2. EARTHEN VESSELS MUST BE REPLACED

2 Corinthians 5 should not be separated from chapter 4. In the latter Paul had just spoken of his mortal body, and the sufferings it had endured. This is his portrayal:

"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. We are troubled on everyside, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body [mortal flesh]" (2

Corinthians 4:7-10).

His was a battered body—having suffered stonings, scourgings, and other terrible experiences detailed in 2 Corinthians 11:24-28. All those had left their marks on the fragile "earthen vessel." And there was also his "thorn in the flesh" (2 Corinthians 12:7)—a bodily infirmity, the exact nature of which is not revealed—to buffet him, and keep him humble. But he testified: "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Romans 8:18).

However, the earthen vessel could not bear the fullness of that glory any more than new wine could be contained in old bottles (Matthew 9:17; Mark 2:22; Luke 5:37, 38). So Paul longed to exchange the old body for the new one in which he would be forever free from "weariness and painfulness," "hunger and thirst," "cold and nakedness" (2 Corinthians 11:27). Such was the constraining power that made even his life in this mortal flesh triumphant.

But while he was "at home" in this mortal body he was "absent" from his Lord, and confined to this present evil world. He longed to get rid of the old, and to receive the new and glorified body, and dwell in Christ's presence forever. Now let us examine the full text, with technical definitions interspersed to illuminate the key words and phrases.

C. Full Text of Problem Passage With Definitions

Here is the entire text of 2 Corinthians 5:1-9, with key words defined to bring out the fuller meaning:

"For we know that if our earthly [epigeios] house of this tabernacle [skenous, "tent"] were dissolved [kataluo, "to tear down," as of a tent, "to demolish"], we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this [earthly house] we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked.

"For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest [arrabona, "a down payment," "pledge"] of the Spirit.

"Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (for we walk by faith, not by sight:) we are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him."

D. Five Basic Considerations Involved

1. THREE CONSECUTIVE STATES IMPRESSIVELY PORTRAYED.

Paul here impressively describes three different consecutive states, or conditions, of man: (1) The present earthly life; (2) the period of death, or intermediate state; and (3) the eternal future state, when he shall have put on Immortality. (See the illustrative diagram on the three states, on page 341.) These states he sets forth under the figure of a temporary "tent," in contrast with an "abiding house"—which he later changed to the simile of "clothing," or covering. This transitory present life was wasting away under the incessant sufferings he had endured. It is a life in which he groans and is burdened. This body, however, was soon to be "dissolved," like a worn-out tent that is laid aside.

But Paul's mind leaps forward from the present, transitory existence to the eternal heavenly status of things to come. He sees a glorious change—the blessed hope of exchanging his frail earthly "tent" for a new and eternal "house," a "mansion which is of heaven"—by which he refers to his glorious resurrection body to come, in likeness to that of his Lord's. And he is satisfied.

2. SHRINKS FROM BEING UNCLOTHED IN DEATH

When he thinks of the time when his present "tent" must be taken down, or dissolved, he shrinks from the thought of being with out tent, or covering—for here he changes the figure to that of "clothing." What was before a "tent" is now "being clothed." And he distinctly states that he does not desire to be "unclothed," or "naked." He would much rather be "over draped" with the coming immortality than to be denuded of the mortal body. "Not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life" (2

Corinthians 5:4). The "unclothed" state is manifestly that of death (1 Corinthians 15:37)—the "bare [gumnon, "naked"] grain," planted in the ground, in gravedom, with a view to resurrection. And the "clothed upon" condition is obviously the resurrection or translation life, in which we shall have "put on" Immortality.

3. LONGS FOR ETERNAL STATE

In writing to the Corinthians, Paul does not linger over the "death," or "unclothed," state. He passes on without pause to the blessed condition of being "clothed upon." That is the important thing, the glorious prospect, when at the sound of the trumpet we will awake to "put on" incorruption and Immortality. That is the whole point and purpose and consummation of the gospel. And the pledge thereof is the gift of the Holy Spirit.

4. INTERMEDIATE STATE THE BASIC QUESTION

In verse 1 of 2 Corinthians 5, Paul had depicted death as the dissolving of our "earthly house." He is speaking not merely of the body but of our entire being. Death is the dissolution of our entire being. It is also to be emphasized that Paul is not speaking of the consequences of death to a special part of our being, but of the state of death in contrast with the future state of eternal life, for which he earnestly longs. And this future life is in contrast with the condition called, from its transitoriness, a "tabernacle," in contrast with the "house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (v. 1).

5. DEATH NOT A POINT OF TIME, BUT A PERIOD

The clue to this entire passage clearly lies in what is meant by, and involved in, that interim state of death which the apostle calls the dissolution of "our earthly house." Popular theology presupposes "death" to be a momentary act—the departure of the soul from the body, with instant entrance into the presence of Jesus. Such a view assumes the act of dying to be both the beginning and the end of death. But in inspired Scripture the act of dying is only the entrance into the state of death, which lasts from the moment one closes his eyes in the death-sleep to the moment he awakens in the resurrection. It is there fore not a point of time but a period—the entire period during which the person is enfolded in the embrace of gravedom. This is Paul's teaching in 1 Corinthians 15:54, 55.

The reign of death remains unbroken during this entire period of death. It is undeniably the period during which "our earthly house of this tabernacle" is dissolved. This cannot be overemphasized. We repeat: So far from contemplating merely the moment a person dies, Paul is speaking of the entire time one is dead. The act of dying, therefore, so far from being the termination of death, is only the entrance under the dominion of death. This, then, is established: At death our "earthly house of this tabernacle" is "dissolved," and continues in its state of dissolution until the Lord wakes us up from the death-sleep for the restoration of life and the bestowal of Immortality at His second advent.

6. INTERIM DEATH STATE vs. ETERNAL RESURRECTION STATE

With this point established we are freed from a number of perplexities in this passage. Paul is not here contrasting any state of the soul with that of the body. He is not contrasting the act of dying with that of the person in some other state or condition. The whole intermediate state is embraced in the idea of the "dissolution" of the "earthly house." No, Paul is here contrasting the temporary interim death state with the eternal resurrection state.

He is contrasting the present life, verging toward dissolution—and after a few years of dissolution and remaining in this state of dissolution until the resurrection—with the glorious, endless life which will begin when Christ raises His people, and which life will continue without end forever. This is the "building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (2 Corinthians 5:1).

On no theory could the intermediate death state be said to be "eternal in the heavens." The soul of the believer does not go to Heaven at death—an idea that was regarded as a heresy by the primitive church, as attested by Justin Martyr and Irenaeus. Justin Martyr, Dialogue With Tryf ho, chap. 80; Irenaeus, Heresies, chap. 31. Not until about A.D. 180 did the concept of an innately immortal soul make entrance, under such a term, through Athenagoras. (See Part IV for full portrayal with documentation.)

7. SIGNIFICANCE OF TERM "NOR MADE WITH HANDS."

The expression, "not made with hands" (acheiropoietos), is not a cursory or merely routine phrase. It is fraught with meaning, and is historic in intent. This is by no means Paul's first use of the term. He had already used it three or four years prior in his oration on Mars' Hill, at Athens, in which he declared: "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands" (Acts 17:24).

And again in his Epistle to the Hebrews (c. A.D. 53) Paul is even more explicit:

"For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us" (Hebrews 9:24).

However, the expression is more than Pauline. In his great apology, in answering the accusation of blasphemy, Stephen likewise used the expression in "the most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands" (Acts 7:48). It clearly has to do with God and heavenly things. Yet even that is not the origin. It stems back to Christ Himself.

At the very outset of His public ministry, when Christ had purged the Temple from its desecraters, and had driven out the money-changers and merchandisers in the only recorded show of force in His life on earth, the Jews immediately challenged His authority for such an unprecedented act, and demanded a "sign" of His right and power to meddle in Temple affairs. Then He answered cryptically, and said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (John 2:19). But they countered by asserting that the Herodian temple was forty-six years in building, and asked scornfully: "Wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spake of the temple of his body" (vs. 20, 21).

That was the real meaning. His resurrection would be the ultimate proof of His claims and the "sign" of His deity. But the significance of this utterance was, at the time, lost upon all —including the disciples. However, after Christ's resurrection from the dead, the disciples remembered it vividly—and then understood its meaning (v. 22). And after the Temple episode the Jews again demanded a "sign" from Christ (Matthew 12:38). But He upbraided them, and said: "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: for as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Matthew 12:39, 40. His meaning then began to unfold to those who would understand. Reference to the "third day" appears in Matthew 16:21; 17:23;
20:19; Mark 9:31; 10:34; Luke 9:22; 18:33; 24:7, 21, 46.

8. EXEMPLIFIED IN CHRIST'S NATURAL AND RESURRECTION BODY

This differentiation between "made with hands" and "made without hands" is further emphasized in the experience of Christ at His trial in the palace of the high priest. Then it was that the Pharisees' witnesses said:

"We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands [acheiropoietos]" (Mark 14:58).

That is highly significant. They spoke more wisely than they knew. Finally, at Calvary, when Christ hung in anguish on the cross—"they that passed by railed on him ["reviled"—Matthew 27:39], wagging their heads, and saying, Ah, thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself, and come down from the cross" (Mark 15:29, 30; see Matthew 27:40).

But He was fulfilling a predetermined plan. He died that we, too, might have resurrection bodies "not made with hands." He would, and did, appear in His glorified resurrection body on the third day, according to prediction. Christ's body was placed in the tomb as a "natural body." It came forth on the specified third day as a "spiritual body." And in similar fashion we, too, shall "bear the image of the heavenly" (1 Corinthians 15:49), the image of the "second man," the "Lord from heaven" (v. 47; cf. Romans 8:29). Our earthly bodies will then be "fashioned like unto his glorious body" (Phil. 3:21)—"made without hands." Or as John says, "We know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him" (1 John 3:2). That is what Paul meant. Or, as he phrased it to the Colossians: "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory" (Colossians 3:4).

That is the glorified body we are destined to receive, "made without hands/' formed by the creative power of God, in contrast with these earthly, corruptible, inglorious bodies, "made with hands," through human generation.

9. EARTHLY TABERNACLE TEMPORARY; HEAVENLY TEMPLE ETERNAL

In discussing what happens to the body, Paul illustrates it by this figure of the temporary wilderness tabernacle-tent of old, when God commanded Moses to build for Israel a "tent for the congregation," made after the pattern of the original temple, eternal in the heavens, shown to Moses in the mount (Exodus 25:40). This was so important that it is thrice referred to in the New Testament.

That was because there was a vital relation between the transient tabernacle in the wilderness and the resplendent temple of God in Heaven—the earthly being but a fragile, limited likeness of the heavenly. Paul applies the parallelism to the body, likening this present mortal body to the tabernacle-tent on earth, that is to give place to the glorified, eternal body "not made with hands." This earthly tabernacle of clay is to come to nought, be "dissolved" (2 Corinthians 5:1). But it is to be replaced by a glorious and immortalized body, in God's due time and provision.

For the vast majority of the saints there will be a lapse of time between the moment of death and the time when Christ, having returned with His retinue of holy angels, shall make our mortal bodies like unto His own glorious body, by His own omnipotent, creative power. The actual lapse of time is not equally long for all—the longest being for the patriarchs before the Flood, the shortest for those dying just before the Second Advent.

But when the believer lies down in death, Paradise is just one act away—at the resurrection at the Advent. Between death and the resurrection would seem a briefer time than for an angel to wing his way from earth to Heaven. And the change will seem to take but a moment—a twinkling of an eye. And some will not die. Their mortal bodies will be "changed" without experiencing death, through translation into glorified body form (1 Corinthians
15; 1 Thess. 4). This tremendous, final, supernatural act is what Paul calls being "clothed upon," after having been "unclothed" in the death state. This is the main point of the passage.

10. SIMULTANEOUS REUNION AND REWARD AT CHRIST'S RETURN

The whole passage treats on, and is written in, the spirit of the resurrection, with which it actually begins: "Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus" (2 Corinthians 4:14).

The comfort Paul offered the bereaved Christians at Thessalonica was not that their loved ones who had died in Christ would be immediately with Him in conscious joy. He does not offer happiness in a disembodied state. Rather, they would be caught up together with them to meet our Lord upon His return. That would be the moment of glad reunion (1 Thess. 4:13-18). Paul's eye was always upon Christ's future coming, as the day of (1) reward and (2) reunion. Thus he writes: "What is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?" (1 Thess. 2:19).

It will be conceded that if man had never sinned he would have reached the eternal state or condition without passing through the experience of death. Then the notion of an inner, immortal soul would never have come into being. That was the aftermath o£ the temptation and the Fall. It was, in fact, the second falsehood invented by the arch deceiver to sustain the first lie—"Ye shall not surely die" (Genesis 3:4). When man should fall in death, the original lie would be inconcealably apparent, unless he could be persuaded that there is some in visible medium or entity (soul or spirit) through which he continues to live. Hence, such a theory was imperative, and was introduced into and through paganism, and became widely believed.

E. Glossary of Key Words and Phrases by Verses

As an aid to clear understanding, here are the English equivalents of the key words and phrases of 2 Corinthians 5:1-9.

Verse Term Amplified Meaning

(1) "Earthly house"—this earthly body, in our present temporal condition "Tabernacle"—temporary dwelling, earthly body "Dissolved"—disintegrate, go back to earthly elements
"Building of God"—durable edifice, house from Heaven
"House . . . in the heavens"—glorified body provided by the Lord
"Not made with hands"—of heavenly origin

(2) "Groan"—sigh in distress, earnestly desiring redemption of body "Clothed upon"—to put on the "house" from Heaven "House . . . from heaven"—glorified resurrection body

(3) "Clothed"—mortal life in the flesh, here and now
"Naked"—unclad, in state of death, dissolution

(4) "Unclothed"—stripped, without either mortal or immortal body "Mortality"—corruptible, subject to decay and death

"Swallowed up of life"—invested with immortality

(5) "Earnest"—assurance of their full inheritance in the hereafter, token, sure pledge

(6) "At home in the body"—living in this present life, absent from Lord "Absent from the Lord"—not yet in His presence, not yet clothed upon

(8) "Absent from the body"—resting, asleep in Jesus, relieved of suffering
"Present with the Lord"—having arrived, because "raised" or "changed," united with Christ

F. Expositional Survey of Passage by Verses

1. VERSE 1 — EARTHLY HOUSE DISSOLVED; HEAVENLY HOUSE ETERNAL
Let us now traverse the passage verse by verse, in logical sequence, in the light of all factors, as diagramed or visualized by a chart. Paul speaks of our earthly "tent-house." And tent and body are similar in several respects —the materials of both are made of earthly elements, they are transient dwelling places, and may be taken down and moved at any time.

It will also be recalled that Christ tented, or tabernacled, for some thirty-three years among us (John 1:14), when He assumed a human body at His incarnation, before returning to Heaven. Peter similarly compares the human body to a tent, or tabernacle, that is put off at death (2 Peter 1:13, 14). The figure is therefore apt.

Again, our present life state is followed by the death state, or state of dissolution. And this in turn is to be succeeded, through resurrection or translation, by the eternal life state. Our glorified life begins when, and only when, Christ returns. Then we receive our "house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (2 Corinthians 5:1).

Paul casts his mind's eye across the gloomy stretch of death and dissolution and fixes it yearningly upon the eternal state, which begins when, and only when, the intermediate state ends. His faith overleaps the chasm of gravedom, anticipating the "unseen" but "eternal" state of blessedness for which he hoped (2 Corinthians 4:18).

"Clothed," "unclothed," and "clothed upon" are thus the key words. While living on earth we are "clothed" with our mortal body. At death we are "unclothed" while in gravedom, this earthly body being laid aside and "dissolved." That will be the lot of the vast majority of believers. Only those living when Christ returns will escape dissolution, for they will be translated. But we shall all become "clothed upon" when we exchange the mortal for the glorious immortal bodies.

This Life **The Life to Come**
2 Corinthians 5:2, 4 In this (body) Desiring to be clothed upon with
tabernacle we groan our house from Heaven
That mortality be swallowed up of life

Romans 8:22, 23 The whole creation Waiting for the redemption of our
Groans body

Paul's Three Consecutive States, or Conditions, of Man, Outlined

Two Houses—Temporary Earthly and Eternal Heavenly; With Intervening Death Between (2 Corinthians 5:1-9)

(1) "Clothed"	**(2) "Unclothed"**	**(3) "Clothed Upon"**
(Present State—Mortality)	(Death State)	(Future State—Immortality)
TRANSITORY (temporal)	INTERMEDIATE (gravedom)	ETERNAL (from Heaven)

Brief earthly tabernacle- tent (made with hands)	Tabernacle-tent dissolved	Eternal house from Heaven Not made with hands
Clothed	Unclothed (naked)	Clothed Upon
Groaning under burdens	(Released from suffering)	(Glorified spiritual body)
Mortality (Interim end of life)		Swallowed up of eternal life
Walking by faith	(Sleeping in Jesus)	Living by sight in God's presence
Having earnest of Spirit	(No perception of time)	Resurrected by power of Spirit
At home in body	Absent from the Lord	At home with the Lord
ABSENT FROM THE LORD	(Resting in the Lord)	PRESENT WITH THE LORD
		SECOND Resurrection ADVENT or translation

2. VERSE 2—GROANING FOR IMMORTALITY BEYOND RESURRECTION

Verse 2 presents Paul's great desire as he contemplates the glorious eternal state. He longs, not for death (to free him from the hatreds of men and the infirmities of the flesh), but for the resurrection state. He passes over, as it were, the entire intermediate state. There is nothing to cause him to pause there with desire. His longing gaze is fixed upon the state that begins when the intermediate state has vanished like a dream.

We "groan," or sigh in distress, because we earnestly desire our Lord's return, and for the "change" of our bodies of humiliation into the likeness of His glorious body. Observe, in passing, Paul's parallelism in 2 Corinthians 5:2 and 4, and Romans 8:22, 23.

Yes, the "house . . . from heaven" (2 Corinthians 5:2), the immortal body, the state of immortality, awaits the redeemed beyond the resurrection, or translation, day.

3. VERSE 3—CLOTHED AGAIN AFTER NAKED STATE OF DEATH

There is often confusion over the term "naked," in verse 3. But the nakedness Paul mentions is the dissolution state of the earthly house of verse 1, and in verse 4 it is denominated "unclothed." Paul longs for the heavenly home, for when thus "clothed upon" we shall be no longer in the "naked" state to which death leads all men. And it is only of the intermediate state that Paul says this—not of this life, and surely not of the glorified future life.

In the glorified state we shall assuredly have our "eternal house" and home. The grave (hades—bereft of light and joy and consciousness) is not our home. It is indeed a state of uninviting nakedness. But Paul looks beyond this nakedness of death to the land of life. He thus rules out any possibility of a state between death and the resurrection in which, as disembodied spirits, men go to be present with the Lord. That cannot be the intent of "naked," or "unclothed." The nature of the intervening state of death is that of sleep, without consciousness, and with no perception of time.

A thousand years will seem no longer than an instant. The dead in Christ are "fallen asleep" (1 Corinthians 15:18). If that sleep were unbroken by the call of the Life-giver, it would be tantamount to utter extinction—an eternal sleep. But all who sleep are destined to an inevitable awakening, either unto "life" or to "damnation." So beyond the state of death looms the glorious state of immortality—with eternal life, joy, and light.

4. VERSE 4—MORTALITY TO BE SWALLOWED UP BY IMMORTALITY

In verse 4 (2 Corinthians 5), Paul repeats the point that in "this tabernacle" we "groan, being burdened." The world, Satan, sin, and temptation had made his life a burden. Yet all this cannot produce a desire to be "unclothed"—in the unclothed

intermediate state that he disparages. Death is not the time of redemption, nor is the grave our home. It is only a temporary tarrying place until our Lord returns. Paul's burden is for the future "clothed upon" state of the heavenly house, eternal in duration. The grave signifies the triumph of death. But death, or mortality, is to be "swallowed up of life," a life that shall never end. And death itself is to be obliterated (Revelation 20:14).

This mortal must put on, or be invested with, immortality. This corruptible must become incorruptible by immortalizing transformation. Only then can it inherit the kingdom of God, with its endless life. Until and unless there is this tremendous creative "change," there can be no immortal life for any of the human family. But when that is accomplished, then "mortality" is swallowed up of immortality, and we will be "clothed upon" with our eternal house from Heaven. As noted, this is not at death but at the last trump, when the Lord Jesus appears in glory, and the dead are "raised," and the righteous living are "changed" in the twinkling of an eye. That is the great apostle's unequivocal declaration.

And Paul categorically states that men are not clothed with immortality individually and separately at death, but simultaneously and "together," at the resurrection-translation of the just (1 Corinthians 15:51-54; 1 Thess. 4:15-17). And it is to be observed, further, that in translation the mortal body of the living is "changed" without a prior "dissolution." This is definitely included in the phrases, "clothed upon," and "mortality swallowed up of life"— Paul's ardent hope. Paul's mind is fully made up. He does not want to be "unclothed," to die, to disintegrate. He would rather live on, and continue in the "clothed" state, with all its burdens and sufferings, than to die. But when the third possibility is considered, it at once takes first place in his heart.

Paul wishes above all things to be "clothed upon" with his promised "house . . . from heaven"—when the Lord would come and fashion anew the body of his humiliation. At the Second Advent, when Christ shall appear, we shall appear with Him in glory, being "clothed upon" with our heavenly house.

5. INDWELLING SPIRIT IS PLEDGE OF OUR RESURRECTION.

The Holy Spirit dwelling in our hearts is the "earnest" (down payment, assurance, pledge, token) that we shall finally receive the desire of our heart, and be "clothed upon" with immortality. The indwelling of the Spirit is the sure pledge that the Spirit that raised up Jesus will also raise us up (Romans 8:11). Compare this trio of texts:

PRESENT PLEDGE OF	FUTURE REDEMPTION HOLY SPIRIT OF BODY
2 Corinthians 5:5—"Hath given unto us	That mortality might be swallowed the earnest of the Spirit" up of life
Ephesians 1:13, 14—"Sealed with that	Until the redemption of the purchased holy Spirit" — "the earnest of possession our inheritance"
Romans 8:11—"The Spirit of him	He that raised up Jesus shall also that raised up Jesus"—dwelling quicken your mortal bodies

All taking place at the Second Advent and the resurrection-translation (1 Corinthians 15:51-55).

6. VERSE 6—AT HOME IN BODY; ABSENT FROM THE LORD

To be in our "earthly" tabernacle-house is to be "at home in the body." The chief characteristic of this temporary house is that it is mortal and may be dissolved. That is our present situation. To be "absent from the Lord" is to be living here on earth, or resting in the grave—not yet in His presence. To be "present" with Him is effected by being either "raised" or "changed"—these being the sole gateways to the glory land.

7. VERSE 8—INTERVAL OF DEATH SEPARATES FROM PRESENCE WITH LORD

There is nothing in verse 8 or in the context to justify the contention that being "present with the Lord" occurs immediately upon being "absent from the body." The passage does not indicate when these experiences take place. We do not, immediately upon dying, take possession. From Paul's other writings, and Scripture in general, it is established that the interval of the death state is the period that separates the two. We await the coming of the Lord.

Paul does not here deny his previous witness to the Corinthians—that this "corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality" (1 Corinthians 15:53)—and that at the Second Advent, which is still future. Paul is uniformly consistent and very positive that "if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain. . . . Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished" (1 Corinthians 15:16,
18). His only hope, like the worthies of Hebrews 11, is in the resurrection of the dead. Thus he declares that there is no advantage in the martyrs fighting the beasts at Ephesus, "if the dead rise not" (1 Corinthians 15:32). Obviously, they were not already in Heaven.

"Absent from the body" (2 Corinthians 5:8) consequently denotes, not happiness in a disembodied state, but a period of relief from a suffering and dying body—of resting and sleeping in Jesus. "The things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal" (2 Corinthians 4:18). Thus the present world is contrasted with the future. The present earth and its inhabitants are to continue but for a limited time; the world to come, with the redeemed children of God, is eternal. The portrayal is that of a tent versus a permanent home at the end of life's journey.

8. RECAPITULATION: THREE STATES FOR MAN

So this problem passage, written under inspiration, presents three states, or conditions, each in sharp contrast with the other two. These are: (1) This present mortal life; (2) the intermediate state of death; and (3) the future immortal life of the redeemed.

The first is spoken of as "we that are in this [bodily] tabernacle do groan" (v. 4). The second is described by, "If our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved," we are "naked," "unclothed" (vs. 1, 4). The third is alternately described as "a building of God" "eternal in the heavens," "clothed upon with our house which is from heaven," "mortality . . . swallowed up of life," and "present with the Lord" (vs. 1, 2, 4, 8).

The second of these conditions—the state of death—is not one to be desired. But the third is so glorious that Paul groans for it. It is therefore clear that being "present with the Lord" cannot possibly mean his condition while this earthly house is "dissolved" in death. This second state Paul disparages, but the third he praises. These are definitely not descriptions of one and the same period and condition. Paul expected to be present with the Lord after the intermediate state and the resurrection—or through translation, without passing through death. Thus there is harmony and consistency in this impressive passage of the great theologian-apostle. The conditionalist position reconciles all factors.

Paul's Other Problem Passages

A. (2 Corinthians 12:2-4): Paul's Vision—"In or Out of the Body"

In 2 Corinthians 12:1-4, Paul speaks of being caught up into the third heaven, where he heard unspeakable words. It is frequently alleged that this passage or episode furnishes an example of a human soul, or spirit, actually existing or traveling in a conscious, perceptive condition outside of the body, seeing transcendent sights and hearing unspeakable words, thus gathering heavenly information, and then returning to resume its abode in the temporarily deserted body. But Paul plainly declares that this was a "vision," or "revelation" (v. 1). Surely the vision of a prophet does not prove consciousness in death.

1. EXACT SPECIFICATIONS OF PASSAGE

Here is the passage in full:

"It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago,1 (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) how that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful [ouk exon, "possible," or "proper"] for a man to utter."

Fourteen yean prior was about the time Barnabas brought Paul to Antioch (Acts 11:25, 26), possibly from Tarsus.

It will be observed that there is not a word in the passage about the soul of Paul leaving the body to visit Paradise. Paul was still

very much alive. So the text proves nothing pro or con as to the soul's separate existence after death, for he had not died. Paul says he knew a "man" in Christ, not a spirit, how "he" was "caught up." But Paul himself was obviously the "man" that he knew. It was a personal experience in his own life. However, it was a man, not the soul of a man.

Paradise is here equated with the third heaven, where the tree of life is (Revelation 2:7; 22:2). So Paul was carried away, in vision, to Paradise, just as John was later, while imprisoned on the Isle of Patmos. Paul plainly denominates it a "vision."

2. VISIONS PRODUCED BY AGENCY OF HOLY SPIRIT

Visions are produced through the agency of the Holy Spirit, while men are living. Thus of Ezekiel the Scripture record is: "And the spirit lifted me up between the earth and the heaven, and brought me in the visions of God to Jerusalem, to the door of the inner gate that looketh toward the north" (Ezekiel 8:3).

"Afterwards the spirit took me up, and brought me in a vision by the Spirit of God into Chaldea, to them of the captivity" (chap. 11:24).

The question unavoidably arises, Could not the Spirit have similarly conveyed Paul, as well as Ezekiel? Then there was John, just mentioned, on the Isle of Patmos, who wrote: "So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast" (Revelation 17:3). These experiences took place while these men were alive in the earthly service of God, and were seen through the ecstasy of vision, with the mind under the supernatural control of the Holy Spirit. They therefore prove nothing about the condition of the dead, and have nothing to do with death. There is therefore not a scintilla of proof from this passage for consciousness of the soul between death and the resurrection. It is to be remembered that Paul frequently recorded personal communications from God through visions (Acts 9:4-6; 16:9; 18:9; 22:17, 18; 23:11; 27:23, 24; Galatians 2:2). This was no exception.

As to the expression, "in the body," or "out," there was complete absence of sensibility to earthly surroundings. The third, or highest, Heaven, or Paradise (2 Corinthians 12:4), where God is, has frequently been seen in vision by various prophets. And, as generally recognized, the first heaven is the atmosphere; the second that of the starry heavens; the third the abode of God and heavenly beings. But let us look more closely into the matter of the visions of the prophets.

3. "VISIONS" INSEPARABLE PART OF PROPHETIC ROLE

Through Moses, the Lord said of the prophet, "I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision" (Numbers 12:6). And Job said that "in a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, . . . then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction" (Job 33:15, 16). The prophets of old had visions as an inseparable part of the prophetic role —Abraham, Moses, Joshua, Samuel, Iddo, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Amos, Obadiah, Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zechariah. The same is true in the New Testament, such as with Stephen, Paul, Peter, and John. Going back, take the prophet Daniel for example:

Daniel 2:19—"Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision."

7:2, 3—"I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, . . . four great beasts."

8:2—"I saw in a vision, and I was by the river of Ulai."

10:7—"I Daniel alone saw the vision: for the men that were with me saw not the vision." And in the New Testament we read:

Luke 1:22—"They perceived that he [Zacharias] had seen a vision in the temple."

Acts 7:55—Stephen "saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God."

9:10—"To him [Ananias] said the Lord in a vision."

10:11—Peter "saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending."

16:9—"A vision appeared to Paul in the night."

18:9—"Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision."

But note particularly John the revelator. Practically the entire Apocalypse was presented to John in vision. Just observe: In Revelation 9:17 John said, "I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them." And in a series of unparalleled views John saw Christ amid the golden candlesticks, the twenty-four elders, the seven lamps, the sea of glass, the four living creatures, the sealed book, the seven seals, the sealing, the seven trumpets, the temple, the two witnesses, the beasts, the woman, the dragon, the flying angels, Babylon's fall, the seven vials, the Second Advent, the harvest, the two resurrections, the binding of Satan and his loosing, the lake of fire, the destruction of death and hades, the New Jerusalem, and the new heaven and the new earth, with the river and tree of life in the Paradise of God—constituting a matchless over-all panorama of the plan of salvation and its triumph. That is the scope of the "visions" of God to the seer of Patmos.

4. PAUL'S VISION OF HEAVEN MATCHED BY ISAIAH, DANIEL, JOHN

Specifically, Isaiah "saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple" (Isaiah 6:1). Daniel also saw the throne of the Most High in Heaven and the coming judgment scenes:

"I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened" (Daniel 7:9, 10).

"I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him" (vs. 13, 14).

John the revelator likewise specifically saw the "throne" of God in Heaven, with the tree of life overspreading the river of life in the New Jerusalem (Revelation 22:1, 2). The question, then, is inescapable and unanswerable: If Isaiah, Daniel, and John all saw the throne of God in Heaven, and heard words spoken there in vision, why could not Paul, likewise in vision, see and hear, without involving the extraneous claim of his soul's actually leaving his body? Isaiah, Daniel, and John were living men, albeit prophets, and continued to live and work on after their visions. Why then was not Paul the prophet functioning in the same way, according to the specified method and pattern of visions?

5. ABSURDITY OF "SOUL'S SEPARATION" THEORY

This Pauline passage expressly concerns "visions" and "revelations" received from the Lord. This particular "vision" was evidently the most remarkable Paul ever experienced. He was given a view of "paradise," in the "third heaven." It was so real, so alive and vivid, that he could not tell whether he had been transported bodily to Paradise or whether it was in reality merely a vision, presented before his mind by the Holy Spirit. Two possibilities only are brought to view by the text—either actual transportation to Paradise or the viewing of Heaven in vision. But notice the involvements either way: (1) If Paul was taken to Paradise alive, then he was not dead, and the episode would have no bearing on the question of consciousness in death. (2) And if it were, instead, a "vision," common to prophets throughout Old Testament times, neither would that prove consciousness in death, for Paul was alive at the time. In either case, it does not support the Immortal-Soulist theory.

6. PREPOSTEROUS CONCLUSIONS INVOLVED

The question at issue is reduced to one point: What is the meaning of the expression, "out of the body"? As stated, modern Immortal-Soulists assert that it is the immortal soul, or spirit, going out from the body—soul travel—and its existence for a time in a separate, conscious, perceptive condition, independent of, and apart from, the body. But note what such an allegation involves.

According to the view of such proponents, the separation of the soul from the body takes place at death—the customary definition of death. In fact, in their view there can be no separation of soul from body, without death resulting. But would anyone contend that Paul did not know whether he had died, and had had a resurrection? Yet that would have had to happen if the words "out of the body" meant a trans-aerial flight of Paul's soul to Paradise and back. It would mean that his soul went off to the "third heaven" while his body lay in Tarsus (or wherever it was)—a corpse upon the earth. And when Paul's "soul" returned, he must have undergone a restoration from the dead. Such a presumption is, of course, untenable. Therefore, "out of the body" obviously does not mean entrance of the separated body into a temporary state of death.

The expression simply means that Paul had a "vision"—a condition in which to his mind, controlled by the Spirit during the time of the vision, were presented scenes so realistic that he seemed to be there in person, viewing the actual spectacle it self and hearing the graphic words spoken. It is to be remembered that vivid, realistic, natural dreams crudely illustrate how this could be. The case of John the Beloved in Revelation 17 is a striking example. He seemed to be present, viewing events wholly future, and which could not have been contemporaneous—for they were restricted to the "last days" of time. Meantime, John was all the while alive bodily on Patmos. Similarly with Paul.

But such are the lengths to which some go, and the absurdities in which they involve themselves, in seeking to sustain a preconceived Platonic theory brought over from Paganism into Jewry, and then into Christianity. The passage affords no proof that there is an immortal soul in man, that can live on in a conscious, sensate state, while the mortal body becomes lifeless or insensate, or crumbles back to dust.

B. (Philippians 1:20-24): "To Depart, and to Be With Christ"

1. BASIC PRINCIPLES OF SOUND INTERPRETATION

To understand with certainty the revealed message of God on any given topic or passage of Scripture, one needs to have before him all the pertinent statements and principles of the Word bearing on the subject. And the true conclusion will always be one that fits every important statement and underlying principle without forcing the language, or the thought—just as a key will be recognized as the right one when it penetrates and turns a given lock without forcing any of its various wards. So with God's Word. When a key is found that harmoniously explains every expression of a given passage, without forcing the language or twisting the meaning, one may know that he has found the true interpretative key.

The tragedy is that some, instead of following Scripture, seek to compel Scripture to follow them, putting the figurative for the literal or the literal for the figurative—or construing an isolated text in opposition to the fundamental teaching of Scripture in general, and to Paul in particular in the instance we are about to examine.

Surely every truth lover will agree that it is far more important to maintain the harmony of the Sacred Writings than to defend a dogma at all costs, even to involving the Scriptures in fatal contradiction. We must always interpret the uncertain by the certain, and not vice versa. And always in accordance with the Word. "To the law

and to the testimony," if they are made to speak out of accord with this Word, it is because there is no true light in the exposition (Isaiah 8:20).

2. PASSAGE REGARDED AS BULWARK OF IMMORTAL-SOULISM

Philippians 1:20-24 is, by many Immortal-Soulists, considered to be the strongest text in the Bible in favor of natural immortality—primarily the expression, "To depart, and to be with Christ" (v. 23). Such proponents contend that Paul expected, immediately upon death, to go at once into the presence of Christ—on the premise that the soul lives on endlessly, and separately, in a conscious state after the death of the physical organism. Thus the real Paul would "depart." Paul does not, however, indicate that it is his "soul" or "spirit" that would depart. The "I" of his desire and the "my" of his departure indicate the whole person. He here makes no separation of body and soul. It is to be conceded that if this expression stood alone, it might give that impression. But it does not stand alone. It must be understood in the light of Paul's teaching elsewhere that death is a "sleep," and that reunion with Christ takes place at, and only at, the Second Advent and its attendant resurrection, or translation—and not before.

Paul's desire "to depart, and to be with Christ" must receive its interpretation from Paul's own fuller terms of specification elsewhere recorded. When rightly understood the testimony of Scripture will be harmonious, and never self-contradictory. But the Immortal-Soulist claim is that a person, by his immortal spirit, goes immediately at death to be with the Lord. That, however, is contrary to Paul's own explicit explanation in 1 Thessalonians 4, which stipulates an entirely different manner of entry into Christ's presence, by an altogether different and wholly contrary means.

3. THE PROBLEM PASSAGE IN ITS ENTIRETY

Here is the text of this famous "depart, and be with Christ" passage in Philippians:

"According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always,

so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot [gnorizo, "declare"] not. For I am in a strait [sunechomai, "being pressed"] betwixt [the] too [living and dying], having a desire to depart [analusai, "return"], and to be with Christ; which is far better: nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you" (Phil. 1:20-24).

But first, let us get the historical setting and circumstances for this unique epistle and this particular passage.

4. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND FOR PHILIPPIAN EPISTLE

The background for Paul's famous Philippian problem passage is this: Some ten years had passed since Paul had preached the gospel at Philippi. During his third missionary journey Paul was beaten by a mob at Jerusalem and brought before the Sanhedrin (Acts 22:30). Paul there skillfully divided the opposing Pharisees and Sadducees by referring to the doctrine of the resurrection. He was then sent, under duress, to Felix the governor. But his trial was deferred for two years, being resumed under Festus in A.D. 59. Paul then appealed to Caesar, and Festus ordered him sent to Rome for trial.

On the voyage Paul suffered shipwreck, and wintered at Malta (Acts 27). Upon reaching Rome, he was kept in custody, during which time he wrote the "captivity epistles" (Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians). This was toward the end of his imprisonment, as his trial drew near, probably in A.D. 62. As the time approached when his case would be heard before the high tribunal, more rigid conditions of confinement were imposed. Nevertheless, a tone of joy and rejoicing runs like a golden thread throughout the Philippian epistle, just as grace does in Ephesians. Paul was, however, acquitted. The epistles to Timothy, with their remarkable immortality statement, were written later. Such is the historical setting. Now let us analyze the passage.

5. THE TWIN GATEWAYS TO GLORY

Paul determined that under all circumstances Christ should be magnified in his "body," whether by his life or by his death. Life and death are here tied in, by Paul, with his body, not primarily his soul, or spirit. There is not a word in the entire recital about a separate soul or discarnate spirit. If Paul meant that his real, inner self was a conscious immortal soul, which would leave the body at death to go to be with the Lord, then, we ask, why did he not once say so some place in the one hundred chapters of his various epistles—comprising more than a third of the entire New Testament. But let us pause a moment for two texts.

Paul expressly declared, "I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you" (Acts 20:20). He did keep back, however, everything concerning any disembodied immortal soul or spirit. Such a Platonic concept he evidently did not consider "profitable" for the church. Again, he said, "I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:27). But he never uttered a single syllable about an immortal soul or a deathless spirit in man.

Consequently, such a notion cannot be considered as any part of the "counsel of God." And Paul must be permitted to be in harmony with himself. This pre-eminent apostle would never stoop to being double in his language or deceitful in his witness. He placed his entire hope on resurrection or translation as the sole, conjoined gateway to glory.

6. PAUL'S "SO" PRECLUDES EVERY OTHER MEANS

To the Thessalonians he wrote of this in its inseparable relation to the Second Advent:

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain [at the Advent] shall be caught up together with them [the resurrected saints] in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thess. 4:16, 17).

The "so" (houtos), which is emphatic in the original, emphasizes the fact that not by our dying but by our Lord's descending from Heaven, at His second advent, shall both the living saints and the sleeping saints enter the Lord's presence together in the grand home going. "So" means "in this way," "in this manner," "by this means." That is how we shall ever "be with the Lord." Therefore, when Paul in 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17 describes the sole way and precise method by which we are to go to be with the Lord, he thereby precludes every other means. There is no other way save by (1) resurrection, or (2) translation. If there is, then Paul's language is misleading and untrue.

If we go to be with the Lord by means of our immortal spirit when we die, then we do not go by means of, and at, His visible coming and the miraculous resurrection of the dead and the translation change of the living. In such an event Paul is made to falsify and deceive. There is no way to avoid such a conclusion. It must be clear that the descent of the Lord from Heaven, the mighty shout, the

voice of the archangel, the sound of the trump of God—and the resurrection of the dead, or the change of the living—do not take place at death.

C. Paul's Baffling Dilemma—"Life" or "Death"

1. CHRIST "MAGNIFIED" BY EITHER LIFE OR DEATH

Paul was "in a strait" (sunechomai, "being pressed") "betwixt" the two alternatives of "to live," or "to die." "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain," he wrote. In the context Paul had just said that Christ would be "magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death." So, if Paul lived, Christ would be "magnified" (Phil. 1:20), and the church profited (v. 24). If he died, Christ would still be "magnified" (v. 20), and it would still be "gain" to Christ.

Paul had been beaten eight times and stoned once. He had been in perils of waters, robbers, the Jews, false Christians, the heathen, perils in the city, the wilderness, and on the sea, and had been times innumerable in weariness, pain, sickness, hunger, thirst, cold, and nakedness (2 Corinthians 11:23-27). He had a desire to end this mortal pilgrimage. He could well say that to die is "gain," for he would then be at rest. But the cause of God and his sympathetic heart drew him to remain here in labor if acquitted.

On the other hand, his own weariness and sufferings were an urge for rest in the sleep of death. He was in a quandary. These strong pulls were just about balanced, though he did think it more needful for him to remain to give the benefit of his counsel and labors to the church. Thus "gain" to the cause of Christ would come by martyrdom, and there would be gain to himself as a martyr through the resurrection, for in his affliction any form of death would be a release. Thus he reasoned.

2. INVOLVEMENTS AND ADVANTAGES OF DEATH

To Paul death was a state of unconsciousness for the sleeper, as he so often and clearly taught, with no conscious lapse of time between death and the resurrection. He knew that, after he had lost consciousness in death, the next moment of awareness would be the hearing of the voice of the returning Christ, call ing him to arise and be with his Lord forever. The first face he would look upon would be that of his beloved Life-giver. Thus he could say, "For me ... to die is gain" (Phil. 1:21). But how could death be "gain" if it reduced him to a state of unconsciousness? Just as it would be to Job, who entreated, "O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave" (Job 14:13).

The intervening period between death and the return of the Lord would, for the sleeper, be annihilated, and the glories of the eternal world, through the resurrection, would open instantly, as it were, upon his view. The waiting period, however long, is an utter blank—seemingly but a moment of time, like the twinkling of an eye. The very moment he would regain consciousness, upon the call of the Life-giver, he would be in the presence of Christ. So he need not actually wait a single conscious moment, for, we repeat, those who are sound asleep have no awareness of the passing of time.

3. CHRIST WILL CALL FORTH FROM DUSTY BEDS

The Lord Jesus Christ Himself went down into death. But it was not the prospect of death that filled Him with joy—except as He was fulfilling His Father's will and providing salvation for man. His joy was over the fact that God would not leave His soul in she'ol (the grave) nor suffer His "Holy One to see corruption" (Psalm 16:9, 10).

Christ "passed into the heavens" (Hebrews 4:14), and now ministers for us in the presence of the Father (Romans 7:23-27). But that was through the designated resurrection and ascension provision. On the contrary, the worthies of old passed into the earth, the grave, and are dependent upon the living Son of God to come forth from the heavens to call them from their graves (John 5:28, 29). Until then they have no share in "anything that is done under the sun" (Eccl. 9:6), for "the dead know not any thing" (v. 5), and there is no "knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest" (v. 10). That was the Scripture dictum of Paul's day—the Old Testament.

4. ONLY TWO DESIGNATED WAYS TO GLORY

The intermediate state has been arbitrarily injected into this passage, whereas the text is totally silent on the condition of the dead. That is not the point. Surely, if all the prophets and apostles, and saints and martyrs were already in Heaven, death would indeed be more desirable—if that were the pathway to Heaven. It is commonly assumed by the Immortal-Soulist that one goes into the presence of Christ immediately upon death. But the text states nothing of the kind. And a whole battery of other texts

affirm the contrary fact that we gain immortality and go into His presence only at the Second Advent and the concur rent resurrection.

Entrance into Christ's presence is therefore a future event, to be experienced simultaneously by all saints alike— except for those privileged few who have a prior special resurrection (like Moses), or special translation (like Elijah), both of whom appeared with Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration. But in either case, it is still only by resurrection or translation. Clearly, then, it is by resurrection or translation, there being no other way of going to be "with Christ" (John 5:21-29; 1 Thess. 4:17). Paul does not deny or contradict his own testimony.

5. PAUL'S MULTIPLE TESTIMONY AS TO "WHEN."
The notion that during the state of death believers are "with Christ" in a state of life in Heaven, involves an inescapable denial of one of the cardinal doctrines of Scripture—the sleep of all the dead, in gravedom. Further,
if the deceased saints were already with Christ in glory, and were able to see Him "as he is," they would already have been changed into the "likeness" of Christ (1 John 3:2). But here is the timing for that change according to Scripture: "But we know that, when he [Christ] shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (v. 2).

It would follow that, on the premise of the Immortal-Soulist, the saints would already possess the fullest transformation that they could ever look for and obtain, and thus long anticipate Christ's actual personal advent. But such a view brings a denial of an antecedent resurrection uniformly taught by Paul. Either that, or it implies that the resurrection occurs at death, and is already past (2 Tim. 2:18), which Paul likewise condemned as a heresy.

Paul repeatedly went on record as to when the Christian goes to be with his Lord. Here is the Pauline testimony. It is an eight-strand cable of evidence—so strong that it cannot be broken:

Romans 8:23—At the redemption of the body.
1 Corinthians 5:5—In the day of the Lord Jesus.
1 Corinthians 15:51-55—At the last trump.
2 Corinthians 5:2—When we are clothed upon with our house from Heaven. Colossians 3:4—When Christ our life shall appear.
1 Thess. 4:16, 17—When the Lord descends from Heaven with a shout and the dead are raised, and the living translated.

2 Thess. 2:1—At the coming of the Lord.
2 Tim. 4:7, 8—At "that day," by which term he designated the day of Christ's appearing.

6. RESURRECTION, NOT DEATH, USHERS INTO PRESENCE OF CHRIST
We are told there will be "fulness of joy" in Christ's presence (Psalm 16:11). But those who are fallen asleep are not
yet enjoying that presence. If they were, the resurrection would be unnecessary. And as stated, Paul makes all life beyond the grave depend on resurrection. Thus the saints of old were "tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection" (Hebrews 11:35). Again, "if there be no resurrection of the dead," "then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished" (1 Corinthians 15:13, 18). They are consequently not in Heaven. And once more, the sleeping saints of the ages do not go to Jesus before the saints living at the time of the Advent (1 Thess. 4:14-17).

Therefore it is not at death but at the resurrection of the dead that the saints will be ushered into the presence of Christ. And for this Christ must first return from Heaven. It is only when He comes again that He will receive us unto Himself (John 14:3). Again, "when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory" (Colossians 3:4). Paul told the Romans that he, with them, awaited "the redemption of our body" (Romans
8:23). This is the glorious "change" about which Paul wrote to the Philippians, when he said: "A Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory" (Phil. 3:20, 21, A.R.V.). That occurs only at the Second Advent (1 Corinthians 15:51-54).

D. Paul's Great Third Choice—Translation

1. TRANSLATION FAR BETTER THAN LIVING OR DYING
We should now note carefully Paul's comparison when he speaks of "departing" to be with Christ as "far better."
It was not that to die was better than to live, and that he therefore desired to die. The desire of his heart was to be
"with Christ," or "with the Lord," which is vastly different.

To the two alternatives (to "live" or to "die"), upon which he could not make up his mind, Paul now adds a third choice, which was his deep desire—and that was to "depart" and "to be with Christ," which is "very far better" (Phil. 1:23, R.V., A.R.V.). That would be to be caught up with Christ, through translation, to meet the Lord in the air when Christ comes to be "glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe ... in that day" (2 Thess. 1:10). This sound solution has been set forth by various reputable scholars back through the years, with no theory on the nature of men to sustain.

This was "very far [pollo mallon, "much more"; "far, far"—Weymouth] better"—a double comparative. "Better" than what? Clearly, than either of the two he had just men tioned (living or dying). Therefore it cannot mean death, but some event or means by which alone Paul could be with Christ—by being "caught up" alive (1 Thess.
4:16, 17) through translation, either at the Advent, or a special translation, as with Enoch and Elijah. Paul had been in a strait between the first two, having difficulty in choosing between them. But the third alternative ended all indecision.

Paul's "desire to depart" was mentioned in the midst of his discussion of the alternatives of life amid many perils, and dying and being at rest. He at first did not know which he should choose. But there appears this third consideration, which was "far, far better"—to "depart," or go to be with Christ through translation, and thus be personally with Christ without dying. That was his heart's deepest desire.

2. DESIRED TO BE LOOSED, SET FREE FROM EARTH

The deep feelings, yes, the fervent desire, of the great apostle in his lonely confinement, as he contemplated this blessed hope of being with Christ, was to "depart" (analud)* as of a ship from port, or a prisoner from
confinement. Paul's wish was not to be come a discarnate ghost-spirit, as some have interpreted, but to realize the Christian's hope. It was one of the two designated means of being with Christ—there being no other way. There is thus no conflict or inconsistency here.

Analuo—to loosen, as of a ship from her moorings, so as to depart and return. Thus with the classical Greek. And this is the invariable meaning in the Septuagint, and in the Apocrypha as well. On the latter see Tobit 2:9; Judith 13:l; 1 Esdras 3:3; Wisdom 2:l; etc. Also Josephus, Antiquities vi, 4, 1.

Paul wished to be loosed, or set free, from earth. He earnestly longed not to live longer on the earth, nor to die and be buried in the earth, but to be caught up from the earth, to meet the Lord in the air, and to be "for ever with the Lord."

He did not, however, live to see the fulfillment of his heart's desire, as he suffered a martyr's death. But he "died in faith," awaiting the "crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give" him "at that day: and not to" him "only, but unto all them also that love his appearing" (2 Tim. 4:8).

So, if Paul "departed" to be with Christ, then he would be translated, and thus be personally with Christ without dying. This third consideration was assuredly "very far better." And why did Paul have a desire to "depart"? - Because he knew the suffering, toil, and trial here would then be over. He would be released from his almost- unbearable burdens.

3. RELATION OF PROBLEM PASSAGES TO WHOLE OF SCRIPTURE

In summation: To a whole army, as it were, of explicit witnesses, has been opposed a rear-guard action of a few seemingly dubious passages, which are by some invested with a meaning wholly foreign to the general tenor not
only of the specific book of which they are a part but, more than that, of the New Testament as a whole—and even beyond that, of the Old Testament testimony as well. Yet some would, by such debatable passages, seek not only to counterbalance but even to outweigh hundreds of other explicit texts.

It is as if to contend that, on the scales, a pound outweighs a ton. The inconclusiveness of the contention is self- evident. But in reality, these texts do not contradict the rest. Under scrutiny they fail to give support to such a thesis, as our scrutiny of Philippians 1:20-24 attests.

So, to understand debatable passages we must first begin with passages whose meanings are incontrovertibly clear. Then, once the key is discovered, it will be possible to unlock other wise baffling passages. If the key is found that unlocks every passage to which it is applied—without any forcing—making all harmonious, the conclusion becomes irresistible that we have found the true and divine key. The principle of Conditionalism is that key.

Unique Witness of Epistles of Peter and John

A. Peter's Portrayal of Cataclysmic End Events

The apostle Peter—man of action, ever ardent and impulsive—was one of the earliest of the original "twelve" to be called as an apostle. He followed Christ through all His travels and teachings and witnessed His miracles. He was the first to confess Christ to be the Son of God. He sought to walk on the water. He became one of the chosen three to witness the transfiguration, and heard Christ's great sermon on the end of the world, or age (in Matthew 24).

Peter thrice denied Christ, but repented, was soundly con verted, and became a strengthener of his brethren (Luke 22:32). He was the chosen preacher at Pentecost, and wrought miracles, even restoring the dead. His vision at Joppa opened the door to the Gentiles (Acts 10:11-34; 15:14). And finally, according to Christ's prediction, he died a martyr's death, crucified head down.

Peter heard Christ's constant teachings on eternal life. And when the disciples were turning away from Christ— during the crisis with the Jews over Christ's claim to be the "Life" and the "Resurrection," and the "Living Bread from Heaven"—and Christ asked the disciples if they, too, would go away, it was Peter who answered, "To whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life" (John 6:68). And into his two short epistles, written to the Christian Jews of the dispersion, much vital truth on the destiny of man is packed.

1. IMPOSING OUTLINE IN SWEEPING STROKES

With bold, sweeping strokes Peter sketches in the outline of the "last things," leading up to "an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you" (1 Peter 1:4). He deals particularly with the "last time" (v. 5), and the final phase of the salvation "ready to be revealed." This includes the climactic second "appearing [apocalupsei, "unveiling," "revelation," "manifestation"] of Jesus Christ" (v. 7), or "revelation" (v. 13), prophesied by the prophets, with the "glory that should follow" (v. 11).

Peter goes back to the first advent, when our Lord made all this possible, as He paid our redemption price ("the precious blood of Christ"), who was slain and raised up (vs. 18-21). Then he touches on our imperative new birth (v. 23). And he stresses Christ as the "living stone," and "chief cornerstone," but becoming the "rock of offence" to many (chap. 2:4-8). Peter presents Him as our great sinless Substitute (vs. 22-24), the "just [dying] for the unjust, . . . being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (chap. 3:18) at the "resurrection," but "who is [now] gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him" (vs. 21, 22).

[Ephesians 1:21; 3:10; 6:12; Colossians 2:10, 15; Titus 3:1.]

Peter then presents Christ, our present mediator, as erelong "ready to judge the quick and the dead" (chap. 4:5), and declares that "the end of all things is at hand [eggiken, "approaching," "drawing near"]" (v. 7). He tells of the joy of the saints "when his [Christ's] glory shall be revealed" (v. 13). But he warns of "judgment," beginning at the "house of God" (v. 17), and of the fateful end "of them that obey not the gospel of God," our "faithful Creator" (vs. 17, 19). And he again stresses the day when "the chief Shepherd shall appear," and we "receive a crown of glory" (chap. 5:4).

2. CHARACTERISTICS OF CENTURIES THAT PRECEDE

In his second epistle, after mentioning the precious promises of God that enable us to escape the world's "corruption" (2 Peter 1:4), Peter again leads up to "the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (v. 11). He then refers to the Spirit-inspired prophecies that light up the darksome pathway of the centuries, until the "day star" shall appear (vs. 19-21). He touches on the "damnable heresies" (chap. 2:1) that mark and mar the centuries, and pervert the faith of some. And he touches on the "angels that sinned," confined in the darkness of Tartarus, "reserved unto judgment" (v. 4)—and how the "unjust" among men are likewise reserved "unto the day of judgment to be punished" (v. 9). They will then "receive the reward of unrighteousness" (v. 13).

Next Peter comes to the last-day scoffers (empaiktai, "mockers"), openly doubting the promise of Christ's coming (chap. 3:3), contending for the now familiar "uniformity" of all things from the beginning, and willfully

denying the evidence of the cataclysm of the Noachian deluge "whereby the-world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished" (v. 6).

3. COMING DELUGE OF FIRE IN "DAY OF THE LORD."
Then comes Peter's tremendous eschatological prophecy, blending in with Christ's great last-day prophecy of Matthew 24, and anticipating John's fourfold description (Revelation 20:10, 14, 15; 21:8) of the coming lake of fire. Here is Peter's portrayal. He had just referred to the prediluvian world.

"The world [kosmos, abode of mankind] that then was ["of old" —v. 5], being overflowed with water, perished: but the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition [apoleias, "utter and final ruin"] of ungodly men." "The Lord ... is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:6, 7, 9).

Thus Peter comes to the tremendous "day of the Lord" or "day of God" with his vivid portrayal of coming destruction; when, in the overwhelming fierceness of the fires of Gehenna, the earth actually melts:

"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up [katakaesetai, "to ashes"]. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto [speudontas, "hastening"] the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?2 Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Peter 3:10-13).

This corresponds to such frequent Old Testament predictions of earth's final destruction as:

"They [the earth and the heavens, v. 25] shall perish . . . shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shall thou change them" (Psalm 102:26).

"The earth is utterly broken down . . . clean dissolved . . . moved exceedingly. . . . The earth shall reel to and fro ... be removed like a cottage . . . shall fall, and not rise again" Isaiah 24:19, 20).

"Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner" (Isaiah 51:6).

"For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch" (Malachi 4:1).

So Old Testament and New Testament predictions are in harmony on the coming destruction. Peter thus presents the histories and destinies of the three worlds:

(1) "The world that then was" (2 Peter 3:5, 6), that is, before the Flood.
(2) "The heavens and the earth, which are now" (v. 7) needs no explanation.
(3) The "new heavens and a new earth" to come (v. 13), that will continue on through all eternity as the home of the redeemed.

Thus the awful judgment of an earlier age through death and destruction by water is to be surpassed by the more awful day of eventual judgment to come of death and destruction by fire in the "day of the Lord," and the destruction of the ungodly. Then Peter closes with a warning against so wresting (streblousin, "straining," "turning," "twisting") the Scriptures as to result in the destruction of the distorter (v. 16). Thus, in a lesser way, Peter traverses the same general eschatological pathway later given in greater fullness and detail by John, the seer of Patmos, as well as by Paul. There is complete agreement.

So Peter declares that fires now hidden in the heart of the earth will burst forth in the final flames of the judgment day and do their appointed work. Then sin and sinners will pass away forever.

B. Problem Text (1 Peter 3:19)—Preaching to "Spirits in Prison"

1. DOUBTFUL TEXTS INVOKED TO SUPPORT DOUBTFUL POSITIONS

Certain texts are quoted from Peter to sustain the Innate-Immortality postulate. Actually, they are thus placed in outright conflict with the general tenor of the teaching of Scripture. And concepts that are at variance with the prevailing witness of Scripture are supported only by an unwarranted construction of a few texts that are admittedly difficult of interpretation, or are susceptible of two renderings. One of these is 1 Peter 3:19—the "spirits in prison." This is the full statement in context:

"For Christ also hath once suffered [apethanen, "died"] for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: by which [the Spirit] also he went and preached [ekeruxen, "to herald," "announce," "proclaim publicly"] unto the spirits in prison; which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls [persons] were saved by water" (1 Peter 3:18-20).

Some Immortal-Soulists hold that the souls of the righteous dead were liberated by our Lord when He descended into Hades at His death, and then ascended with Him to Heaven; and that all who have died since that time, if purified from all sin, go directly to Heaven. They usually hold, however, that these souls will come back for their bodies at the time of the general resurrection. And part of this theory is the contention that Christ's "spirit" preached the gospel, during the interval between His death and resurrection, to the "spirits" of antediluvian times, confined to this Hadean prison. Peter speaks frankly of "some things" in Paul's writings that are "hard to be understood" (2 Peter 3:16), which some "wrest . . . unto their own destruction." Paul might have responded in kind concerning Peter's writings. And this passage is one of them. Let us consider it in some detail. But we must beware lest one text be allowed, by reading Platonic Immortal-Soulism into it, to check the whole central current of consistent Scripture teaching.

2. PROFOUND IMPLICATIONS OF PAPAL POSITION

From the foregoing verses (1 Peter 3:18-20), the contention is made that the soul, or spirit, is immortal, and continues to live on in uninterrupted consciousness after death. And, during the interval between Christ's death and resurrection, it is held that Christ's conscious spirit, His real being (while His body lay in the grave), descended into hades, the abode of the allegedly living dead, to preach to the disembodied conscious "spirits" of the antediluvians imprisoned there, with a view to giving them a second chance, and thus to escape from torment. That is the basic contention. The question must pertinently be asked at this point, even on such a premise, Why did Christ go down to "hell" (hades, "the grave") to preach to the damned spirits there, some twenty-four hundred years after the Flood, since their probation passed at death, according to uniform Bible testimony?

The implications of such a position are profound and revolutionary. Some, we are confident, have never thought them through. If the dead are consciously alive—and can be preached to, and can be benefited by such preaching, and can repent and be saved out of torment—then the Roman Catholic doctrine of Purgatory, or its equivalent, is validated, and the modern contention of probation after death is substantiated. Those are the momentous implications. Such a proposition is obviously of sufficient importance as to merit careful examination. First, note some basic facts.

3. CHRIST WENT NOWHERE IN DEATH; PREACHED TO NO ONE

As to Christ's condition in death, Christ's body was put into the grave, or sepulcher (hades, or gravedom—Psalm 16:10; Acts 2:31), while He commended His "spirit" to God (Luke 23:46; cf. Psalm 31:5). According to the apostle Peter, who had talked with Jesus after the resurrection (John 21:7-22), and who was the preacher at Pentecost (Acts 2:14ff.), Jesus' soul (Greek psuche equivalent here to Hebrew nephesh, Jesus Himself) was in the grave from death until the resurrection. Quoting David (Psalm 16:10), Peter said of Christ:

"Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell [hades, "the grave"], neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." "He would raise up Christ to sit on his throne" (Acts 2:27, 30).

Note that "my soul" in the first clause is paralleled by "thine Holy One" in the second clause. It was Jesus Himself that slept in the tomb. Christ went nowhere and performed no action between His death and His "quickening," or resurrection, for He was asleep in death.

4. CHRIST WAS MADE ALIVE; DID NOT CONTINUE ALIVE DURING INTERIM

The word "quicken" (zoopoieo), here emphasized in 1 Peter 3:18, is the same used in Romans 8:11: "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken [zoopoiesef] your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." According to this, God brought again our Lord from the dead by the Holy Spirit—the same Spirit by whom His followers are to be raised at the last day. The "quickening" here means "to impart life, to make

alive." He was put to death in the flesh and made alive by the Spirit. To contend that He continued alive would be to nullify, or invalidate, the declaration that He was made alive, or brought back to life, and for a time had been dead—from the cross until His resurrection "from the dead" (Romans 1:4).

He says of Himself, in Revelation 1:18, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore." Incontestably Christ was put to death. He was quickened by the Spirit. He went and preached to spirits in prison. But His preaching was not between His death and resurrection. Thus the contention collapses that this occurred between the time when Christ laid down His life for our sins "and was raised again for our justification" (Romans 4:25). Any other affirmation on the part of man is pure assumption, in conflict with Holy Scripture.

5. WHEN AND TO WHOM DID CHRIST PREACH?
If, as stated in the text (1 Peter 3:18), Christ was "quickened [raised to life] by the Spirit," it is equally clear that
it was by the Spirit that He did the preaching mentioned here. The text reads "quickened by the Spirit: by which also he went and preached." Since the text says that the preaching was done "when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah," it must be Noah's generation that heard the preaching of Christ through the Spirit.

In the account of the condition of the earth before the Flood, the Bible records, "The Lord said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years" (Genesis
6:3). Since according to Peter, Noah was a "preacher of righteousness" (2 Peter 2:5), it follows that the Spirit preached through Noah just as He has preached to every generation to whom God sent His human messengers. And it is Christ through the Spirit who is said to have done this. Here is no conflict, for Christ is the mediator of all communication to earth from Heaven. But how can these antediluvians be called "spirits"? We will let Dr. Adam Clarke, well-known commentator, answer this question. After remarking that the phrase, "he went and preached," should be understood to mean, "by the ministry of Noah," he goes on to explain:

"The word pneumasi, spirits, is supposed to render this view of the subject improbable, because this must mean disembodied spirits; but this certainly does not follow, for the spirits of just men made perfect, Hebrews xii, 23, certainly means righteous men, and men still in the Church militant; and the Father of spirits, Hebrews xii, 9, means men still in the body; and the God of the spirits of all flesh, Numbers 16, 22, and 17, 16, means men not in a disembodied state." Adam Clarke, Commentary, on 1 Peter 3:19. (Italics his.)

C. Christ Truly "Died" According to Prediction, Fulfilment, Attestation

It is essential to establish the fact that Christ died on Calvary—truly died. And no inner or real self, or being, as a separate, continuing entity, lived on during the period between His giving up of the "ghost," or "expiring," and His resurrection on the "third day." Observe the conclusive Biblical evidence. Note the italicized words.

1. EXPLICIT OT PROPHECIES OF FORTHCOMING DEATH
Here are six explicit Old Testament predictions:

Isaiah 53:7—"He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter." Isaiah 53:8—"He was cut off out of the land of the living." Isaiah 53:10—"Thou shall make his soul an offering for sin." Isaiah 53:12—"He hath poured out his soul unto death."
Daniel 9:26—"Shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself."
Zechariah 13:7—"Smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered."

2. JESUS' OWN UNEQUIVOCAL PREDICTIONS OF HIS DEATH
Now follow about a score of Christ's own personal New Testament predictions of His approaching death and
His designated period in the grave. Again follow the italicized words. (Those in small capitals indicate the time element.)

Matthew 12:40—"So shall the Son of man be THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS in the heart of the earth." Matthew 16:21—"Be killed, and be raised again the THIRD DAY."
Matthew 17:23—"They shall kill him, and the THIRD DAY he shall be raised again." Matthew 20:28—"The Son of man came ... to give his life a ransom for many."
Matthew 21:39—"And they caught him . . . and slew him." Matthew 26:2—"The Son of man is betrayed to be crucified." Matthew 26:28—"My blood . . . which is shed for many."
Matthew 26:38—"My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death."

Mark 8:31—"Rejected . . . and be killed, and after THREE DAYS rise again."
Mark 9:31—"Shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise the THIRD DAY." Mark 10:34—"Shall kill him: and the THIRD DAY he shall rise again."
Luke 9:22--"And be slain, and be raised the THIRD DAY." Luke 22:15—"Before I suffer."
Luke 24:46—"It behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the THIRD DAY." John 10:11—"The good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep."
John 10:15—"I lay down my life for the sheep."
John 10:17—"I lay down my life, that I might take it again." John 11:51—"Prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation." John 12:7—"Against the day of my burying."
John 12:32—"Lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."
John 12:32, 33—"Lifted up from the earth" "signifying what death he should die." John 15:13—"That a man lay down his life for his friends."

3. INSPIRATION'S RECORD OF CHRIST'S DEATH
And here follows the unimpeachable evidence of competent eyewitnesses as to His death:
Matthew 27:50—"Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost [apheken to pneuma, "yielded up the spirit"]."
Matthew 27:57, 58—"Joseph . . . went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered."
Mark 15:37—"And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost [exepneusen, "expired"]."
Mark 15:39—"And when the centurion, which stood over against him, saw that he so cried out ["with a loud voice"], and gave up the ghost [exepneusen, "to breathe out, expire, die"], he said, Truly this man was the Son of God."
Mark 15:43—"Joseph . . . craved the body of Jesus."
Mark 15:44, 45—"Pilate . . . calling unto him the centurion, he asked him whether he had been any while dead. And when he knew it of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph."
Luke 23:46—"And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit
[pneuma]: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost [exepneusen, "expired, died"]" * (cf. Psalm 31:5).

Dr. Adam Clarke, commenting on the frequently used Biblical term, "gave up the ghost," says that it "signifies to pant for breath, to expire, to cease from breathing, or to breathe one's last."—Commentary, on Genesis 25:8.

Luke 23:52, 53—"This man [Joseph] went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. And he took it down . . . and laid it in a sepulchre."
John 19:30—"Jesus . . . said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost." John 19:33—"But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was
dead already."

According to the unvarying testimony of Scripture, Christ, as the voluntary substitute in death for sinners, was without any thought or activity while in the embrace of death, awaiting the summons of the life-giving Spirit— the Third Person of the Godhead—at His resurrection on the "third day."

4. APOSTOLIC WITNESS TO CHRIST'S DEATH
And here is the galaxy of supporting apostolic witnesses to Christ's death:
Acts 3:18—"That Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled."
Acts 17:3—"Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead." Acts 20:28—"He hath purchased [the church of God] with his own blood." Acts 26:23—"That Christ should suffer, and . . . should rise from the dead." Romans 5:6—"Christ died for the ungodly."
Romans 5:8—"While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

Romans 5:10—"Reconciled ... by the death of his Son, . . . saved by his life." Romans 6:5—"Planted together in the likeness of his death."
Romans 6:10—"In that he died, he died unto sin once."
Romans 14:9—"To this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived [lived again]."
1 Corinthians 1:23—"We preach Christ crucified."
1 Corinthians 2:2—"Jesus Christ, and him crucified."
1 Corinthians 5:7—"Christ our passover is sacrificed for us."

1 Corinthians 15:3—"Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures."
1 Corinthians 15:4—"That he was buried, and that he rose again the THIRD DAY according to the scriptures."
2 Corinthians 5:14—"One died for all."
2 Corinthians 5:15—"He died for all."
Galatians 3:13—"Being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." Ephesians 1:7—"We have redemption through his blood."
Ephesians 2:16—"Reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross."
Ephesians 5:2—"Hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God." Phil. 2:8—"Became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Colossians 1:20—"Having made peace through the blood of his cross."
Colossians 1:22—"In the body of his flesh through death."
1 Thess. 4:14—"Jesus died and rose again."
1 Thess. 5:9, 10—"Jesus Christ, who died for us."
Hebrews 2:9—"Jesus . . . made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death." Hebrews 2:14—"That through death he might destroy him that had the power of death." Hebrews 7:27—"This he did once, when he offered up himself."
Hebrews 9:12—"By his own blood he ... obtained eternal redemption for us." Hebrews 9:26—"He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." Hebrews 9:28—"Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many."
Hebrews 10:10—"Sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." Hebrews 10:12—"Offered one sacrifice for sins for ever."
Hebrews 12:2—"Endured the cross, despising the shame."
1 Peter 2:24—"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree."
1 Peter 3:18—"Hath once suffered for sins . . . being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit."
1 Peter 4:1—"Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh."

To deny that Christ died is consequently to repudiate the whole irrefutable testimony of Holy Writ.

5. CHRIST'S POST-ASCENSION TESTIMONY FROM HEAVEN
And here is the infallible witness of the risen, ascended Christ Himself that He was dead, but from the resurrection onward lives forevermore:

Revelation 1:18—"I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore." Revelation 2:8—"These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive." Revelation 5:9—"Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood."
Revelation 5:12—"Worthy is the Lamb that was slain."
Revelation 7:14—"These are they which . . . have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Revelation 13:8—"The book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

6. CHRIST'S DEATH ESTABLISHED, CERTIFIED, ATTESTED
In the light of such an array of divine predictions of Old Testament prophets, iterated and reiterated New Testament forecasts by Jesus Himself, together with the inspired eyewitness record of His actual death and burial, and of multiple concurring apostolic witness, and finally of attestation from the ascended Christ Himself in Heaven, we rest the case. Jesus actually and truly died! And He rose there from on the "third day."

7. ALL IS LOST IF CHRIST DID NOT ACTUALLY DIE
Now comes the tremendous alternative: If Christ did not Himself truly, actually die, as called for in the terms of atoning substitution—but only His body, while His spirit lived on as a continuing discarnate entity and busily visited the confined "spirits in prison" during the interim between the alleged moment of His "death" and the "resurrection" (within the "three day" asserted and reasserted)—then the declared transaction of the cross is a travesty; and the veracity of God and of Christ is impugned.

The credibility of their characters is destroyed. And the sole basis of our hope of repentance, reconciliation, and atonement is canceled and nullified, and all the benefits springing from an atoning death are alike swept away. Then we are indeed left destitute of any sound hope and trustworthy expectation of redemption—past, present, and future.

Then the promises of God would be invalidated, the inspired assurances rendered null and void, and the justice of God impugned. And most sobering of all, Satan's claim, "Ye shall not surely die" (Genesis 3:4), would be vindicated and sustained. And God's solemn declaration, "Thou shall surely die" (chap. 2:17), would stand discredited and disproved before the entire universe—His veracity shattered. That is the gravity and the essence of the issue. But let us examine these dread possibilities in greater depth and detail.

8. MULTIPLE BENEFITS ANNULLED IF CHRIST DID NOT DIE
Look at the imposing array of promised benefits, here listed, all contingent upon Christ's death—but all canceled and lost if He did not truly die, but actually lived on. The terse point of the text is here listed, with the key word or phrase italicized. Observe:

Matthew 20:28—Ransom not paid.
Matthew 26:28—Remission of sins not effected. John 1:29—Sins of world not taken away. John 3:16—Everlasting life voided.
John 12:31—"Prince of this world" not cast out.
Romans 3:25—Propitiation for our sins not accomplished. Romans 5:9—Justification through blood not received. Romans 5:10—Reconciliation not brought about.
Ephesians 1:7—Redemption and forgiveness nullified. Colossians 1:20—Peace through blood abolished.
Colossians 1:22—Holiness and blamelessness thwarted.
1 Thess. 1:10—Deliverance from wrath to come unaccomplished. Hebrews 2:14—Destruction of devil's power of death aborted.
Hebrews 2:15—Deliverance from bondage breaks down. Hebrews 9:26—Putting away sin unaccomplished.
Hebrews 9:28—Substitutionary bearing of sin collapses. Hebrews 10:14—Perfection of those sanctified voided.
1 Peter 3:18—The bringing of us to God thwarted.
1 John 1:7—Cleansing from all sin canceled.
1 John 2:2—Propitiation for our sins voided. Revelation 1:5—Washing from our sins abandoned.
Revelation 7:14—Washing of robes in Lamb's blood not accomplished.

That is the tremendous, sobering sweep of salvation that would be nullified, aborted, canceled—IF Christ did not die a complete, vicarious, atoning, all-sufficient, once-for-all death on Calvary's cross. That is the gravity of the contention that Christ did not die, but lived on during the fateful "three days." All redemption hinges on His death, as well as His resurrection, as His part of the transaction. But He did die, and was raised forevermore. Our redemption is assured by the immutable fact of Christ's actually accomplished death, followed by His triumphant resurrection. Hear it:

"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement" (Romans 5:8-11).

D. Problem Text (2 Peter 2:4)—Fallen Angels Detained in "Tartarus"

"For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell [tartaroo], and delivered them into chains [seirais, "cord," "rope," "chain"] of darkness [zophou, "nether darkness," "murkiness"], to be reserved unto judgment; and spared not the old [antediluvian] world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly" (2 Peter 2:4, 5). Tartaroo is the verb form of the noun tarlaros. "Tartarussed" would be a good English translation of this verb. This compares with the verb "jailed" for "cast into jail."

Had it not been that tartaroo unfortunately has been rendered by the translators, "cast down to hell," there would be no occasion to allude to this text as having any bearing upon the doom of wicked men. The background is simply this: The designation Tartarus (in Gr. tartaros, the noun form of this verb) belongs to Greco-Roman mythology, and occurs only here in Scripture. Although it is a Greek word, it does not appear at all in the Septuagint.

Virgil, however, and Horace, Lucian, Lucretius, Statius, and other pagan Greek poets use it to designate what they understood to be the dark abyss of the infernal regions. Homer describes it as a subterranean region, or prison, into which were cast the Titans, or giants, who rebelled against Zeus. Pluto was supposed to be the reigning deity of those regions, and was called "Father Tartarus."

1. PLACE OF DETENTION FOR FALLEN ANGELS
Tartarus, as here used by Peter, represents the place of temporary confinement of the demons, or wicked angels, until such time as they should be judged and then destroyed. It is to be particularly noted that Tartarus in no way relates to the place where the wicked dead (men) are at present reserved, which is hades, or gravedom—she'ol in the Hebrew. Nor is it to be confused with Gehenna, where the resurrected wicked will be destroyed in the future, in the lake of fire.

These fallen angels were, as a result of their sin and rebel lion, cast down from the highest heights of glory to the deepest abyss of darkness—from "ministering spirits" to the ignominious state of restricted prisoners awaiting judgment.

2. NO PUNISHMENT BEFORE DECISIONS OF JUDGMENT

It is to be noted, however, that neither wicked men nor fallen angels receive their punishment until after determinations of the judgment. So Tartarus is here used as a place of detention, not of torment. The modern notion that Tartarus is an apartment of Hades, a sort of underground dungeon of torture, is based solely on heathen fables, without a scintilla of scriptural support. Any attempt to make a pagan out of Peter is based wholly on Greek mythology.

It is regrettable that she'ol, hades, and gehenna were alike translated "hell," and tartaroo as "cast into hell," when they are by no means synonymous. Such a procedure has only perpetuated and increased the confusion of ideas on the question of future punishment. We repeat: She'ol and hades stand for gravedom, wherein the dead sleep until the last trump, while gehenna is the place of final punishment, after judgment. We must not borrow our theology from the heathen world.

To assert that these angels, and human sinners as well, are now in a place of burning torment is to charge God with the gross injustice of punishing before judgment. (See 1 Corinthians 6:2, 3; Revelation 20:10-14; Daniel 7:22, 26.) Tartarus, then, is primarily a place of detention—not of torment—for the temporary confinement of evil angels, who are reserved unto judgment and ultimate destruction. It has nought to do with men. "The Lord knoweth how ... to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished" (2 Peter 2:9).

E. John's Epistles: Life in and Through Christ Is Central Thought

As might be expected, the Epistles of John, like his Gospel, are infused with the same sublime theme of life. John begins and ends his first epistle with the dominant thought of eternal life in Christ—Christ as the fountain, source, and personification of life. The expression "eternal life" appears six times in this one short epistle.

1. LIFE MANIFESTED, PROMISED, POSSESSED IN CHRIST

Note this illuminating and progressive series:

(1) "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life [logon tes zoes, "God Incarnate"]; (for the life was manifested ["brought to light"], and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;)" ... (1 John 1:1, 2).

(2) "This is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life" (chap. 2:25).

(3) "We know that we have passed from death unto life [zoeri], because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life [zoen aionion] abiding in him" (1 John 3:14). That is it—manifested, promised, possessed.

2. POSSESSION OF ETERNAL LIFE CONDITIONED ON INDWELLING CHRIST

The Christian believer, then, has "eternal life" now, as a gift of God—but vested in Christ, for "this life is in his Son" (1 John 5:11; cf. 3:2). Everything turns on this relation ship. "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (chap. 5:12). The possession of everlasting life, then, is wholly conditioned upon Christ's abiding in the heart by faith. He who believes in, and experiences, this indwelling has everlasting life, vested in Christ, and has "passed from death unto life" (1 John 3:14; also John 5:24, 25; 6:54; 8:51). Note the inspired phrasing:

"And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son" (1 John 5:11).

"He that hath the Son hath life [the life]; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life [the life]" (v. 12). "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life" (v. 13).

But this is a dual, or reciprocal, relationship:

"We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life" (v. 20).

Stronger, more explicit phrasing could scarcely be framed, nor higher testimony cited. The only way to turn away its force is to deny that life—eternal life in Christ—does not really mean life, through giving it a metaphysical twist. But if men attempt to change the intent of such positive testimony to suit their preconceived concepts, then their controversy must be with God, the Author and Inspirer of these lucid statements. Life, eternal life in Christ, is the dominant note and burden.

Revelation

Inspiration's Supreme Portrayal of Human Destiny

Of all the disciples, John the Beloved caught the vision of Christ's inner message and reflected the genius and goal of His mission on earth more clearly and fully than all others. His Gospel record of the utterances and emphases of Christ constitutes our supreme source book on the eternal life that He came to bestow. And his epistles are replete with their application. Contrary to popular conception, John actually wrote of life as frequently and as fully as of love.

But the Apocalypse, penned by John the revelator, constitutes the climax, the ultimate, in divine revelation. In it, all books of the canon "meet and end." It was John who was chosen of God to convey the last New Testament message of God to men, with its supreme entreaty to repentance and life, and its final admonition and warning against rejection and death—necessary to complete the record of the Book of God, and to round out and close the inspired revelation of truth. Any deviation from or perversion of this perfect norm, or any addition to or subtraction from the terms and specifications of this inspired depiction, is therefore fraught with gravest peril. Its closing words of warning are:

John used the terms "life" (zoe) "give life" (zoopoieo), and "live" (zoa) a total of 56 times, and used the terms for love (agape, agapad, and phileo) only 57. So even by count there was as great and constant an emphasis upon life as upon love in the Gospel of John.

"If any man shall add unto these things ["the words of the prophecy of this book"], God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book" (Revelation 22:18, 19).

A. Tremendous Scope and Grand Finale of Book of Revelation

The majestic, towering figure of the book of Revelation is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. He fills the Apocalypse from the opening verse to its closing benediction. And in the motif and movement of the book all the events portrayed sweep inexorably onward toward the great consummation—the triumph of God and righteousness, and the immortalization of the righteous at the Second Advent and resurrection, together with the establishment of the everlasting kingdom of Christ. But along with it is placed the grim portrayal of the total destruction of sin and sinners and the complete eradication of the originator and of the fearful fruitage of sin and death—and which will eventuate in a clean universe forever.

Man has titled this inspired portrayal the "Revelation of St. John the Divine." But the Spirit-inspired title is instead, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ" (Revelation 1:1), which it most assuredly is. It is the unveiling, revealing, and presentation of Jesus (the Saviour) Christ (the Messiah-Priest), and now soon to appear pre-eminently in all His power and glory as King of kings and Lord of lords, together with the inauguration of His everlasting kingdom.

1. SWEEPS IN PAST, PRESENT, BUT PRIMARILY FUTURE

The Apocalypse is a prophetic message. It declares that it deals with three major classes, or divisions, of "things": (1) "The things which thou [John] hast seen"—the vision of Jesus Christ, His eternal pre-existence, incarnate life, atoning death and triumphant resurrection-life forevermore, and His possession of the "keys of hell [hades, "the grave"] and of death"—(Revelation 1:10-20); (2) "the things which are"—those then existing or now taking place—and (3) "the things which shall be here

after"—up to and through the close of the present world order. That is its tremendous scope and declared emphasis.

2. TRIUMPH OF "SEED" AND CRUSHING OF SERPENT

These all-embracing developments are presented in a series of significant sevens—seven churches, seven seals, seven trumpets, seven prophetic symbols, seven vials, seven dooms, and seven "new" things forevermore. Basically, the Revelation covers the time of the Christian Era (with retrospective glimpses) from John's day to and through the great consummation, and the epochal entrance upon the aeons of eternity.

It brings the initial prophecy of the triumph of the "seed" (Genesis 3:15) and the paralleling crushing of the serpent to its predestined close. Genesis (the book of beginnings) and Revelation (the unveiling of the endings of the disclosures of the Written Word) are thus tied together in Christ, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last (Revelation 1:8, 17).

The Revelation is clearly the complement and glorious completion of Genesis. Either book without the other would be wholly incomplete and actually incomprehensible. So the Creation and the Fall of Genesis 1 to 3 find their complete counterpart in the re-creation and restoration of Revelation 20 to 22. Truly, without the opening chapters of Genesis the Revelation would be an insoluble riddle. And likewise, without these closing chapters the conflicts of the chronicles of history would be but a heartbreaking record of the failure of man, the triumph of Satan and sin and death, and the doom of the human race.

But history does not so end. It closes with the glorious triumph of truth and righteousness, and of those who have ranged themselves on the side of God. It is God's message of hope and assurance. It completes the eschatological portrayal of the "last things." There is no more beyond.

In the Old Testament, Christ the King and His kingdom are set forth in promise, symbol, and prophecy. In the Gospels the Messiah-King is presented and proclaimed to men, and rejected. But in the Revelation the King is enthroned amid the acclamations of the redeemed and His everlasting kingdom set up forever. Thus promise and prophecy are completely fulfilled. Types and symbols all give way to glorious antitypical realities that are now established forevermore. The vague eternity of the Old Testament becomes the absolute reality of the New.

3. "DAY OF THE LORD" IS MASTER KEY TO APOCALYPSE

The term "day of the Lord" (Isaiah 2:12; Ezekiel 13:5; 30:3) will be seen to be the key that unlocks the vast meaning and remark able scope of the Apocalypse, which inspired expression includes "day of vengeance," "day of wrath," and multiple paralleling terms (for example, Isaiah 61:2; 63:4). In 1 Thessalonians 5, the apostle Paul shortens the full term "day of the Lord" (v. 2) to the terse "that day" (v. 4). It is the prophesied day of reckoning, of judgment, of redemption, of retribution, of visitation, of rewards and punishments, of the Advent and the resurrection, and the finishing of the mystery of God and of godliness (1 Tim. 3:16; 1 Corinthians 2:7; 15:51).

The Revelation sets forth the consummation of all the affairs of time. It depicts the successful suppression of the great rebellion, and the vindication of the wisdom, justice, and omnipotence of God. It portrays the end of time and ushers in the beginning of eternity. It sets forth the end of all ages and dispensations.

Careful scholars claim that in the Revelation there are no fewer than 285 quotations, references, and allusions to the Old Testament, thus showing the inseparable intertwining of the Old Testament and the New. Consequently the book of Revelation is the consummation of all divine revelation.

4. COVERS TRANSITION FROM TIME TO ETERNITY

While the Apocalypse covers the Christian Era in five great repeating prophetic outlines, each presenting a different angle and aspect, so as adequately to compass the whole, its chief emphasis is on the climactic last things. While it points out the way marks and issues along the highway of the ages, it deals primarily with the great approaching consummation of all things. Each prophecy, like a descriptive timetable of the journey, leads up to and through the "last days," or "time of the end," to the Second Advent, the actual "end" and its attendant events—including the resurrection and immortalization of the righteous at our Lord's return.

But the Apocalypse goes far beyond the cataclysmic end of the present age at the Second Advent. It introduces the millennial thousand years, which is, in reality, the remarkable transition period between the world that now is and the world to come. No other inspired penman portrays it in such fullness or sequence. That was left for John. Here is portrayed the approaching period of the confining of Satan in a vast abysmal world prison house, as it is described.

This leads up to the third coming of Christ, at the millennium's close, to raise the wicked dead— the "rest of the dead," of Revelation 20:5. Then, after the final, futile, desperate stand of the wicked, the just sentence of God's judgment is pronounced upon them, and is executed by the raining down upon the incorrigibles the predicted Gehenna of fire, to destroy them."

This compasses the end of Satan and his evil angels, who participated in the great rebellion in Heaven (Revelation 12:7-9), and ever since have been the relentless tempters of men on earth and the instigators of war, sin,

sickness, sorrow, suffering, and death, as well as the persistent purveyors of error and deception. These all have their part in the Gehenna of fire "prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matthew 25:41).

Fully covered in L. E. Froom, The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers, volume 4.

But this is not to be accomplished until Satan makes his final effort to rally the multitudes of the resurrected wicked of the ages in a final but futile attempt to overwhelm the saints and wrest the kingdom of God from them, and to establish him self instead, as malign dictator. But it all ends in the ultimate and utter overthrow of Satan, the evil angels, and incorrigibly wicked men forevermore. Ultimately they will all be burned up, destroyed, brought to nought, become ashes. The fires of destruction will do their fateful work.

5. COMPLETE VINDICATION OF GOD AND RIGHTEOUSNESS.
And after the fires have done their cleansing work, God will create new heavens and a new earth, wherein the immortalized saints will dwell forevermore in Paradise restored. That is the transcendent promise of the Apocalypse. And that, in a nutshell, is the divine plan of salvation, the divine plan of the ages. That is the consummation of God's great outline of time and eternity.

Man has long had his day of rejection of God and righteous ness. Now the great day of the Lord, as it is constantly termed, brings the end of all rebellion and the establishment of righteousness forevermore. It is marked by the triumph of God and the vindication of His justice, wisdom, grace, and love—and the bestowal of eternal life and Immortality upon man for evermore. It is God's day. That is the essence of the book of Revelation that we will now examine.

B. "Day of the Lord"—God's Great Day of Reckoning With Man

As intimated, the key that unlocks the understanding of the book of Revelation is to be found back in Isaiah:

"For the day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low" (Isaiah 2:12).

This may properly be referred to as the inception, be cause it is the first of twenty Old Testament occurrences of this epochal expression, "day of the Lord." In fourteen instances * it is simply yom Yahweh. In four (Isaiah 2:12; Ezekiel 30:3; Zechariah 14:1, 7) it appears with the Lamed prefix "for" or "to," that is, a day known to Jehovah. In all other places it is combined with. such momentous words as "wrath" and "vengeance," the in escapable accompaniments of the day.

In the New Testament the same significant term occurs four times (1 Thess. 5:2; 2 Thess. 2:2; 2 Peter 3:10, 12). The "day of the Lord" is the "day" when sinful man will be judged and abased, and Jehovah exalted. This is now "man's day," when man exalts himself and at tempts to crowd God out of the control of the very world He has created. The Lord's "day," or "day of the Lord," will bring the great reversal—when man shall be "brought low," and the just and righteous sovereignty of God established forever-more.

In order to grasp the far-reaching implications and significance of this tremendous time of reversal—of rectification of all inequities and of justification of God and His punishment of sin and sin's proponents, both demonic and human—we must follow the development of this tremendous motif through out the Book of God. This involves the consecutive tracing of the pertinent passages across the pages of Holy Writ.

The fourteen occurrences are here recorded for reference: Isaiah 13:6, 9; Ezekiel 13:5: Joel 1:15; 2:1, 11; 3:14; Amos 5:18, 20; Obadiah 15; Zeph. 1:7, 14 (2); Malachi 4:5.

C. Old Testament Texts and Terms Portraying "Day of the Lord"

Without injecting diverting comment we first present the remaining texts of the striking Old Testament witness in the sheer words of

Scripture, that they may speak cumulatively for themselves, with key words or phrases emphasized —the term in capitals and small capitals and the description in italics.

Isaiah 10:3—"What will ye do in the DAY OF VISITATION, and in the desolation which shall come from far?" Isaiah 13:6—"Howl ye; for the DAY OF THE LORD is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty."

Isaiah 13:9-13—"Behold, the DAY OF THE LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine. And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible. ... I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the Lord of hosts, and in the DAY OF HIS FIERCE ANGER."

Joel 1:15—"Alas for THE DAY! for the DAY OF THE LORD is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come."

Joel 2:1—"Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the DAY OF THE LORD COMES."

Joel 2:11—"For the DAY OF THE LORD is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?"

Joel 2:31—"The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the GREAT AND TERRIBLE DAY OF THE LORD come."

Amos 5:18—"Woe unto you that desire the DAY OF THE LORD! To what end is it for you? The DAY OF THE LORD is darkness, and not light" (also v. 20).

Zeph. 1:7—"Hold thy peace at the presence of the Lord God: for the DAY OF THE LORD is at hand: for the Lord hath prepared a sacrifice, he hath bid his guests."

Zeph. 1:14, 15—"The GREAT DAY OF THE LORD is near, it is near, and hastens greatly. . . . That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess."

Zechariah 14:1-7—"Behold, the DAY OF THE LORD cometh. . . . Then shall the Lord go forth. . . . And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives. . . . And the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee. And it shall come to pass in THAT DAY, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark: but it shall be one day which shall be known to the Lord."

Malachi 3:2—"Who may abide the DAY OF HIS COMING? and who shall stand when he appears?"

Malachi 4:5—"Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the GREAT AND DREADFUL DAY of the Lord."

SUMMARIZING:
The "DAY OF THE LORD" will be a day of retribution, of humbling, of punishment, of destruction, of desolation, and of terror, with celestial phenomena as precursors twice mentioned; a day of the shaking of the heavens, of the removal of the earth, of darkness and wasteness, of the coming of God, of heart searching, of separation of the righteous from the wicked, and of the reward of the righteous. And it will be preceded by the coming of symbolic "Elijah the prophet." Such is the multiple Old Testament description. It is a tremendous panorama of the day of God's reckoning with defiant man. Its intent cannot be escaped.

D. NT Portrayal of Day of the Lord Jesus Christ

Next follow through, in the same way, the amazing wit ness of the New Testament testimony, likewise italicizing the key descriptive phrases:

Matthew 7:22—"Many will say to me in THAT DAY [when the saints shall "enter into the kingdom of heaven"], Lord, Lord, have

we not prophesied in thy name? . . . And then will I profess unto them [the hypocrites], I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

Acts 2:20, 21—"The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that GREAT AND NOTABLE DAY OF THE LORD come: and it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Romans 2:5-7—"Wrath against the DAY OF WRATH and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; who will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life."

1 Corinthians 1:7, 8—"Waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: . . . that ye may be blameless in the DAY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST."

1 Corinthians 5:5—"May be saved in the DAY OF THE LORD JESUS."

2 Corinthians 1:14—"Our's in the DAY OF THE LORD JESUS."

Phil. 1:6—"Will perform it until the DAY OF JESUS CHRIST."

Phil. 1:10—"That ye may be sincere and without offence till the DAY OF CHRIST."

Phil. 2:16—"That I may rejoice in the DAY OF CHRIST, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain."

1 Thess 5:2—"For yourselves know perfectly that the DAY OF THE LORD so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, . . . and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that THAT DAY should overtake you as a thief."

2 Thess. 2:1, 2—"We beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . that ye be not soon shaken in mind, ... as that the DAY OF CHRIST is at hand [in their generation, as the "falling away" must come first, whom the Lord will "destroy" at "his coming']."

2 Peter 3:10—"But the DAY OF THE LORD will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."

2 Peter 3:11, 12—"Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be ... looking for and hasting unto [from speudo, "hastening"] the coming of the DAY OF GOD, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?"

Revelation 1:10—Some scholars would add, "I was in the Spirit on the LORD'S DAY [he kuriake hemera]," or "DAY OF THE LORD." Compare Isaiah 2:2 where the Hebrew terms are equivalent to the Greek he kuriake hemera.

AGAIN SUMMARIZING:
Celestial signs appear as harbingers of the Second Advent, then wrath, judgment, retribution, surprise, destruction for the wicked, heaven and earth dissolved in physical cataclysms, but with immortality and reward
for the righteous. What a portrayal! The day of the Lord is clearly the climax, the grand finale of all things terrestrial, when God takes charge of the affairs at the great consummation.

E. "Day of the Lord"—Fulfils in Historical Actualities of Apocalypse

We will restate briefly the over-all prophetic portrayal of the day of the Lord, of the Old and New Testaments, and then proceed to note the identity of the terms of fulfillment majestically spread before us in the Apocalypse that seals off the Book of God, and its parting message to mankind. Then we will note certain supplemental variant phraseology, which now appears in the detailed application in the Revelation recital, which enforces and establishes the fundamental truth that had been cumulatively unfolded over the centuries. Observe particularly the additional features.

1. NEW NOTE HAS INCREASING VOLUME AND TEMPO

Beginning with the eighth-century B.C. prophet Isaiah, a new note was introduced, and a new term (with its variants) was injected into Holy Writ. This motif persisted and grew in significance throughout the remainder of the Old Testament canon, and swept on through the New Testament with increasing volume and tempo. In the Old Testament, it was employed by Isaiah, Joel, Amos, Zephaniah, Zechariah, and Malachi. And in the New Testament it was enforced and amplified by Jesus, Peter, Paul, and John.

That momentous term was the day of the Lord, and its cognate expressions. God was beginning to prepare mankind for the great day of reckoning, the mighty consummation, and God's determinate settlement of the sin problem that had plagued the race and given boldness to the enemies of God.

Back in chapter eight of the Old Testament discussion, mention was made of eight similar terms of increasing intensity—"The day," "latter day," "day of the Lord," "day of his coming," "great day of the Lord," "great and terrible day of the Lord," "great and dreadful day of the Lord" and "day of the Lord's wrath." But its climax was also called the "end," to be preceded by the "time of the end," or "latter days."

As we have seen, it is variously depicted as a day of wrath, anger, vengeance, trouble, distress, destruction, wasteness, desolation, darkness, gloominess, trumpet, alarm, trouble, terror, and dread—for the wicked. It forms a swelling crescendo of developments climaxing with the "end of the world," or age—and consequent developments—comprehended in the one all-inclusive term, "day of the Lord."

And in the New Testament it is similarly called a day of wrath, judgment, and harvest for the wicked, but of recompense, reward, and eternal life and habitations for the saints. But the dominant note is retribution, punishment, perdition, and judgments, terminating with total destruction of sin and sinners, and especially of Satan and his minions, then followed by a clean universe forevermore.

2. DETAILED BILL OF PARTICULARS IN APOCALYPSE

As the day of the Lord is prophetically pictured in the Apocalypse, other intensified terms are employed in the portrayal: Torment, sorrow, wrath poured out without mixture, and tormented with fire and brimstone.

Specifically, spread over the various prophecies of the Revelation, the day of the Lord is declared to include the time of reaping (Revelation 14:15, 16), of crushing in the wine press of the wrath of God (v. 19), of judgment made manifest (15:4), of the pouring out of the vials of the wrath of God (16:1), of the consummating fiat, "It is done" (16:17), of judgment (17:1), of going into perdition (vs. 8, 11), of burning with fire (v. 16; 18:9, 10), of torment and sorrow (v. 7), of weeping and wailing (v. 15), and of the smoke of burning (v. 18).

It is the time when iniquity is thrown down and found no more at all (18:21), of further allusion to the smoke of her torment (19:3), of righteous judgment and making war on iniquity (v. 11), of smiting the nations (v. 15), of treading the wine press of the wrath of "Almighty God" (v. 15), of casting alive into lake of fire burning with brimstone (v. 20), of slaying with the sword (v. 21). And finally fire comes down from God out of Heaven and devours them (20:9), and they are tormented "day and night" (v. 10). It is the execution of a just judgment, for they have been judged out of the infallible record of the books of Heaven.

"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works" (Revelation 20:12). "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (v. 15).

3. "OLD" PASSES FOREVER; "NEW" ESTABLISHED FOREVER

Such is the galaxy of terms and descriptions necessary to portray the actual day of the Lord and God's righteous disposal of the sin problem. Then comes the "new heaven and a new earth," the former having passed away forever (Revelation 21:1). Thenceforth there is forever no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, nor any more pain, and no more curse, "for the former things are passed away" (v. 4). "Behold, I make all things new" (v. 5).

And the two—the new earth, and the utter passing of the present earth, and its sin, sorrow, injustice, and rebellion—were both predicted in Isaiah 65:17, by the very prophet who initiated the term and launched the intent of the day of the Lord. Such is the profound unity of the Old and New Testaments. They both had one inspired Author, impelling the inspired penmen—the prophets and the apostles. And this is a prime exhibit.

4. CONSUMMATING TESTIMONY SEALS AGE-OLD WITNESS

Another feature must be stressed ere this section is closed. It is this: "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defiles, neither whatsoever works abomination, or makes a lie" (Revelation 21:27).

Satan, the original rebel and ruthless deceiver and father of lies, will not be there—having then been totally destroyed—and his catastrophic lie in Eden will have been utterly discredited, disproved, and brought to an end. Sin, with its lethal train of woe, will not rise up again. In the "second death" all sinners will have utterly perished and passed from being—thus disproving Satan's lying claim announced in Eden, "Ye [our first parents, and all mankind] shall not surely die" (Genesis 3:4). Six thousand years of unremitting death confute it.

So the saved all know by actual experience the verity of God's word and the falsehood and fraud and deception of Satan's first lie. They have seen its falsehood fulfilled before their eyes. The controversy is thus ended. The day of the Lord is over, fulfilled, past. The truth of God as to the nature and destiny of man is vindicated and established forever. The cruel experiment of sin is ended.

That is the triumph of God in the day of the Lord. A sin less universe and a redeemed humanity will then have entered upon the aeons of eternity. That is the primary message of God's last book of the canon—the Revelation. And it is in complete harmony with the over-all witness of all the inspired messages across the centuries that preceded it.

Apocalypse Reveals Final Fate of Wicked

A. Teaching of the Apocalypse on Final Punishment

As we have seen, the Apocalypse is pre-eminently a book of life and death. As to the LIFE phase, we find the tree of life (Revelation 2:7; 22:2, 14), the book of life (20:12, 15; 21:27; 22:19), the river of water of life (22:1, 2), the crown of life (2:10; 3:11), and the water of life (21:6; 22:17). All of these are for the recipients of eternal life.

As to the DEATH (thanatos) aspect we find the "second death" four times portrayed, and defined as death in and through the "lake of fire" (2:11; 20:14, 15; 21:8). It is also termed "killing with death" (apokteino, "to kill outright," "to slay," "to put an end to"); "destruction" (from diaph-theiro, "decay wholly," "perish"—11:18); and being "devoured" (katesthio, "denoting utter excision"—20:9). These terms are always used in the sense of bringing to an utter end. As twice intimated in the Old Testament, the wicked will then "sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the King, whose name is the Lord of hosts" (Jeremiah 51:57). There is identity of punishment in both Testaments. Observe first that the universal "first" death, with its ac companying hades (gravedom), is cast into and swallowed up by the lake of fire (Revelation 21:8). Then Satan, the keeper of gravedom, which is the stated "house of his prisoners" (Isaiah 14:17), is at last consigned to the same fiery fate. But this all indicates, not endless continuance in misery, but the actual ending of existence itself.

B. Gehenna "Lake of Fire" Totally Destroys All Sinners

1. "SECOND DEATH" TIED IN WITH "DAY OF WRATH."

The Apocalypse gives the ultimate word on the final destiny of both righteous and wicked. While some of the Apocalyptic symbols are difficult and mysterious, the Apocalyptic teachings on the destiny of man are not in that category. And it is to be observed that this is the message of Jesus, the "first and the last: ... he that liveth, and was dead," and is now "alive for evermore." He, as the Life-giver, has the "keys of hell and of death" (Revelation 1:17, 18). Here "life" and "death" are obviously used in their natural and normal sense. Here is found Inspiration's final word thereon.

From first to last the Revelation rings with the dominant note of life. But also heard throughout are the somber under tones of death—both the universal first death of sleep for all and the inescapable second death of total destruction, restricted exclusively to the wicked. First note its tie-in with the day of God's wrath, alternative for the day of the Lord: "He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death" (Revelation 2:11).

"And the heaven departed as a scroll. . . . And the kings of the earth [and great, rich, chief, mighty, bond, and free, . . . hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath1 is come" (Revelation 6:14-17).

"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 . . . and shouldest destroy [from diaphtheiro, "to cause to wholly perish"] them which destroy the earth" (Revelation 11:18).

It may be well to note two other "wrath" texts: (1) The "wrath" of the devil, "for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time"—Revelation 12:12; and "the great dragon . . . , that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world" (v. 9); who was "wroth with the woman [the church]" (v. 17); and (2) the "wrath" of Babylon, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen . . . because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication" (Revelation 14:8). So there are three wraths—of God, Satan, and Babylon—all actual, and all in fundamental conflict.

2. "LAKE OF FIRE" EQUATED WITH "SECOND DEATH."

In chapter 14 the drinking of the "wine of the wrath of God" involves being "tormented with fire and brimstone" with the "smoke of their torment" ascending "up for ever and ever," and having "no rest day nor night" for a special designated class (Revelation 14:9-11). Chapter 17:8 depicts the going of the "beast" into "perdition" (apoleia, "destruction," "ruin"), which declaration is repeated in verse 11.

Chapter 19 describes the judging of the symbolic harlot, and her "smoke" going up forever (Revelation 19:2, 3), the casting of the "beast" and the "false prophet," and their special followers, into the "lake of fire burning with brimstone" (v. 20). Chapter 20 describes the casting of the devil into this seething "lake of fire and brimstone," where he, too, is "tormented day and night for ever and ever" (v. 10). Then follows the declaration:

"And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell [hades, "the grave"] delivered up the dead which were in them. . . . And death and hell [hades, gravedom] were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (vs. 13-15). "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murder ers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death" (Revelation 21:8).

That is the total testimony of the Apocalypse on the "lake of fire" and the final destruction therein. And it is this cluster of texts that furnishes the supporting weight of evidence cited by proponents of the endless torment theory. It is therefore incumbent upon us to examine those expressions upon which such reliance is placed. We here assemble them for convenient reference.

3. "LAKE OF FIRE" IS PREDICTED "GEHENNA OF FIRE."

That the "lake of fire" of the Apocalypse is simply the "hell [gehenna] fire" (occasionally "outer darkness," as indicated by an asterisk [*]) of the rest of the New Testament, and still future, into which the wicked, including Satan, are to be cast at the end of the age, will be apparent from running the eye down over the expressions in italics and small capitals in the texts that follow:

Matthew 5:30—"That thy whole body should be cast into hell [gehenna]."

Matthew 8:12—*"Be cast out into outer DARKNESS: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Matthew 10:28—"Fear him

which is able to destroy both soul and body in HELL [gehenna]."

Matthew 13:41, 42—"Gather out of his kingdom all ... which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a FURNACE of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."

Matthew 18:8—"Rather than ... to be cast into EVERLASTING FIRE [pur to aidnion]." Matthew 18:9—"To be cast into hell fire [ten

geennan ton puros, "fire of Gehenna"]."

Matthew 22:13—*"Cast him into OUTER DARKNESS; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Matthew 25:30—*"Cast ye the unprofitable servant into OUTER DARKNESS: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Matthew 25:41—"Depart from me, ye cursed, into EVERLASTING FIRE, prepared for the devil and his angels." Matthew 25:46—

"These shall GO AWAY into EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT."

Mark 9:43—"To go into HELL [gehenna], into the FIRE THAT NEVER SHALL BE QUENCHED [to pur to asbeston, with no hope of escape]."

Luke 3:17—"The chaff he will burn with FIRE UNQUENCHABLE."

2 Thess. 1:9—"Shall be punished with EVERLASTING DESTRUCTION [olethron aionion, age lasting] from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."

2 Peter 2:4—"God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell [tartaroo], and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be RESERVED UNTO JUDGMENT."

Jude 1:6—"The angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation [Heaven], he hath
RESERVED in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day [of the Lord]." Revelation 2:11—"He that

overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death."

Revelation 14:10—"He shall be tormented with FIRE AND BRIMSTONE."

Revelation 19:11-15—The "Faithful and True" rides forth to "judge and make war," His eyes as a "flame of fire," on His head "many crowns"; His name "The Word of God." He smites the nations and treads the "winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God." On His vesture is the name "King of kings, and Lord of lords."

Revelation 20:6—"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the SECOND DEATH hath no power."

Revelation 20:10—"The devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone."

Revelation 20:15—"Whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the LAKE OF FIRE."

Revelation 21:8—"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brim stone: which is the SECOND DEATH."

4. CONSTITUTES INEXORABLE CHAIN OF EVIDENCE

Now just observe: Here are twenty-two references—seven of them in the Apocalypse—dealing with this one
theme. Here is the complete round of equivalent, or contingent, terms: Gehenna, fire, furnace of fire, everlasting fire, everlasting punishment, Gehenna fire, everlasting destruction, lake of fire burning with brimstone, second death, reserved unto the judgment of the GREAT DAY, lake of fire and brimstone, lake of fire —and finally, the comprehensive "lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death" (Revelation 21:8).

The fire of Gehenna, portrayed by Christ, was then future. It was to be preceded by the judgment. It was part of the operation of the GREAT DAY OF GOD. It was destruction by fire. It was the lake of fire, or fire and brimstone. And to round out the inexorable sequence, this lake, burning with fire and brimstone, is the SECOND DEATH (v. 8). And the fires, having then done their destined work, burn out. And those destroyed thereby are no more, as elsewhere portrayed. The lake of fire thus involves and results in the second death. This is in exact accord with Christ's declaration that God can, and will, "destroy [apollumi, "destroy utterly," "kill," "cause to perish," "come to an end"] both soul and body in hell [gehenna]" (Matthew 10:28). That is the evidence of the Apocalypse on the final doom, or destruction, of the wicked.

C. Problem Text (Revelation 14:11)

Torment Day and Night; Smoke Ascending Forever

1. TERMS OF REVELATION 14:11 LIMITED TO SPECIFIED GROUP

Various terms in the Apocalypse are figurative or symbolical—such as the "smoke" of Revelation 14:11.

"Smoke" has aptly been said to be the formless relic of an object that has been consumed, or decomposed, by the action of fire. It is but a relic, a vestige, an emblem, a lingering trace of the passing, the drifting aftermath that remains from an object that has been destroyed. A perpetual smoke may, therefore, well stand for a perpetual reminder before the universe of an irreparable ruin that has taken place, a burning up that has accomplished its allotted purpose.

The same inspired portrayal, it is to be ever remembered, declares that God will "consume," "devour," "destroy," cause to "perish," and "blot out" all the wicked. That dread transaction, or operation, involves and constitutes the "second death." The perpetuity intended is not, therefore, of the torment, but of the death following thereafter and caused thereby.

And as to the "torment" of Revelation 14:11, the renowned Greek specialist and translator, Dr. R. F. Weymouth, truly says: "There is nothing in this verse that necessarily implies an eternity of suffering." And he adds that it "gives in itself no indication of time. Cp. Genesis 19, 28; Jude 7."

Richard F. Weymouth, The New Testament in Modern Speech (3d ed.), Revelation 14:11, n. 7, p. 715.

It is further important to remember that in Revelation 20:15 and 21:8, where all the lost are involved, no period of duration is mentioned or specified. There is no indication that the "fire" depicted does not perform its normal and designated function of extirpating destruction, then ultimately and utterly going out—for in the new earth

there will be no more pain, tears, anguish, or death (Revelation 20:14; 21:4; 22:3). These will all have "passed away" (chap. 21:4). And that agrees precisely with the terms of Romans 6:23—that "the wages of sin is death."

2. SMOKE ASCENDS UP FOREVER—FIRES BURNED OUT

As to the intent of the figure of "smoke" ascending up "for ever and ever," other scriptures must be allowed to interpret and explain this expressly recorded term. Just such an explicit definition appears, for example, in Isaiah 34:

"And the streams thereof [of Idumea, or Edom—v. 6] shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch. It shall not be quenched night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go up for ever [Hebrews , lenesach nesachim, "perpetuity of perpetuities"] (vs. 9, 10)."

Then follows immediately the conjoined explanatory clause:

"From generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever. But the cormorant and the bittern shall possess it; the owl also and the raven shall dwell in it: and he shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion, and the stones of emptiness" (vs. 10, 11).

That definitely indicates perpetual desolation, not an end less life of pain. The fires have burned out. If, therefore, the place that was once a raging fire came, in due time, to "lie waste," while the smoke drifted endlessly on, as a reminder, back in Isaiah's time, the same would be true of the smoke from the fires of gehenna when they will have accomplished their designated work in the great day of the Lord.

3. NEITHER "TORMENT" NOR "SMOKE" ARE ETERNAL

Of the expressions appearing in Revelation 14:10, 11—(1) "tormented' with fire and brimstone," (2) the "smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever," and (3) "they have no rest day nor night"—it must again be remembered that these specifications all refer to the punishment of a special class, whose guilt is exceptional. On them, in this retributive "day of the Lord," the "wrath of God" is "poured out without mixture" (v. 10). Their punishment is therefore exceptionally severe.

Nevertheless, even with that understanding the passage does not say that their torment is to continue forever; rather, it is the "smoke" of their time of "torment" that drifts on endlessly.

The psalmist wrote, "The wicked . . . shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away" (Psalm 37:20). The smoke could never be regathered and reorganized, so as to form the continuing individual personality again. This is evident from the fact that the same expression is used concerning mystical "Babylon" (an ecclesiastical organization, not an individual), whose smoke likewise "rose up for ever and ever" (Revelation 19:3), else where referred to as "smoke of her burning" (Revelation 18:18). But neither is this endless burning, for her doom is else where set forth as utter obliteration—Babylon shall with "violence" be "thrown down, and shall be found no more at all" (v. 21). She shall be "utterly burned with fire" (v. 8). Consequently she does not live on and suffer on endlessly, but ultimately ceases to be. Now, inasmuch as Babylon is to be obliterated, and yet her smoke said to continue to rise, it is plain that her "smoke" obviously represents a perpetual attestation or reminder of her burning.

Several occurrences of the term "torment" (basanos). or "tormented" (basanizo, literally, "to test," as with metals by a touchstone, or "to torture), appear in the Apocalypse. These are:

Revelation 9:5—"tormented [from basanKo, "test, prove, torture"] five months" Revelation 11:10—"tormented them that dwelt on the earth"
Revelation 12:2—symbolic woman "pained [lit., "tormented"] to be delivered" Revelation 14:10—"tormented with fire and brimstone"
Revelation 14:11—"smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever" Revelation 18:7—"so much torment and sorrow give her"
Revelation 20:10—"tormented [from basanizo] day and night for ever and ever"

There will assuredly be torment, but not endless torment. It ultimately ends when the destined utter extinction of being has taken place.

4. "FATHER" OF FIRST "NO-DEATH" LIE LAST TO DIE IN GEHENNA

Among the closing prophetic declarations of the Apocalypse is the significant affirmation that "all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death" (Revelation 21:8). Satan, the deceiving and malignant source of the original Edenic "no-death" lie (John 8:44; cf. Genesis 3:4),4 is himself destroyed forever in this very fire of Gehenna "prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matthew 25:41). Thus his own lie is completely disproved by his own death, and brings his age-old deceptions and tragically accepted perversions to an utter end. Here is the fateful declaration: "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone." "This is the second death" (Revelation 20:10, 14). Thus he dies, and dies forever. There is no resuscitation for Satan.

Hence the first lie will be completely canceled out by the extirpation of all liars and lying in the terminating "lake of fire." The introduction of the fateful first death is counterbalanced by the destruction and cessation of all death and dying in the "second death." And all sorrow, pain, sickness, and misery, and finally the grave (all comprehended in that one original word "death") are nullified forever by the obliteration of Satan and all that is evil.

The falsity of Satan's claim ("Ye shall not surely die"), as pertains to Adam, is recorded by inspiration—"All the days that Adam lived were nine 'hundred and thirty years: and he died" (Genesis 5:5). So the inspired Old Testament record attests that the serpent lied as to Adam—as well as perpetrating and perpetuating his deceit upon Adam's posterity.

So, with Satan's destruction the great day of the Lord comes to its end. The great challenge and rebellion are over. Truth is triumphant forever, and God and His righteousness and equity are vindicated before all for all eternity. All falsehood, error, and deception have been unmasked and overthrown. God's word and wisdom, His power and justice, His grace and mercy, His government and law, omniscience and sovereignty, are now established beyond all challenge—and that forevermore! The new heaven and new earth follow, and abide forevermore.

D. No Eternally Seething "Lake of Fire" in Coming "New Earth"

1. DOGMA OF ETERNAL TORMENT INVOLVES NOTORIOUS DUALISM

Let us frankly face this point: The Immortal-Soulist postulate of the eternity of sin would necessitate (1) the creation or conditioning of special bodies for the wicked, upon their resurrection, in order that they might suffer forever; (2) the redeemed would always behold the agonies of the damned; (3) there would be an eternal activity in death, and (4) this would involve an inescapable denial of the finished work of Christ. These are all in conflict with the Word. More than that, such a concept involves evil coexisting eternally with good, and Satan coexisting eternally with God—which, in actuality, is simply the ancient Dualism perpetuated.

According to such a thesis, sin and Satan, pain and the curse, sinners and death, will last as long as God exists and is God. But the Apocalypse denies and excludes any such pagan concept, derived as it was from Persian Zoroastrianism, and transmitted there from. How could an "eternal evil" coexist forever with the Absolute God, "who only hath immortality" (1 Tim. 6:15, 16)? These are wholly incompatible concepts. The lake of fire will not seethe alongside the New Jerusalem throughout all eternity. There will be no endlessly burning, perpetually torturing lake of Gehenna fire. The tree of life will not be rooted in the searing sands on the shore line of the lake of fire and brimstone. The flames of the lake of fire will in time die out, just as did the unquenchable fires of Sodom and Gomorrah, and of Idumea of old, when they have accomplished their destined mission of complete destruction of wicked men, evil angels, and Satan the root and source of all evil.

2. CELESTIAL CONFLICT TERMINATES ON EARTH

It should also be noted that the real existence and fearful activity of evil spirits, or fallen angels, has been an integral and in separable factor in the great controversy between God and Satan, as well as between good men and evil. Behind the earthly struggle lies the original universe-shaking rebellion (Revelation 12:7-12), in which angelic principalities and powers are in relent less revolt against divine truth and heavenly authority, including the law and government of God. It was into this dread conflict that earth was tragically drawn in the days of Eden (Genesis 1-3).

However, that celestial conflict is to come to a climax and be crushed forever on this very earth, where Satan will be confined during the thousand years (Revelation 20:1-3). Indeed, the unprecedented attack of Revelation 20:7-

10, at the close of the thousand years, is the last battle in the age-old warfare that has racked the universe. We repeat that, according to Holy Writ, this very earth will be the battleground of the last fearful contest, and then of the final suppression of the great rebel, following the resurgence of his forces at the close of the millennial thousand years.

So the Bible history of man, and of man's redemption, is inextricably bound up with the chronicling of the infernal activities of these demonic enemies of God and man, knowledge of whose temporary victory but final defeat is imperative to the right understanding of the role of death and destruction in the conflict of the ages, and of Satan's final frenzy, as well as of the bestowal of immortality upon the glorified saints, prior to the close of the great controversy.

3. NEW EARTH AND NEW JERUSALEM GLORIOUSLY REAL

As the heavens and the earth "which are now," are real, so, after the tremendous transition period of the day of the Lord—with its millennial events that will likewise be real—so will the new earth and the New Jerusalem be real (2 Peter 3:5-13). And at the close of the retributive "day of the Lord" God then becomes the prophesied God of the whole earth (2 Peter 3:10, 12, 13). The tragic experiment of sin will be over forever. It is that wondrous time twice prophesied of by Isaiah, the prophet, and now confirmed and elaborated by the seer of Patmos. Here are Isaiah's forecasts:

"For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind" (Isaiah 65:17).

"For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain" (chap. 66:22).

The foundations of the New Jerusalem are planted eternally upon this very earth, renewed and restored, and destined to continue forevermore. And the tree of life and the river of life, as portrayed in Revelation 21 and 22, are real. This depiction is not mere poetic imagery.

The tree of life, removed from the original Paradise of Genesis, is here restored to the whole earth. And man, banished from the presence of God, now dwells in the presence of the "God of the whole earth" (Isaiah 54:5), who will dwell with men and be their God. We would stress the fact that this is not merely beautiful symbolic imagery—but actual, glorified conditions, re-established when God's eternal, original purpose concerning Heaven and earth is consummated. Hear it: "No more curse!" (Revelation 22:3). In place of the Fall, the restoration. In place of expulsion—"lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever" in his sinful condition (Genesis 3:22)—the gracious invitation to those who now "have right to the tree of life" (Revelation 22:14), "Come. . . . Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (v. 17).

Transitory existence in this present world gives place to those blessed "everlasting habitations" (Luke 16:9) alluded to by Christ. Death, and the death principle, are effaced. End less life forevermore is established. Just punishment upon all sinners is past and ended. God and righteousness reign for evermore. And the redeemed abide forever with Him in a clean universe. They have now become

"unassailable" by death, for death itself is destroyed—the "last enemy" having been destroyed, abolished forevermore (1 Corinthians 15:26; 2 Tim. 1:10; Revelation
20:14; 21:4). Satan himself, its instigator, is destroyed (Hebrews 2:14; Revelation 20:10)—being reduced to "ashes" (Ezekiel 28:18, 19).

Yes, it is a clean universe. The divine purpose of Eden is now carried out, more wonderfully than ever. God made this earth to be inhabited by a race of holy, happy beings. And now the glories foretold by the prophets and the apostles of old have met their complete fulfillment. The majesty and grandeur of the eternal scenes baffle and defy all adequate description.

4. ENDLESS LIFE IN CHRIST UNDEVIATING NOTE OF APOCALYPSE

Let us close this survey of the Apocalypse with this positive note: The vast company from among the descendants of Adam—a mighty host which "no man could number" (Revelation 7:9), whose names were "written in the Lamb's book of life"—are now clothed forever in the spotless robe of Christ's righteousness. They now walk the golden streets of Paradise restored, with fadeless crowns of life (Revelation 2:10), praising the "Prince of life" (Acts 3:15), who redeemed them with His own precious blood, which symbolized His Life. Here they again have a "right to the tree of life," and drink freely forever of the inexhaustible water of life in the Paradise of endless life. And "the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes" (Revelation 7:17).

In closing let the eye run down the following italicized "life" texts of the book of the Revelation, that their cumulative force may be sensed. These have been sustaining promises, now fulfilled as glorious realities. See how this is the undeviating theme of God's last book of the canon—the record of the triumph of God in the fateful day of the Lord. The redeemed now inherit the promises—

Revelation 2:7—"Give to eat of the tree of life." Revelation 2:10—"Give thee a crown of life."
Revelation 3:5—"Not blot out his name out of the book of life." Revelation 11:11—"The spirit of life from God entered into them."
Revelation 13:8—"Whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."
Revelation 17:8—"Whose names were not written in the book o] life from the foundation of the world." Revelation 20:12—"Another book was opened, which is the book of life."
Revelation 20:15—"Whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." Revelation 21:6—"I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely."
Revelation 21:27—"They which are written in the Lamb's book of life."
Revelation 22:1—"A pure river of water of life, clear as crystal."
Revelation 22:2—"The tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits." Revelation 22:14—"That they may have right to the tree of life."
Revelation 22:17—"Let him take the water of life freely."
Revelation 22:19—"God shall take away his [the tamperer with the truths of God's Word] part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city."

Thus fifteen times in this last book of Holy Writ, life is stressed as the supreme gift of God, bestowed by the Lord of life upon the righteous recipients of endless life, as an inseparable part of God's matchless provisions of eternity—tree of life, crown of life, and water of life. That is the note of glad some assurance with which the Apocalypse closes. It presents life—endless, boundless, fadeless, measureless, life forever more. Death has passed forever.

That is Inspiration's parting portrayal of the origin, nature, and destiny of man. God's eternal purpose, delayed but not defeated by the episode of sin, is now carried out in full ness. What a marvelous plan of redemption! What a matchless Saviour—in Resurrection and in Life!

Greek Terms and Usages—"Psuche" (Soul); "Pneuma" (Spirit)

A. Characteristic Advantages, Disadvantages, and Pitfalls of Greek

The New Testament was written in Greek. The very terms we are now to survey were all fully established in this universal tongue, dominant at the dawn of the Christian Era. But at that time, it is to be remembered, the world was in pagan confusion. At that time endless being was regarded by some as a boon devoutly to be cherished, while by others it was considered an evil to be shunned.

With some, influenced by Orientalism, existence was a curse rather than a blessing, and nirvana, or annihilation of the individual personality, was esteemed as the goal of life and the summit of hope. Consequently, at the time of Christ and the apostles the Immortality of the soul was the question of all questions in the various schools of Grecian philosophy, as well as a point of division and contention. And as elsewhere seen, its penetration had tragically split the ranks in the Jewish faith. Further, bodily resurrection to immortality—which was the supreme message of the primitive church and the paramount article of the early Christian faith—had no place in pagan speculation. When the early Greek sages brought back the lore of Egypt into Attica, it did not include the concept of a resurrection. And to the Greek intellect such an idea was utter foolishness. They saw the body return to the dust, and there they left it forever.

1. ISSUE OF IMMORTALITY OF PARAMOUNT CONCERN

As stated, immortality was a subject of swirling speculation among the Greeks, some maintaining and some refuting it—with a majority of pagan citizenry currently treating it as a jest. Nevertheless, the whole of life turned on the issue of the Immortality of the soul. The noblest specimens of human reasoning that ever charmed (and bewildered) the human intellect were the lofty speculations of Socrates and Plato, as set forth in the Phaedo—an attempt to establish the Innate Immortality of the soul and the assumption that whatever changes or pollutions it might suffer, or whatever pain it might endure, the soul could not cease to be.

By such there was believed to be a deathless, innate principle in the human soul, or spirit, that utterly refused to die. According to Plato it never could become a thing of the past, blotted out forever. And many of the Jews, particularly around Alexandria, had imbibed these teachings of undeniable pagan origin. Philo had just given this notion tremendous impetus. Such was the historical setting at the dawn of the Christian Era. This is all covered in Part III.

And all this involved certain language problems—advantages and disadvantages—in the proclamation of the gospel. Such was the complex linguistic and historical situation that confronted Christ and His apostles, to whom He committed His message, and the launching and up building of His infant church.

2. CONFLICT OVER PUNISHMENT OF WICKED

The terms and specifications of the punishment of the wicked, set forth by Christ and the apostles in the New Testament, were likewise in direct contradiction to the Platonic assertion that the soul cannot die, and therefore cannot be destroyed. The New Testament Christians insisted that the whole man could and would die, and cease to be. Platonism held that the real being could not perish and see corruption. The New Testament Christians asserted that the entire person of the wicked could and would ultimately and utterly perish and suffer corruption. And the Greek terminology unavoidably used by both sides was the same. What Plato affirmed, the primitive Christians denied. And likewise, what Platonism disavowed, the New Testament Christian asserted. And, be it remembered, both groups in the early Christian Era clearly sensed the utter clash in viewpoint.

All the phrases employed were in the Greek language, with its large vocabulary, its fine shadings, and its multiple tenses. Wherever the Christian preacher expounded his message on man, his origin, nature, and destiny, there were Platonists, Epicureans, Stoics, and Alexandrian Jews with their variant views, set to hear and refute—but all were bound together under the "scepter" of a common tongue, as someone has phrased it. To the Greek terminology and usage involved, then, we now turn.

B. Psuche in New Testament Usage

1. HEBREW BACKGROUND OF THE EARLY CHURCH

First of all, when we discuss the meanings of Greek words in the New Testament, we must remember that Christ and the disciples did not ordinarily converse in Greek during the events recorded in the Gospels, but in Aramaic. Their whole background was Hebrew, and their theological concepts were based on the Old Testament. It is true they lived in a Hellenized society, but when they used the Greek equivalents of Hebrew words, they certainly carried over into the new language the meanings they were accustomed to in their mother tongue.

Thus it is with the Greek word psuche ("soul"). In the Septuagint, the Hebrew nephesh is rendered psuche. When a New Testament Christian used the word psuche he assuredly meant what nephesh connoted in his usual speech. On the other hand, of course, Hellenized Jews who had accepted the immortality of the soul doctrine from the Greek philosophers, would read back into nephesh the philosophy they had imbibed.

2. HOW THE TRANSLATORS RENDERED "PSUCHE."

Psuche occurs 105 times in the New Testament, and in the K.J.V. is rendered "soul" 58 times, "life," or "lives," 40 times, "mind" 3 times, and "heart," "heartily," "us," and "you" once each. Since the word "soul" carries certain overtones of meaning that do not properly belong to the Greek word, or its Hebrew antecedent nephesh, it is proper to ask if the English "soul" is really the best word to use in an English rendering of the Greek.

It is interesting to notice the change in the number of times the word is used in the more recent English translations. In the R.S.V. "soul" or "souls" is used only 40 times in the New Testament. And in The New English Bible "soul" as a translation of psuche is used only 19 times. These newer translations tend to use personal pronouns or their equivalents and "life" to replace "soul" as a rendering of psuche.

It must be admitted that translators have been influenced by their theological beliefs to some extent at least. For a man who believes that a person possesses an immortal soul, it is surely easier to render psuche as "soul" in many places where complete objectivity would choose a different rendering. It would appear that later translators have been able to achieve this objectivity without regard to their personal beliefs more frequently than earlier translators.

It is possible to pass this kind of judgment because of the fact that the Bible does not teach that man has an immortal soul. The immortality of the soul can be read into the Bible only when one already believes that "soul" means an immortal something that can separate from the body at death and maintain a separate, conscious existence. Neither psuche nor nephesh ever has any qualifying words like "immortal," "ever lasting," "undying," or "endless," or any modifier of equivalent meaning attached to them. That is significant.

3. MEANINGS OF "PSUCHE" FALL INTO FOUR CATEGORIES

An examination of Biblical usage reveals that the various meanings of psuche may be divided into four basic groups.

(1) A living organism. First of all, used of man as an individual, as "The first man Adam was made a living soul [psuche, here properly "living being"; see Genesis 2:7, R.S.V.]" (1 Corinthians 15:45); and of lower animals, as, "every living soul [psuche, here properly "living creature"; see Genesis 1:24, R.S.V.]" (Revelation 16:3).

(2) A person, or personality. "And fear came upon every soul [psuche]" (Acts 2:43); and "Every soul [psuche], which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed" (Acts 3:23). David's inspired Old Testament prediction of Christ is, "Thou wilt not leave my soul [psuche] in hell [hades]" (Acts 2:27, quoting Psalm 16:10)—"my soul," that is, "myself," emphasizing the pronoun. And Peter at Pentecost says that David "spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul [psuche] was not left in hell [hades, gravedom], neither his flesh did see corruption" (Acts 2:31). That was Christ Himself, His person.

(3) The physical life of man. Life, which can be destroyed, saved, laid down, et cetera.

(4) The inward man. The more remote but logical metaphysical meaning of the "inward man" appears in "Seeing ye have purified your souls [psuche] in obeying the truth" (1 Peter 1:22), and in "My soul [psuche] is exceeding sorrowful unto death" (Mark 14:34).

So the living organism in the physical realm is followed by the person or personality, and next the physical life itself.

And finally comes the more remote metaphysical meaning of the inward man. It should be remembered that this inward man is not in Biblical usage a separate entity that can maintain a conscious existence apart from the body, but merely describes those aspects of man's nature that we might call spiritual as opposed to physical.

In general The New English Bible demonstrates a keen discrimination in the words used to translate psuche. This is particularly well shown in the parable of the rich fool, where the various meanings of the word psuche come in rather close juxtaposition:

"And he told them this parable: 'There was a rich man whose land yielded heavy crops. He debated with himself: "What am I to do? ... I will pull down my storehouses and build them bigger. I will collect in them all my corn and other goods, and then say to myself [my psuche], 'Man [psuche], you have plenty of goods laid by, enough for many years: take life easy, eat, drink, and enjoy

yourself.' " But God said to him, "You fool, this very night you must surrender your life [psuche]." . . . 'Therefore,' he said to his disciples, 'I bid you put away anxious thoughts about food to keep you alive [K.J.V., "your life (psuche), what ye shall eat"] and clothes to cover your body. Life [psuche] is more than food, the body more than clothes'" (Luke 12:16-23).1

It is interesting to note that in The New English Bible the word "soul" is used in most cases to refer to the inward man. In the few exceptions there may be a variety of opinions as to the exact shade of meaning intended. On the basis that in many cases both nephesh and psuche represent the man himself, personal pronouns would have served as accurate translations in at least three of these texts: James 5:20, "rescuing his soul [him] from death"; 1 Peter 1:9, "salvation for your souls [you]"; 1 Peter 4:19, "commit their souls [them selves] to him." In Revelation 6:9, "souls of those slaughtered," psuche represents dead people; and in Revelation 20:4, "souls of those who had been beheaded," psuche represents people who have died and have been resurrected in the second resurrection.

The New English Bible, New Testament. © The Delegates of the Oxford University Press and the Syndics of the Cambridge University Press 1961.

The one text that makes a clear distinction between soul and body in relation to death is Matthew 10:28 (N.E.B.): "Do not fear those who kill the body, but cannot kill the soul. Fear him rather who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." Some might wish to see in this text proof that man has an immortal soul that survives death. But no matter what definition is applied to the word "soul" here, Immortality is one quality that is excluded, for the "soul" as well as the "body" may be destroyed in Hell.

C. Pneuma in New Testament Usage

In the Septuagint pneuma is the translation of the He brew word ruach, and what has been said about ruach in the Old Testament section can in general be said about pneuma in the New Testament.

The Greek word pneuma is related to pneo, meaning "to blow, breathe, or draw breath." The lexicons on classical Greek give "breath" and "wind" as the first meanings of pneuma. "Spirit" is also a common meaning of pneuma. In the Greek text of the New Testament, pneuma occurs 385 times, and is translated in the K.J.V. as follows: "Spirit," 133; "spirit," 153; "spiritual," 1; "ghost," 2; "life," 1; and "wind," 1; or a total of 291. Then with the genitive, "spiritually," 1; with hagion ("holy") as Holy "Spirit," 4; Holy "Ghost," 89, a grand total of
385 times.

The R.S.V. drops the use of "ghost" as a translation of pneuma. Thus the words "spirit" and "spirits" occur 383 2 times in the R.S.V. Concordance. The R.S.V. retains the translation "wind" for pneuma in John 3:8, "The wind blows where it wills," but translates pneuma as "breath" in Revelation 13:15, where the K.J.V. has "life."

Pneuma is used of Deity in the New Testament. In the R.S.V. this is indicated by capitalization, and a check reveals about 235 such usages. The New English Bible adds to this number by applying a few more occurrences of pneuma to Deity. Since there is obviously some measure of interpretation in this classification, perhaps no unanimity of opinion will give an absolutely accurate count. In nearly all of these instances "Spirit" is used of the third person of the Trinity. Pneuma is also used of spirit beings—angels, both good and evil. Evil, unclean, or devilish spirits are referred to about 40 times. As applied to man, pneuma is used with the following meanings:

1. Man himself, by the figure synecdoche, a part being put for the whole. Thus in Luke 1:47 "my spirit" equals I
myself.

2. Life, the living principle, which is represented by breath. Thus in Luke 8:55: "Her spirit [breath of life] came again, and she arose."

3. Character, as being itself invisible, and manifested only in one's actions (2 Tim. 1:7).

4. Other invisible characteristics, as feelings or desires. Matthew 26:41: "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

5. The new nature in the child of God, "begotten" by God (John 3:3-7; Romans 8:4-9).

6. The resurrection body (1 Corinthians 15:45).

The difference between the K.J.V. and the R.S.V. in the number of occurrences is partly due to the critical text used for translating.

D. Exit and Re-entry of the Spirit

1. DEPARTURE OF "SPIRIT" FROM "BODY" AT DEATH

It is essential for us to bear in mind that the Greek New Testament pneuma ("spirit") of man is the same as the ruach of the Old Testament Hebrew. There is no question about this. That they are identical not only is everywhere recognized but is established by the fact that the usual, if not invariable, rendering of ruach, in the Septuagint, is by pneuma, just as are the passages of the Old Testament containing ruach, when translated into the New Testament Greek (cf. Luke 23:46 and Psalm 31:5). This is incontrovertible proof. Moreover, the very same things that are taught in the New Testament concerning pneuma are set forth in the Old Testament concerning ruach. And "spirit," in English, is pneuma. To this should be added the fact that the Latin spiritus is uniformly used in the Vulgate to render pneuma, just as in the LXX pneuma is used to express the Hebrew - ruach. Furthermore, "ghost" is from the Anglo-Saxon word meaning "spirit" "breath." Hence the three— pneuma, spiritus, and ghost—convey the same thought in the three languages.

The New Testament sets forth pneuma as being the source of physical life for man, together with its withdrawal as causing death. Pneuma may be defined as the activating principle of life, residing in the breath, breathed from God into man at creation, and returning to God again at death. God also made the air (Genesis 1:6-8), which man must breathe and have within him (Zechariah 12:1), in order that life may be continued by constant breathing. The general principle is laid down by James, "The body without the spirit [pneuma] is dead" (chap. 2:26).

Job 33:4; Psalm 146:4; 150:6; Isaiah 2:22; Ezekiel 37:5, 10.

Thus our Lord's death is uniformly described in the four Gospels as yielding up (aphiemi, "dismiss," "send forth," "send back," "let escape"), breathing out (ekpneo), or giving up (paradidomi, "give up" or "hand over to another") the "ghost" (pneuma) or spirit, or to "commend" (paratithemi, "to entrust," as a deposit). Note the varying forms of expression by the four evangelists—but with identical meaning, as concerns ghost, or spirit.

2. VARIANT WAYS OF EXPRESSING ACT OF DYING

There are, in fact, seven passages in which "ghost" is thus used, which determine its meaning. First the Gospels, concerning Christ:

Matthew 27:50—apheken to pneuma ("let go," or "send forth His spirit, or breath").
Mark 15:37, 38—exepneusen ("breathed out," "breathed His last," that is, "drew His last breath," "expired"). Cf. ekpneo ("breathe out," "expire").
Luke 23:46—exepneusen ("breathed out," etc.).
John 19:30—paredoken to pneuma ("gave over the breath").

Next note the other three—all wicked characters:
Acts 5:5—(re Ananias) exepsuxen ("breathe out," "expire," "die," etc.). From ekpsucho, a medical term used by Luke.

Acts 5:10—(re Sapphira) exepsuxen ("breathe out," etc.).

Acts 12:23—(re Herod) exepsuxen ("breathe out," "go out," "become extinct," etc.).

These variant ways of expressing the act of dying explain what takes place at death. They all refer to the physical act of dying—not dying a spiritual death, or the release of an un-embodied spirit entity. (Cf. Genesis 2:7; Psalm 104:29, 30; 146:4; Eccl. 12:7.) That is the witness of the Word.

3. "SPIRIT" DEPARTS AT DEATH; RESTORED AT RESURRECTION

As the presence of the "spirit" (pneuma} is the source of physical life to man, so its withdrawal, or dismissal, brings death—life's exact counterpart. This is exemplified in various instances, as just noted when our Lord's death is described as yielding "up the ghost [pneuma, "spirit"]" (Matthew 27:50; John 19:30). This is in direct antithesis to the restoration of life, or recovery from death, which the New Testament describes as the re-entry of the pneuma ("spirit") into the person who was dead.

Thus with Jesus' raising of Jairus' daughter to life—The record is that "her spirit [pneuma] came again" (Luke 8:55). And "she arose straightway," and was given food. Similarly, in the Apocalypse the resurrection to life of the two symbolic "witnesses" who were "slain," is there portrayed as "the spirit [pneuma] of life from God entered into them" (Revelation 11:11). These passages establish the principle.

And as with Christ—"Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit [pneuma]: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost [pneuma, "spirit"]" (Luke 23:46). So with Stephen, the first Christian martyr—when stoned and dying, he solemnly and trustfully called upon the ascended Jesus and said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit [pneuma]" (Acts 7:59). He did not pray, "Lord, receive me," but "my pneuma." "And when he had said this, he fell asleep" (v. 60), with the sure and certain hope of receiving it back at the resurrection. Thus in death the "spirit" (pneuma), which has been the source of life to man, returns to God who gave it, having been commended by the believer into the hands of his God. But this expression, be it particularly noted, is never used of the "soul." However, it is frequently said of the "spirit," committed to God for safekeeping during the time of the death- sleep.

It is only believers who so commit the "spirit." Indeed, they are the only ones warranted in doing so. And thus when so given over to the care of God, the "spirit" is always committed with a view to its restoration. The "spirit" came from God, and returns to God (Eccl. 12:7). There is, however, this difference: In the resurrection of the wicked, the "spirit" is restored only for the purpose of the execution of judgment, and at the second death it returns permanently to God who gave it. On the contrary, with the righteous the "spirit" is restored through Christ at the first resurrection, with life eternal following. Thus the righteous part with the pneuma only for a time, to receive it back forever. That is the joy of the Christian believer—the sure and certain hope of receiving the "spirit" back on the resurrection day, as the concomitant of life everlasting, pledged and promised in Christ. Such is the significance of the pneuma.

This caution should perhaps be added: Where Scripture is silent, we should be silent too. When the Scripture says, "The spirit shall return unto God," just as the dust shall return to dust (Eccl. 12:7), that is as far as we are authorized to go. Speculative theories on and beyond this point are unwise and unwarranted. And we dare not contradict Inspiration's declaration by assuming to put the spirit in "Paradise" or "Purgatory," as some are prone to do.

Terms and Usages: "Aion" and "Aionios"

A. Principles Governing the Meaning ot Aion and Aionios

1. DEFINITIONS AND USAGES

According to Young, the noun aion (meaning "aeon" or "age") occurs 128 times in the New Testament, in 102 passages—34 times in simple form, and 64 times in prepositional phrases and forms. The adjective aionios (belonging to an age) is used 67 times—42 times rendered "eternal" -and 25 times as "everlasting." Even if aion meant "eternity"—which it does not—aionios could only mean "belonging to eternity," not necessarily lasting through it. And in not one of the passages does the word itself mean endless. There are classical Greek words that do stand for endless, but such words are not used in the New Testament. That too is significant.

Aion may be defined as a period of existence, or continuous being, whether a lifetime or an age. It is sometimes limited and sometimes denotes boundless periods and endless eternity. In 23 instances aion is doubled. The basic thought is always continuity, whether for a definite period, long or short, or for all time. It is often a "hidden" period—hidden as to precise length, sometimes terminable, sometimes interminable. So aion, like our term "age," denotes a period of undefined length.

In order to determine its length in any given instance, even relatively, the context and other passages where used must be considered, and especially the substantive to which it is attached. Therefore aionios does not, and cannot, always have the same meaning, for it is modified or even altered by the substantive that it modifies.

2. SPECIFIC "AIONIOS" USAGES OUTLINED

According to the Englishman's Greek Concordance, in the 24 passages in the New Testament where aionios is rendered "everlasting" 14 are used with zoe-life—meaning life without an end. Of the remaining 10, two are used with "fire"

(continuing unquenchable until that on which the fire feeds is consumed); once with "punishment" (permanent in effect); once with "habitations" (doubtless the new earth) without end; once with "destruction" (like punishment); once with "consolation" (unending for the saved); once with "power" (ascribed to God, and hence without limit); once with "covenant" (un ending in results); once with "kingdom of our Lord" (hence unceasing); and once with "gospel," or "power of God" (and thus limitless in duration—Romans 1:16). So AIONIOS always takes its meaning from the word to which it is attached.

In the Authorized Version, in prepositional phrase form (with aion as the base), it appears some 68 times, and has been variously rendered: "since the world began" (Luke 1:70; Acts 3:21); "from the beginning of the world" (Ephesians 3:9); "for ever" (20 times); "ever" (Hebrews 7:24); "for evermore" (Hebrews 7:28); "for ever and ever" (20 times), et cetera.

B. Aion and Aidnios in the Contrasts of Scripture

1. GOLDEN RULE: PERPETUITY WITHIN LIMITS

Aion and aionios, when used in connection with life (zoe) for the righteous, mean constant, abiding, eternal, measureless. It involves unbounded existence and duration in the world to come. But when used of the continuance (or more accurately of the consuming) of the wicked, who are to be destroyed, it is transitory, and comes to an end. Everything consequently and consistently depends upon the nature and destiny of the substantive that it modifies. That is the golden rule of interpretation of these terms. It is perpetuity within limits—the duration being determined by the person, or thing, or condition to which it is attached.

Thus with the fate of the wicked. It is until their destruction is accomplished—not a process going on forever. The "fire" that shall not be "quenched" does not mean that it shall not ultimately cease. The fire that destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah was "unquenchable" (no one could put it out), but it finally ceased burning. But this was not until its objective was accomplished. (This is discussed under "destruction," and "punishment.")

2. TWO DETERMINATIVE PRINCIPLES RE "AIONIOS."

All are aware that aidn and aionios have been the subject of avid dispute among proponents and opponents of the Innate-Immortality postulate. The issue has been: Do these terms mean endless or age enduring, or both, upon occasion? Two things need to be noted at the outset:

(1) Aionios is constantly predicated of the new super natural life, received through regeneration by the Spirit of God. But, in contrast with this, aionios is never, in any of its forms, used in Scripture of the old, or natural, life of man. Furthermore, (2) it is never, anywhere throughout the entire Word of God, predicated of a continuing death as the penalty of sin. When used of death, it means a period of limited duration. These principles are determinative.

The terms "eternal death" and "everlasting death" are consequently not found in the Bible. Life may be brief, or long—or endless if it pleases God to perpetuate it—but death is a finality in itself, and needs no qualifying epithet. And that is the doom denounced upon sinners—"Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (James 1:15; cf. Romans 6:23). This is the "second death," which follows the judgment of the wicked. From this there is no resurrection. But of the new life, the spiritual life, the divine life, upon which the people of God enter, and of which the epithet aionios is predicated, and no other, is zoe aionios. It is without any limitation.

3. GEHAZI'S "FOR EVER" LEPROSY LASTED UNTIL POSTERITY EXTINCT

The master key that unlocks the meaning of any passage employing the terms aion or aionios is that they are to be taken to mean as long as the thing or person under consideration (in the light of the surrounding circumstances) can exist. Its duration is always determined by the noun to which it is attached. That simple principle will solve all problems and meet all cases.

Take an Old Testament example: The curse of leprosy upon Gehazi (2 Kings 5:27)—that the leprosy of Naaman "shall cleave unto thee [Gehazi], and unto thy seed for ever"—simply means that it should continue as long as Gehazi and his posterity should continue to exist. In other words, until the line became extinct. Then it would cease. And, under the terms of this prophecy, it must have taken place fairly soon. It is restricted to the extent of the duration of the thing or person to which it is applied. The "for ever" of Gehazi was consequently only until his posterity became extinct.

4. LENGTH GOVERNED BY NOUN TO WHICH ATTACHED

When aion and aionios are applied to Divine Beings, or to the eternal home of the saints, or to the redeemed,

immortalized saints, they then obviously denote eternal duration, or eternity of being. But as noted, when aion and aionios are applied to things that will have an end, they are correspondingly limited in meaning. Thus, when they are applied to the existence of the wicked—who will finally cease to be as the result of the "second death"—they must be limited, according to their signification.

We must consequently conclude that the modifiers aion and aionios, with reference to the two classes—"saints" and "sinners"—mean, respectively, bliss throughout all eternity, on the one hand, for the eternally righteous, and on the other hand coming to an end forever, after a due and just period of suffering for the unrepentant and doomed sinner. The wicked are ultimately and utterly extinguished because they refused the eternal life so freely offered to them, which is nevertheless to continue throughout the ages without end for the righteous, who accepted its provisions.

5. BODY BLOW TO IMMORTAL-SOUL THEORY

We have already established the fact that aionios ("eternal" or "ever lasting") is constantly coupled with z5e in Scripture—giving the meaning of endlessness to the life. And we have stressed the point that aionios is never, in Scripture, joined with psuche. It therefore follows that such terms as "immortal soul," "never-dying soul," and the like, though frequently used by many ecclesiastics and philosophers, are not found anywhere between the covers of Holy Writ.

That inexorable fact is a body blow to the Immortal-Soul theory. Those who possess nothing higher than the natural psuche-lite from Adam are destined to perish, and ultimately cease to be. And inspired Bible usage counterbalances and nullifies any and all human opinions to the contrary.

6. RESTRICTED USE IN THE APOCALYPSE

And observe this added point: In the Apocalypse, where the plural form eis tons aionas ton aionon ("to ages of the ages") appears frequently, the reference is usually to personified organizations, systems, or associations

(such as "beast," "Babylon," "false prophet") which must be punished, but which will not exist in the world to come.

Revelation 1:6; 4:9, 10; 5:13, 14; 7:12; 10:6: 11:15; 14:11; 15:7; 19:3; 20:10; 22:5. The difference between the K.J.V. and the R.S.V. in the number of occurrences is partly due to the critical text used for translating.

C. Texts Exemplify Diversified Meanings of Aion and Aidnios

Before testing out these principles with a diversified group of New Testament passages, let us first establish the connection between Old Testament and New Testament usage. The Septuagint again constitutes the vital link between the Hebrew Old Testament 'olam and the Greek New Testament aion and aionios, and provides a second valuable key to right understanding. In the Septuagint use of aionios, God and His attributes, kingdom, and covenant are set forth as unlimited and eternal. But earthly objects, belonging to a passing dispensation, and divine dealings not lasting beyond the continuance of the earth in its present form are always set forth as limited, or restricted, in duration.

Thus it is with the priests' office (Exodus 29:9), "perpetual" statutes (Leviticus 3:17), the burning of Ai (Joshua 8:28), "perpetual hissing" (Jeremiah 18:15, 16), "perpetual desolations" (Jeremiah 25:12; Ezekiel 35:9; Zeph. 2:9), "perpetual wastes" (Jeremiah 49:13), et cetera. This mixed usage constitutes a reliable guide to New Testament practice.

Eighteen Dissimilar Examples Typify Differences Here are eighteen annotated New Testament examples of this multiple usage with the Greek original, and its literal meaning:

Matthew 13:39—"The harvest is the end of the world [sunteleia tou aionos, "consummation of the age," or oion]." Matthew 21:19—

"Let no fruit grow on thee [barren fig tree] hence forward for ever [eis ton aiona, for the remainder of its life—not to all eternity]."

Luke 1:70—"Which have been since the world began [ton ap' aionos, "since time began," "from all time," "from the age," "from of old"]."

Luke 20:35—"Accounted worthy to obtain that world [tou aionos, "that other age," "the age to come"]." John 9:32—"Since the world

began [ek tou aionos, "out of the age"] was it not. . . ."

John 13:8—"Thou shalt never wash my feet [eis ton aiona, "never while the world lasts," "as long as I live," "not to all eternity]."

Acts 15:18—"All his works from the beginning of the world [ap' aionos, "from the age," "from of old," "eternity"]."

Romans 16:25—"Which was kept secret since the world began [chronois aioniois, "through ages long past," or "along with times eternal"]."

1 Corinthians 2:7—"Which God ordained before the world [pro ton aidnon, "age or age-time," "of indefinite duration"]."

1 Corinthians 10:11—"Upon whom the ends of the world [ton aidnon, "of the ages"] are come."

2 Corinthians 4:4—"The god of this world [tou aionos toutou, "of this present age"] hath blinded."

Galatians 1:4—"Deliver us from this present evil world [ek tou . . . aionos, "out of the present age or period"]." Ephesians 2:7—"That

in the ages to come [en tois aidsin, "in the periods of the future"] he might shew."

2 Tim. 1:9—"Given us in Christ Jesus before the world began [pro chronon aionion, "before the ages of time," or "before times eternal"]."

Titus 1:2—"Eternal life, which God . . . promised before the world began [pro chronon aionion, "before times eternal," "before the commence ment of the ages," "long ages ago"]."

Hebrews 1:2—"By whom [His Son] also he made the worlds [tous aionas, "ages"]." Hebrews 11:3—"The worlds [tous aionas, "ages"]

were framed by the word of God."

Jude 1:25—"Be . . . dominion and power, both now and ever [eis pantos tous aionas, "to all the ages," "before every age and now and unto all the ages"]."

Let us now analyze the evidence, seeking out and applying the sound guiding principles disclosed by these and other pas sages wherein usage alone is determinative.

D. Sound Interpretative Principles Emerge for Guidance

The fact that the adjective aionios is applied to some things that are "endless" does not for a moment prove that it always means endless, for such a rendering would, in many passages, be manifestly impossible and absurd. Further, the adjective "eternal" (aionios) and the adverbial phrases that express eternity (such as "forever," and "forever and ever"), indicate an indeterminate duration, whereof the maximum depends upon the nature of the person or thing that it modifies.

It is clearly infinite when predicated of God and eternal things, which are above and beyond time, or of beings who live by faith in communion and connection with Him. On the contrary, it is only relative for other beings, such as mortal man. Thus the sufferings of perishable creatures logically can not be prolonged longer than is compatible with their perish able nature.

The length must be inferred and determined from the context and the nature of the thing or persons under consideration. For example, in Romans 16:25, 26 the mystery of the gospel, hidden in times past—"chronois aidniois" (along with eternal times, but which have come to an end)—is placed in contrast with aidniou Theou ("eternal God," v. 26, R.S.V., endless and independent of all time). To hold that aionios in the one instance must mean the same as the other is manifestly an absurdity.

The Old Testament equivalents of aion and aionios were applied to the passing Aaronic priesthood, the inheritance given to Caleb, the period of the slave's life, the burning of the fire upon the altar, the leprosy of Gehazi, et cetera." One notable case in point was "the land thereof shall become burning pitch. It shall not be quenched night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go up for ever: from generation

to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever" (Isaiah 34:9, 10). And in Deuteronomy 23:3, 6 "for ever" is limited to the "tenth generation." Such examples afford sound principles for our guidance.

Dean F. W. Farrar states that in the Septuagint, which gives a reliable Greek parallel, the Hebrew '61am is rendered by aion 439 tunes. And in Exodus, twelve of its four teen usages are "of things which have passed away; in Leviticus, twenty-four times, always of things which have come to an end; and in Numbers ten times; in Deuteronomy about ten times."—Mercy and Judgment (2d ed.), p. 378.

1. VAST SCOPE OF MEANING OF "AION" EXHIBITED

In the Authorized Version aion is frequently translated "world." Later, the revisers usually rendered aion by "age," at least in the margin. The Greek word for "world," in its material framework, is, of course, kosmos, while aion is earth's history in the larger setting of eternity. It is finite man in a finite world, preceded and followed by the timeless eternities of past and future. God, the King of the "ages," laid His redemptive plans before the ages began to unroll, and sent forth His Son at the appointed time to consummate His matchless plan for the redemption of humanity.

In its backward look in depth, aion was a period lost in the mists of past eternity—the farthest dawn of time (Luke 1:70; John 9:32; Acts 15:18; Jude 25). But it may refer not only backward to time without beginning, but forward as well, as without end in the future. Thus we see that one group of aion texts tells of that which is divine and endless—God Him self (Romans 16:26); His attributes (1 Tim. 6:16); His kingdom (2 Peter 1:11); His covenant (Hebrews 13:20), et cetera.

Another group tells of the "ages" planned by God (Romans 16:25; 2 Tim. 1:9; Titus 1:2). A third group tells of His various acts and activities—"punishment" (Matthew 25:46); "judgment" (Mark 3:29; Hebrews 6:2); "destruction" (2

Thess. 1:9); "salvation" (Hebrews 5:9); "redemption" (chap. 9:12), et cetera. And there are lesser categories, but there is no conflict. Let us note a few important points.

2. GOD HAS INFINITY; MAN DOES NOT

There is a common misconception that any existence beyond this life is eternal, and that anything that is indefinitely extended is in finite and endless. But infinity is an attribute of God alone. He is the "King eternal, immortal, invisible," et cetera (1 Tim. 1:17), "who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto" (chap. 6:16). Therefore, intrinsic eternity of being cannot be the attribute of any creature, or he would be equal to his Creator. Man does not, and cannot, possess God's infinite attributes. Man can and does have wisdom, intelligence, power, and other attributes of free moral agents. But because of the very fact of his creation he must be dependent upon God for all that he is and has (Acts 17:28).

God gives to man "life." But this life is subordinate to God's own absolute, original, underived, self-existent life. God may prolong man's life, even without end. But such life is ever conditioned on God's will, power, and pleasure. It is contingent, and cannot be an independent life. The life everlasting, or immortality—which He has promised to all who are united to Him—is everlasting simply because such beings are in vital connection with Him. Such life is not absolute, but conditional. It is because He thus keeps them that the re deemed will be immortal.

Again, because the wicked will live again after the first death, some jump to the conclusion that such life after death will be endlessly perpetuated. But the Scriptures solemnly assure us that the wicked dead are to be raised, judged, and destroyed with an everlasting destruction, which is the "second death" (Revelation 20:6, 14, 15; 21:8).

The present earth and sinners are not to be forever in process of destruction by the purifying fires of the last day. The new earth is to rise from its ashes (Revelation 21; 22; 2 Peter 3:10-13). And the new earth, purified from all the pollutions of sin and free from all the deformities of the curse, is to be the everlasting abode of the righteous forever. Those are the contrasts left on record for our guidance.

3. "AIONIOS"—ETERNAL IN RESULTS, NOT IN PROCESS

Many illustrious scholars recognize that the meaning must be sought not in aionios but in the noun to which it is attached. Let us apply the principle: If the noun stands for that which is essentially eternal, then the accompanying adjective (aion ios) is properly translated eternal. But if it is applied to that which is temporal and terminable, then aionios simply means lasting to the natural limits of the noun. Thus the "eternal God" (Romans 16:26, R.S.V.), "eternal Spirit" (Hebrews 9:14), and "eternal kingdom of our Lord" (2 Peter 1:11, R.S.V.) are all clear and incontrovertible. Here the adjective has the meaning of endless, for the existence of Deity and His divine attributes and kingdom are

without end.

That aion can mean either a finite or an infinite period—a human lifetime or an eternity of endless duration, according to the nature of the case or usage—is sustained by many standard authorities, such as Greenfield, Schrevelius, Lid dell and Scott, Parkhurst, Robinson, Schleusner, Wahl, Cruden, Strong Young, Bullinger, et cetera.

But when aionios modifies nouns of action, such as an "eternal judgment" (Hebrews 6:2), "everlasting punishment" (Matthew 25:46), and the everlasting fires of Gehenna, it must be understood as lasting "forever" in the sense of everlasting results rather than an everlasting process. It is the verdict of the judgment that is immutable and stands forever—eternity of result, not of process. The same is true of "eternal redemption" (Hebrews 9:12). This is not an endless process, but the eternal result of Christ's once-for-all redemptive activity for man's salvation.

Similarly with "eternal destruction." A thing is not destroyed until the act of destroying comes to an end. The results of the destructive process are therefore eternal. When aionios modifies "punishment," the process is not one of eternally punishing but the eternal result of a terminative process. When a criminal is hanged, electrocuted, or gassed, the process is not one of eternal hanging, electrocuting, or gassing. The criminal is deprived of life forever.

In the case of "eternal fire" (Jude 7), the duration is determined by the nature of the fire, which burns until it consumes that upon which it is feeding, and then ceases—as with Sodom and Gomorrah, where the complete destruction of the cities is set forth as an example of the puros aidniou which will destroy the wicked.

4. REVELATION 20:10—EXAMPLE OF LIMITED TORMENT

That the terms aion and aionios often denote a limited period, and not always one of eternal duration, is apparent even from Revelation 20:10. "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever [eis tons aionas ton aionon, "to the ages of the ages"]."

The limitation in the text is explicit. The verse does not refer to all the wicked, but speaks only of the devil and the symbolic "beast" and the "false prophet." The "lake of fire," as the place and means of torment, is mentioned in verse 14. But there it is the declared symbol of complete and final utter destruction. "Death and hades" are cast into the lake of fire, after which it is recorded, "There shall be no more death" (Revelation 21:4). It comes to an end. Whatever was cast into the lake of fire, after it has wrought its destruction, no longer exists. In Revelation 20:15 is the declaration that "whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." This marks the final disposition, through destruction, of all who are not saved in the kingdom of God.'

Again, Revelation 14:11 represents the duration, or period, of the unrest of a special group. It, too, represents a limited period that will end. As seen elsewhere, this allusion to the smoke ascending is clearly a figure of speech, and to make that the basis of a doctrine which contradicts all the plain teaching of the Word on this question, as well as making God infinitely cruel, cannot be the proper exegesis.

• In this Dr. R. F. Weymouth concurs:
"The use in the N.T. of such words as 'death,' 'destruction,' 'fire,' 'perish,' to describe Future Retribution, point to the likelihood of fearful anguish, followed by extinction of being, as the doom which awaits those who by persistent rejection of the Saviour prove them selves utterly, and therefore irremediably, bad. —The flew Testament in Modern Speech (3d ed.), on Hebrews 10:27 n. 1.

•According to Archbishop R. C. Trench (Synonyms of the Mew Testament, pp. 208, 209) aion often means the "duration of the human life." Prof. Herman Cremer (Biblico Theological Lexicon, p. 74) likewise says, "Duration of human life, as limited to a certain space of time . . . hence the duration of life, course of life, terms of life, life term, life in its temporal form."

• As to Augustine, Dean F. W. Farrar soundly remarked that—
"Aion, aionios, and their Hebrew equivalents in all combinations, are repeatedly used of things which have come and^ shall come to an end. Even Augustine admits (what, indeed, no one can deny) that in Scripture aion, aionios must in many instances mean 'having an end'; and St. Gregory of Nyssa, who at least knew Greek, uses aionios as the epithet of 'an interval.' " —Eternal Hope (1879), excursus HI, "On the Word Aidnios," p. 197. (Italics his.)

5. BEWARE OF UNSCRIPTURAL FOUNDATIONS AND UNSOUND REASONING

The rendering of the same word (aionios) once by "everlasting" and the other by "eternal"—as they appear twice

in the same verse—is a purely arbitrary translator variation. Note it: "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment [kolasin aidnion, "everlasting in result"]: but the righteous into life eternal [zden aidnion]" (Matthew 25:46). But, far more important, we must beware of eisegetically reading into the word kolasis ("punishment") a sense that it does not possess. "Punishment," here, is the opposite of life only if that punishment be "death"— which it is. The eternal result is the same in both cases. There is no validity, for example, to Augustine's argument that if we do not make aionios kolasis mean endless punishing,' we have no assurance that the aionios zoe that follows means endless living—and that we thereby lose our promise of everlasting happiness. Such an Immortal-Soulist contention is utterly invalid.

Our sure and certain hope of everlasting happiness rests on no such flimsy foundation as the disputed meaning of a Greek adjective, which is often used of things that are transitory. We have the clear, positive, and explicit foundations of God's nonfigurative affirmations recorded for our assurance. Sound doctrine is based on solid Scripture, and sound reasoning there from.

Here are a few: Isaiah 25:6-8; Hosea 13:14; Luke 20:36; 1 Corinthians 15; 2 Tim. 1:10; 1 Peter 1:4; 5:4; Revelation 21:4; et cetera.

"Immortal," "Incorruption," "Immortality," "Eternal Life"

A. "Immortality"—Springs From God, Bestowed on Man

We next note the Greek terms and usages involved in the Immortality aspect. First, note the three foundational words used to express Immortal, Incorruption, and Immortal ity—together with eternal life. These are:

(1) Athanasia ("immortality"), which occurs three times in the New Testament, and is each time translated "immortality." In the Latin Vulgate it is rendered immortalitas, whence comes our "immortality." (2) Aphtharsia ("incorruption," "incorruptibility," "unending existence," "immortality") occurs eight times in the New Testament. It is rendered "incorruption" four times; "immortality" twice, and "sincerity" twice. In the Vulgate it is usually rendered incorruptio, whence comes our "incorruption." But it is once given as immortalitas (1 Corinthians 15:45). Then (3) aphthartos (“incorruptible," "undecaying," "immortal"}, the corresponding Greek adjective, occurs seven times in the New Testament—six times translated "incorruptible" and once as "immortal" (1 Tim. 1:17).

1. "ATHANASIA" ("IMMORTALITY")—POSSESSED BY GOD; PUT ON BY MAN

Thrice translated "immortality," athanasia is defined by Greenfield and Robinson simply as "immortality." Here are the passages:

(1) 1 Corinthians 15:53—"This mortal must put on [endusasthai, as a garment] immortality [athanasian]." (2) 1 Corinthians 15:54—

"When . . . this mortal shall have put on immortality [athanasian]."

(3) 1 Tim. 6:15, 16—"The King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality [athanasian]."

It is to be particularly noted that in these three places where athanasia occurs, the two points most vital to the doctrine of Immortality are included. These are: (1) That it is possessed only by God—"who only hath immortality," and (2) that "mortal" man must "put on" Immortality in order to receive it. And this, as seen elsewhere, is not until the resurrection-translation day, at the second coming of Christ.

2. "IMMORTALITY" IS IMMUNITY TO DEATH OR DESTRUCTION

"Immortality," then, according to definition and scriptural usage, is deathlessness—immunity to death or destruction. It is endless duration of life, or undyingness. Athanasia is made up of "a," without, and "thanatos," death. (There is also the comparable aphtharsia, or imperishability, which is like wise immunity to death or destruction.)

There are thus two angles to the concept of Immortality in the New Testament, namely: (1) That of freedom from death, or

deathlessness—never dying from any cause; and (2) freedom from the elements of corruption that bring forth death. Both, in the absolute, ultimate sense, apply exclusively to God, and to man only contingently and conditionally through voluntary and conscious union with Christ. This will be received personally and actually at the resurrection, or translation, of the righteous, at the second coming of Christ.

3. NOT NATURAL ENDOWMENT BUT SPECIAL BESTOWMENT

Natural Immortality is clearly not the common destiny of all men irrespective of the course pursued. Endless life is the reward only of seekers for righteousness and life. Immortality is consequently not a natural endowment but a special bestowment, made possible through the provisions of God's grace. It is not the universal possession of all mankind, but a gift of God to individual regenerate men in Christ. It is there fore conditional.

Paul's inspired declaration, that "our Saviour Jesus Christ . . . hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (2 Tim. 1:10), therefore becomes radiant with meaning. Our human nature has no enduring life apart from God. Separated from Him "who only hath immortality," our nature not only sinks into degeneration but is destined to "eternal destruction." To God is the power and the glory for the Immortality that comes to us.

B. Athanasia, Aphthartos, Aphtharsia—Restrict Innate Immortality to God

1. "APHTHARTOS" ("INCORRUPTIBLE") LIKEWISE CONFINED EXCLUSIVELY TO GOD

The Greek adjective aphthartos ("incorruptible"), from which the single instance of the term "immortal" is translated (1 Tim. 1:17), occurs seven times in the New Testament, the six other cases being rendered "incorruptible"—and defined by Greenfield as "incorruptible, immortal, imperishable, undying, enduring." The seven passages follow, with the key statement of the text:

(1) Romans 1:23—"Changed the glory of the uncorruptible [aphthartou] God into an image made like to corruptible man."

(2) 1 Corinthians 9:25—"They do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible [aphtharton]." (3) 1 Corinthians 15:52—"The

dead shall be raised incorruptible [aphthartoi], and we shall be changed." (4) 1 Tim. 1:17—"The King eternal, immortal [aphtharto], in

visible, the only wise God."

(5) 1 Peter 1:4—"To an inheritance incorruptible [aphtharton], and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you."

(6) 1 Peter 1:23—"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible [aphthartou]."

(7) 1 Peter 3:4—"That which is not corruptible [aphtharto], even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit."

The first four usages are by Paul, the last three by Peter. In the first passage dphthartos is used to describe God. In the second Paul utilizes it to depict the heavenly crown of the overcomer. In the third it is used to set forth the glories of the redeemed at the resurrection. In the fourth it is translated "immortal" and presents this unique and absolute attribute of God, the Eternal One. In the fifth Peter makes use of it to describe the inheritance reserved in Heaven for the over-comer. In the sixth it is used to set forth the creative principle by which regeneration is wrought in us. And in the seventh Peter again employs it to describe the heavenly adorning we are laboring to secure. These complete the instances.

Be it noted that in no case is aphthartos applied to man as a whole or to any part of man as a natural possession. It affirms that Christ brought Immortality, or incorruption, to light by coming to abolish death (2 Tim. 1:10), There could have been no life or Immortality without this, for the race was hopelessly doomed to death through sin. Christ abolished death by dying for man, and rising again a victor over death, thus preserving Immortality for us.

But this avails only for those who accept the proffered provision. Those who reject it will meet the same fate as would have been the lot of all, had not Christ undertaken the work of redemption with its imperishable boon. And it is to be particularly observed that aphthartos is never joined with the words for "soul" or "spirit" of man, in any of their 1,644 occurrences. It is predicated of only one being—the Eternal God. This is both highly significant and conclusive.

Thus in Romans 2:7 and 2 Tim. 1:10 aphtharsia is translated "immortality"—otherwise "incorruption" or

"sincerity."

2. "APHTHARSIA" ("INCORRUPTION")—NOT INALIENABLE POSSESSION OF MAN
And finally there is aphtharsia, defined as "incorruptibility," "incorruptness," and by implication, "immortality."
Aphtharsia occurring eight times (and twice rendered "immortality") * presents Immortality or incorruption from the material side (1 Corinthians 15:42, 50, 53, 54), also from the spiritual (Ephesians 6:24), and also from both aspects (Romans 2:7 and 2 Tim. 1:10). The passages follow:

(1) Romans 2:7—"Seek for glory and honour and immortality [aphtharsian], eternal life [zden aionion]." (2) 1 Corinthians 15:42—

"Sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption [aphtharsia]."

(3) 1 Corinthians 15:50—"Neither doth corruption inherit incorruption [aphtharsian]." (4) 1 Corinthians 15:53—"This corruptible must

put on incorruption [aphtharsian]."

(5) 1 Corinthians 15:54—"When this corruptible shall have put on incorruption [aphtharsian]."

(6) Ephesians 6:24—"Love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity [lit., "uncorruptness," aphtharsia]."

(7) 2 Tim. 1:10—"Who ["our Saviour Jesus Christ"] hath abolished death, and hath brought life [zoen] and immortality [aphtharsian] to light."

(8) Titus 2:7—"Uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity [aphtharsian, "in corruptibility"]."

Note that in the second one Paul refers, to the body after the resurrection. And in the third, fourth, and fifth Paul declares that "incorruption" cannot be inherited in our present mortal condition, and that "incorruption" must be put on be fore we can enter the kingdom of God. In the sixth and eighth it is used to describe the love we should bear to Christ, and the quality of doctrine we should hold. The seventh shows the relation of the gospel to Immortality.

Omitted by Griesbach, Lochmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Alford, and Codex Sinaiticus.

3. OBSERVATION
That is the complete Biblical testimony on Immortality and incorruptibility. So far from being applied to man inherently, it points out the supreme contrast between God and man. Man is now only corruptible and mortal. Incorruptibility and Immortality are for man an object of hope, for which he is to seek. These terms contrast the heavenly and the eternal with the earthly and the decaying. In other words, the Biblical usage in no way implies or sustains the popular Innate Immortality of the soul postulate.

C. The Five English Uses of Immortal/Immortality Examined

1. GOD THE POSSESSOR, MAN THE FUTURE RECEIVER
Let us next coordinate the evidence of the terms "immortal" and "immortality." These are used but five times in the whole of Scripture, and all occur in the New Testament. An examination of these five illuminates and clarifies the whole immortality question. Note them:

(1) "The blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality [athanasian, "deathlessness"], dwelling in the light which no man [oudeis, "no one of men"] can approach [aprositon, "inapproachable," "inaccessible"] unto" (1 Tim. 6:15, 16).

Here the word "immortality," one of three places where it comes from the Greek athanasia in Holy Writ, is expressly declared to be an attribute that belongs to God alone, along with His omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence. It is in the same category of exclusives. The inescapable inference therefore is that Immortality (like the other restrictive attributes of Deity) is a quality that man does not possess inherently, inalienably, or naturally.

This declaration agrees with the description in 1 Timothy 1:17 of "the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God." It stands out in contrast with "mortal man" (Job 4:17), who is subject to time and to death. We are admonished to "seek" for Immortality (Romans 2:7), and are to receive it as a "gift" (chap. 6:23). But it will not be "put on" until the resurrection, when "mortality" shall "be swallowed up of life" (2 Corinthians 5:4). It is not ours inherently, or actually, as yet. It is ours now in Christ—vested in Him.

(2) "By the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life [zden] and immortality [aphtharsian, "incorruption"] to light through the gospel" (2 Tim. 1:10). Here Christ is presented as the revealer and bringer of Immortality to man. The eternal Son of God came into the world to bring within the knowledge and range and experience of man that everlastingness of perfect being which is now the exclusive possession of Deity alone. But it is promised to and for us.

(3) "To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for . . . immortality [aphtharsian, "incorruption"], eternal life [zden aidnion]" (Romans 2:7).

Immortality is therefore not a present, innate possession of the human race, but is something diligently to be sought for and gained, and to those who seek for it in God's approved way, Immortality, or eternal life (zde

aidnios), will be granted. It is incredible to think of being admonished to seek for some thing already possessed, and from which, according to popular theology, we could not be dispossessed.
(4) "For this corruptible [phtharton] must put on incorruption [aphtharsian], and this mortal [thneton, "liable or subject to death"] must put on immortality [athanasian]" (1 Corinthians 15:53). The inference is consequently clear that man in his present state is mortal and corruptible, but that it is God's plan for him to "put on" Immortality and incorruption. Needless to say, one does not put on what is already a natural, inherent, and inalienable quality or possession. We would not put on what we have had ever since being born into the world. And man obviously cannot be both mortal and immortal at the same time. He is not immortal now.

(5) "So when this corruptible [phtharton] shall have put on incorruption [aphtharsian], and this mortal [thneton] shall have put on immortality [athanasian], then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory" (1 Corinthians 15:54). The time, according to the same apostle, when this mortal shall "put on" Immortality is at the resurrection, or translation—the resurrection at the Second Advent being the central theme of this chapter (see v. 52).

2. RECAPITULATION OF FIVEFOLD WITNESS
God is the sole present possessor of Immortality. He is therefore the source from which man, at present mortal,
must obtain Immortality. Christ is the revealer, the channel, the custodian, and the conveyer of immortal life. Not only has He brought to light the possibility of Immortality for dying man but He has provided in Himself the channel through which it may flow to us. Man is to seek for it by patient, godly living in Christ—and all such seekers will be rewarded. It is the reward of vital faith. Mortal man will put on Immortality at the resurrection of the just (Luke 20:36).

Immortality, then, is not a prerogative but a privilege, not an inheritance but an achievement, not a natural endowment conferred by nature at birth but a conditional gift conferred by Jesus Christ at His second advent, on the ground of a new birth, and abiding faith in and obedience to Him throughout life. The belief that man is immortal is an a priori assumption, that is, a reasoning based upon deducing consequences from definitions regarded as self-evident, but by reason alone, and not through established Biblical evidence. It is therefore presumption, without Scripture proof, and contrary to Scripture. Next let us turn to a serious problem that perplexes many.

D. Problem: "Eternal Life" and "Immortality"—Differences, Similarities, and Relationships

1. PROBLEM: ARE "ETERNAL LIFE" AND "IMMORTALITY" EQUIVALENTS?
A very real problem that must be faced frankly and resolved honestly and Biblically is the relationship between
two frequently used scriptural terms, "eternal life" and "immortality," and the far-reaching provisions for which they stand. Are they actually identical in meaning, being sim ply different expressions for the same thing, such as "regeneration" and the "new birth"? Or are there basic differences? Some maintain that they are one and the same—"eternal life" being, in reality, simply an equivalent for "immortality." If that be so then the terms can properly be equated, and the one expression used interchangeably for the other.

But this assertion must be put to test, for if such a contention be true, then its correctness can be substantiated by substituting one term

for the other in the various passages. If correct, such a usage should always make sense, without straining the meaning or creating conflict and confusion. On the other hand—and far more important— if such a procedure does violence to both the general and the specific teachings of Scripture, it is manifestly wrong. Let us therefore test out this matter, for much haziness and grave misconception exist in the popular mind over the question, Are eternal life and Immortality interchangeable terms? We cannot afford to be mistaken as to their relationships.

As a clue in advance, we shall find, in general, that eternal life is a life of union with God in Christ. It begins now, in trust, and comes to consummation in the tangible bestowal of Immortality, or deathlessness, for man at the Second Advent and its attendant resurrection. It is likewise true that eternal life is the portion of the believer only, not the inherent privilege of the sinner. Awareness of these principles will make it easier to follow the specific evidence to be presented. First look at some foundational facts.

2. GOD'S IMMORTALITY ABSOLUTE; MAN'S ALWAYS CONTINGENT

The "life" that Greek philosophy fondly fancied might exist intrinsically in the soul itself is, on the contrary, to be found solely in the person of Jesus Christ Himself. More over, the life that He will bestow upon His people is vastly greater and more wonderful than Plato ever conceived. But the fundamental point of disparity is this:

Apart from Christ, there is no abiding life. And aside from the pure Christian faith, all other systems or philosophical concepts as concerns life and Immortality are distorted by error. In the gospel of the Word alone is to be found truth without error, as pertains to life in all its aspects. To this Word we therefore turn.

First of all, Scripture reveals that God alone is eternal, that is, without beginning or end. ("From everlasting to everlasting, thou art God"—Psalm 90:2.) He alone has absolute Immortality—independent, innate, inalienable, "original, unborrowed, underived," inviolable, inexhaustible, all-comprehensive Immortality (1 Tim. 1:17; 6:16). Man, on the contrary, is a created being, a creature of time, who was not, but came into being, and can pass out of being at the will of God. Man, mortal since the Fall and subject to death, is to receive Immortality, or immunity to death. It is to be bestowed upon him as a gift, but not until the Second Advent and its attendant resurrection-translation of the righteous.

In contrast with God's Innate Immortality, man's conferred Immortality will be derived, dependent, contingent, and not self-perpetuating, but ever subject to God's continuing grace and power. Man will never have Immortality independent of God. This should never be forgotten. What God has created He can dissolve and destroy. Without life from God we are under sentence of death, past all hope, and dead or dying by reason of trespasses and sins. And Immortality will never be bestowed upon the willfully wicked. It is for the righteous alone.

3. ETERNAL LIFE—GOD'S BY NATURE; MAN'S TO RECEIVE.

Eternal life [zoe alamos] is proffered to man, and promised to him if he believes and obeys the conditions laid down for its reception. In such an event he is "ordained" unto eternal life. It will become his as a "gift." He is to "lay hold" upon it. But for man, eternal life is ever vested in Christ. Man has it now in Christ—but only when he is "in Christ," and Christ is "in him." So "eternal life" is the broader, more comprehensive term. It is God's inherently, and man's to receive conditionally and contingently. And it is his now in the way God has provided. The distinctions are precise and consistent but are often confused.

4. BOTH ETERNAL LIFE AND IMMORTALITY CENTER IN CHRIST

As with Immortality, so with eternal life for man, it likewise centers exclusively in the Person of Jesus Christ our Lord—incarnate, sinless, crucified, risen, ascended, ministering, and coming again as inerrant Judge and eternal King. He, and He alone, is its source and spring. Man forfeited eternal life through sin, but it is offered to him anew by God through Christ, as a future eternal inheritance for the "world to come." But more than that, it is assured now through regeneration, and possessed now in Christ, then to be enjoyed in immortalized realization through resurrection or translation at the Advent.

Eternal life is therefore much more comprehensive than Immortality, which in time begins for man only at the resurrection. Eternal life is a present possession, as well as being a post resurrection heritage forever. It is positive. It is endless fullness of life, while Immortality is negative, that is, not subject to death and corruption.

5. ETERNAL LIFE BASED ON DUAL RELATIONSHIPS

Eternal life, then, is something we both have now in Christ and shall receive with new fullness and personalized reality in the world to come (Luke 18:30). This dual relationship must be sustained. We must be, and continue to be, "in Christ," and Christ "in us"—this being our sole "hope of glory" (Colossians 1:27). Christ lives in me, bringing His life and power and victory to

bear in my life—my eternal life being vested in Him (Galatians 2:20).

Thus my present eternal life and my future Immortality for eternity are assured as long as this relationship continues. And as the gospel is positive, and eternal life is positive, the term "eternal life" is consequently used by the New Testament writers much more frequently than "immortality." It is God's over-all offer of life to man. So much for a general statement.

6. SOUND CONCLUSIONS DEDUCIBLE FROM SCRIPTURE EVIDENCE

Coming now to the detailed examination of the Scripture evidence, we hereafter tabulate three groups of texts that present the scope and reveal the distinctions and relationships between eternal life and Immortality. The first group unfolds the broad, over-all, comprehensive eternal life that characterizes God and Christ, as well as the regenerating life principle implanted in man, in contrast with the immortalized resurrection life for the future. Eternal life for man now, is a present possession that transforms the life that is lived "in Christ," and that assures the resurrection of the believer unto Immortality at the last day.

It is the life that brings full assurance and glorious hope, and that has the inviolable guarantee of God the Eternal, the Immortal One, back of it. Scan the list carefully in order to grasp the sweep of provisions. Sound conclusions will be deducible from this comprehensive Scripture coverage.

New Testament Testimony on "Eternal Life"

Matthew 19:16—"What good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life [zoen aionion]?"
Matthew 25:46—"The righteous ["shall go"] into life eternal." Mark 10:17—"What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?"
Mark 10:30—"Receive an hundredfold now . . . ; and in the world to come eternal life." Luke 10:25—"What shall I do to inherit eternal lifef"
Luke 18:18—"What shall I do to inherit eternal lifef" Luke 18:30—"In the world to come life everlasting." John 3:15—"Not perish, but have eternal life."
John 3:16—"Not perish, but have everlasting life." John 4:14—"Springing up into everlasting life."
John 4:36—"Gathereth fruit unto life eternal."
John 6:27—"Labour . . . for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life." John 6:40—"Every one which . . . believeth . . . may have everlasting life." John 12:25—"Shall keep it [his life] unto life eternal."
John 12:50—"His commandment is life everlasting."
John 17:2—"He should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." John 17:3—"This is life eternal, that they might know thee."
Acts 13:46—"Ye . . . judge yourselves [the Israelites] unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." Acts 13:48—"As many [Gentiles] as were ordained to eternal life believed."
Romans 2:7—"Seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life."
Romans 5:21—"Through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." Romans 6:22—"And the end everlasting life."
Romans 6:23—"The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Galatians 6:8—"Shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."
1 Tim. 1:16—"Should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting."
1 Tim. 6:12—"Lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called."
1 Tim. 6:19—"That they may lay hold on eternal life."
Titus 1:2—"In hope of eternal life . . . , promised before the world began." Titus 3:7—"Heirs according to the hope of eternal life."
1 John 1:2—"That eternal life [the Word], which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us."
1 John 2:25—"This is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life."
1 John 5:20—"This [Jesus Christ] is the true God, and eternal life."
Jude 21—"Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."

Note the qualifiers: "May have," "shall go into," "may inherit," "in the world to come," "springing up into," "unto," "should give," "unworthy of," "ordained to," "seek for," the "end" resultant, "reap," "lay hold on," "in hope of," "manifested unto," and "promised." That is the conditional, or contingent, side. It is expressly not innate, natural, inherent, nor automatically possessed.

E. Eternal Life—Present Possession, but in Christ

Now look at a second tabulation of texts, at first possibly in seeming conflict with the previous listing, yet upon closer examination found to be in complete harmony therewith and explanatory thereof. Only the believer has eternal life, and he has it now, and is passed from death to life. And because he has eternal life now, Christ will raise him up at the last day and bestow Immortality, or deathlessness, upon him at His second advent, and resurrection or translation. That is the time of immortalization.

But eternal life is contingent upon believing on Christ, receiving Christ, abiding in Christ, experiencing the new birth, and maintaining the "in Christ" position. No unregenerate sinner has eternal life, and no one who breaks off the living fellowship with Christ retains eternal life. Here is the Biblical documentation in nine passages, all in the apostle John's writings.

John 3:36—"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life."
John 5:24—"He that . . . believeth . . . hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."

John 6:47—"He that believeth on me hath everlasting life."
John 6:54—"Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day."
John 10:28—"I give unto them ["my sheep"] eternal life."
1 John 3:15—'Wo murderer hath eternal life abiding in him."
1 John 5:11—"God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son."
1 John 5:12—"He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."
1 John 5:13—"That ye may know that ye have eternal life."

Note the conditions in the light of these texts: Present possession is contingent upon believing, and continued believing, on the Son, and thus one passes from the realm of death unto life. Having eternal life is contingent upon living union with Christ, and such recipients will be raised up for the bestowal of Immortality at the resurrection. Eternal life is a gift, but only God's "sheep" have eternal life; no unrepentant "murderer" (or sinner) has eternal life. But most important of all, God has given us this eternal life in His Son. Eternal life is consequently dependent upon believing, having, and abiding in the Son. That is the simple but complete story of Holy Writ.

F. Immortality—God's Alone, Man's to "Put On" at Advent

As already observed, absolute, ultimate Immortality is God's only. Mortal man must "seek" for it, must "put it on," must find it in the gospel promises and God's enabling acts. It is not his presently, nor his naturally, inherently, innately, or independently. It is conditional, contingent, and still future—received at and retained after the resurrection-translation. But it is ours in promise and provision. Note the six pertinent texts sustaining these statements of relationship to the one and only innately Immortal One, whose light no man can approach unto—unless he presumptuously claims immortality on the basis of tradition, based in turn at the beginning on Satan's original lie in Eden (Genesis 3:4; John 8:44).

Romans 2:7—"Seek for glory and honour and immortality."
1 Corinthians 15:53—"This mortal must put on immortality."
1 Corinthians 15:54—"When . . . this mortal shall have put on immortality."
2 Tim. 1:10—"Hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."
1 Tim. 1:17—"Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God."
1 Tim. 6:15, 16—"The King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto."

G. Basic Twofold Provision-Condition of Eternal Life

It is essential that we grasp the revealed twofold basis for eternal life, which is ours here and now, in a special and specified sense. Let us look at one facet of this scintillating gem of truth: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1).

But to this "in Christ" aspect Paul immediately adds the converse side of this dual relationship—if "the Spirit of God dwell in you" (v. 9). And he immediately repeats this aspect by stressing plainly, "If Christ be in you, . . . the Spirit is life" (v. 10). That is unequivocal. Then comes this consequence and climax:

"If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies" (v. 11).

We are thus led up to our "change," or "quickening," at the resurrection. But Paul explains our present relationship even more explicitly:

"I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Galatians 2:20).

It is therefore both His life within us and His faith that are effective. That is the provision and the guarantee of our safety and triumph. Jesus likewise set forth the same twofold relationship in these words:

"He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood [receiving and assimilating Christ in the life], dwelleth in me, and I in him" (John 6:56).

That twofold integration is identical in intent with His previous statement:

"That every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day" (v. 40). There we have it: eternal life now; and Immortality at the Second Advent. That is God's gracious plan and wondrous provision.

1. SIMILAR TO CHRIST'S RELATIONSHIP TO THE FATHER

This life, integrated with the life of Christ, is much the same relationship as that between Christ and the Father when Christ was on earth as a man among mortal men, subject to death. This He presented in these words: "I am in the Father, and the Father in me" (John 14:11). And He added, "The Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works" (v. 10). That was the basis of Christ's triumphant life. So Christ says assuringly to the believer, "We [Christ and the Father] will come unto him [the believer], and make our abode with him" (v. 23). Then He adds one further provision: "Ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you" (v. 20).

That becomes an invincible threefold union. Never are we to forget that Christ is operatively present in us through the Holy Spirit. "For he [the Holy Spirit] dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you" (vs. 17, 18). And our eternal life is safe in Him. There is no occasion for failure. That is why and how our eternal life, vested in Christ, is ours now and here—with immortalization to follow.

2. LIFE OF GOD IMPLANTED THROUGH NEW BIRTH

One further point needs to be remembered. Eternal life is the life of God, revealed in and through Christ, who is God (John 1:4; 5:26; 1 John 1:1, 2). This life of God is implanted in the believer through the new birth (John 3:3-15; Galatians 6:15). And it is through this new birth that the believer becomes a partaker of the divine nature and a recipient of the life of Christ Him self (Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 2:10; 4:24; Colossians 1:27; 1 Peter 1:23, 25; 2 Peter 1:4; 1 John 5:10-12). This is not a mere reformation or rejuvenation of the old nature, but the creative act of the Holy Spirit (John 1:12, 13; 3:5; 2 Corinthians 5:17). But it cannot be overemphasized that this life remains vested in Christ, - and its operation in us is dependent upon our being in Him:

"And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life" (1 John 5:11-13). This is the living, vitalizing relationship o£ the heavenly Vine and the human branches (John 15:1-6).

H. Believers Predestined Heirs of Eternal Life Hereafter

But let us turn the gem and observe the light flashing from another facet. Believers are declared to be both "sons" and "heirs." Paul says, "If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs s with Christ; . . . that we may be also glorified together" (Romans 8:17). Our heirship is therefore tied in with our relation to Christ. But the "earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation [apokalupsin, "unveiling," "revealing," "appearing"] of the sons of God" (v. 19), "waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body" (v. 23), as we come to our full estate as sons. Our change, or immortalization, is therefore involved.

"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate [from proorisen, "decree or ordain beforehand"] to be con formed to the image of his Son" (v. 29).

Foreknowing therefore precedes predestinating, and predestinating precedes historical fulfillment. Transformation, or glorification, at the Second Advent is our destined goal. "Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also

justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified" (v. 30). That is the inexorable logic of the sequence and the glorious outcome in God's plan and provision of redemption.

1. ALREADY HEIRS, AWAITING TIME OF POSSESSION

Pursuing this point further, Paul gives assurance that "if ye be 3Cf. Ephesians 3:6 ("fellow heirs"); Hebrews 11:9; 1 Peter 3:7. Christ's, then are ye ... heirs according to the promise" (Galatians 3:29). But he immediately adds this qualifying factor: "That the heir, as long as he is a child [a minor under age], differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all" (Galatians 4:1)—"until the time appointed of the father" (v. 2).

He does not actually come into his inheritance until he is of age. So each child of God is a "son," and "heir of God through Christ" (v. 7). We are "heirs of salvation" (Hebrews 1:14), "heirs of promise" (Hebrews 6:17). (And James adds, that we are "heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him"—James 2:5.) But we have not yet reached the day of maturity. The apostle crystallizes and completes this entire "heir" line of reasoning by declaring that we shall "be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Titus 3:7).

That is the grand objective—to receive eternal life in its fullness, under God's enabling act, in the time and the way of His appointment.

2. PROLEPTIC FIGURE EMPLOYED RE "ETERNAL LIFE."

God often employs the proleptic figure of calling "those things which be not as though they were" (Romans 4:17)—things designed and destined to take place in the future—referring to them as though they were already accomplished. For example, Paul says that Christ "hath abolished death" (2 Tim. 1:10)—yet death is still actively operative, and will continue to be until Christ's return. But its end is assured. Or, John's "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" (Revelation 7:14)—yet these Christian martyrs were not as yet born. Thus also with the wondrous provision of eternal life: "This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (1 John 5:11, 12; the "gift of God," Romans 6:23). Everything, then, depends upon and is determined by, that unique relationship.

3. ETERNAL LIFE VESTED IN CHRIST, NOT IN US

This eternal life is not in us intrinsically, but is vested and preserved in Christ. It is safe and it is sure, and it is ours—in Him, when He dwells in us. It is thus that we have it. That is the divine safeguard and assurance. We have title but not yet possession. He that "endureth to the end shall be saved" (Matthew 10:22). On the contrary, "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered" (John 15:6). But we have this immutable assurance:

"This is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life [zoen aionion]: and I will raise him up at the last day" (John 6:40).

That is the relationship of eternal life to Immortality at the resurrection. It is the inevitable outgrowth of eternal life now, in Christ. Paul himself thus lived "in hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began" (Titus 1:2; cf. 2 Tim. 1:9; Ephesians 1:4). Eternal life is still in trust in Christ. This is "the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 1:1). Again, "This is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life" (1 John 2:25). It is as sure as the Word and as certain as the integrity of God. It is ours now in Christ, when He is in us. That is God's provision. It is infinitely more safe and secure than if given outright to us.

4. MINOR HEIR DOES NOT HAVE POSSESSION UNTIL OF AGE.

Thus the one who abides in Christ can truthfully say that he "hath everlasting life," for Christ is the embodiment, the source, the personification of life—both the life and resurrection (John 5:24-29; 11:25; 14:6). But Paul specifies, "Your life is hid [laid up, hidden away in store] with Christ in God" (Colossians 3:3). No one can deprive us of it (John 10:28). It is ours, if faithful, just as the heir to an estate (who is still a minor) can say, "The estate is mine!" But he cannot take personal, tangible possession of it until he is of age, as it were, under the terms and specifications of his father's will and testament. Eternal life is received in final immortalized form at the resurrection, when we enter upon our full estate. It is thus that we are to understand these precious declarative assurances:

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath ever lasting life" (John 6:47).

"Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day" (v. 54). "Verily, verily, I say

unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life" (chap. 5:24).

There is thus harmony, logic, love, assurance, and the pledged word of the Eternal God, "who only hath immortality," and who has made full provision for us to be clothed with Immortality appropriate for us, at the appointed time—the Second Advent.

Technical Terms: Sleeping, Waking, Resurrection

A. "Sleeping" and "Awakening"—NT Terms for Death and Resurrection

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Two Greek words are rendered "sleep"—(1) katheudo ("to compose one's self in voluntary or natural sleep," as in 1 Thess. 5:6), employed 22 times, and never used of death; and (2) koimao ("to fall asleep involuntarily," as in 1 Thess. 4:14). This is used of the sleep of death because it is involuntary, while katheudo is voluntary. Koimao occurs 18 times, and is constantly used of death (except Matthew 28:13; Luke 22:45; John 11:12; Acts 12:6).

1. MULTIPLE SPECULATIONS OVER STATE IN DEATH

The mystery of man's state in death has frequently been used as a springboard for plunging into philosophic speculation, poetic fancy, superstitious credulity, and religious yearning. Here Immortal-Soulist speculation ranges all the way from Oriental belief in transmigration, Platonic escape to the starry spheres, American Indian happy hunting grounds, Spiritualism's eerie world of progressive spheres, Romanism's Purgatory and limbo, and on to Protestantism's magic gateway to Heaven.

But the human mind, unaided, is baffled by the mystery of the death state. Man craves certainty and solace on this point. Scripture alone pierces the veil and gives us trustworthy information. Only the Bible gives us the true understanding of the intermediate state. Even after three years of personal companionship with Christ during His earthly ministry, the early apostles still needed the risen Christ to open "their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures" (Luke 24:45). We too must likewise listen to His words today. We too as verily need the divine illumination of the Holy Spirit, who will guide us, as He did them, into "all truth" (John 16:13).

2. "SLEEP"—COMMON TERM FOR "DEAD IN CHRIST."

That man "sleeps" between death and the resurrection is the express testimony of Scripture. It is, in fact, the uniform testimony of both the Old and the New Testaments—as for example, with Moses, David, and Daniel in the Old,1 and Christ, Paul, and Stephen in the New.2 Peter expressly said, "David is not ascended into the heavens" (Acts 2:34). Man sleeps; then he wakens. That epitomizes his experience, covering the intermediate state between the present life and the life to come. Deuteronomy 31:16; 1 Kings 1:21; Daniel 12:2. John 11:11; Acts 7:59, 60; 1 Corinthians 15:20; 1 Thess. 4:15.

The verb koimad ("to make sleep," "put to sleep," "fall asleep," "sleep") not only is generally used of the "sleep of death" but is affirmed to be the condition of man as a whole in death (cf. Deuteronomy 31:16—"thou shalt sleep with thy fathers"). Death is affirmed to be an unbroken slumber until the resurrection morn, when the sleepers will awaken (Daniel 12:2). Jesus said of Lazarus, "I go, that I may awake him out of sleep" (John 11:11). And when "he that was dead" was awakened, he came forth bodily from the tomb (v. 44). And Jesus said, "Loose him [from the "graveclothes"], and let him go" (v. 44). Moreover, Paul in 1 Thessalonians 4 assures us that neither those who are alive at the return of Christ nor those who "sleep in Jesus," will go into the Lord's presence before the other group. Both the resurrected and the translated ones are "caught up together" to meet their returning Lord. Such a declaration confutes the concept that the dead saints have gone before to glory, and have been with Christ for centuries, or millenniums. Neither the "quick" ("the living") nor the "dead" precede the other, but the "changed" quick and the awakened sleepers will go "together" into the presence of Jesus forever (vs. 15-17).

3. FIGURE OF "SLEEP" USED ONLY OF FIRST DEATH

There is a striking similarity between the beautiful euphemism of the "sleep" of the dead and the "sleep" of the

living. Both indicate a condition of unconsciousness and inactivity, which concept is, of course, totally opposed to the popular postulate of the superlative consciousness and activity of allegedly immortal souls. But the Bible must be the criterion on this. Neither tradition nor speculation nor human aspiration can be trusted for reliable information here.

There is also a striking similarity in the awakening that follows. In literal sleep the person who sleeps wakes up after his rest. There is thus the suggestion of a resurrection. But the Scriptures are explicit just here. The dead do awaken. Those who "sleep the sleep of death" (Psalm 13:3) are not to remain in the death-sleep forever. Both good and evil "sleep," and both righteous and wicked must assuredly "awake" (Daniel 12:2).

For "as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Corinthians 15:22). But the figure of sleep is used only of the first, or temporal, death. When we lie down in the "sleep of death," the next thing of which we are conscious is that of being awakened by Jesus, the declared "resurrection, and the life" (John 11:25), to live forever or to be judicially condemned to the second, or eternal, death, from which there will be no awakening.

Such as Job, "For now shall I sleep in the dust" (Job 7:21), or David, "Lest I sleep the sleep of death" (Psalm 13:3), or "David slept with his fathers" (1 Kings 2:10), or "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake" (Daniel 12:2). For Old Testament list see pp. 81, 82. "In Christ" we have reconciliation, salvation, access, hope, peace, sonship, victory, safety, and resurrection. (See Romans 5:1, 2, 10; 8:37: 1 Corinthians 15:57; Ephesians 1:5; Colossians
1:20; Titus 3:5, 6.)

4. UNIFORM USAGE DETERMINES THE MEANING

To grasp the New Testament usage at a glance, let the eye run down the italicized words in the following list of passages, and observe the frequency and consistency with which the terms "sleepeth," "sleep," "asleep," and "slept"—all variants of koimao—are used for the sleep of death in the New Testament, paralleling the same usage throughout the Old Testament. This New Testament terminology is used particularly of those who sleep "in Christ" (1 Corinthians 15:18), or "in Jesus" (1 Thess. 4:14).

Matthew 9:24, 25—"The maid is not dead, but sleepeth. . . . And the maid arose." Matthew 27:52—"Many bodies of the saints which slept arose."
Mark 5:39—"The damsel is not dead, but sleepeth."
Luke 8:52, 53—"She is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn, knowing that she was dead." John 11:11—"Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep."
Acts 7:60—"He [Stephen] fell asleep." Acts 13:36—"David . . . fell on sleep."
1 Corinthians 7:39—"If the husband have fallen asleep [koimao]" (Rotherham tr.).
1 Corinthians 11:30—"And many sleep."
1 Corinthians 15:6—"Some are fallen asleep."
1 Corinthians 15:18—"They also which are fallen asleep in Christ."*
1 Corinthians 15:20—"Christ [is] risen from the dead, ... the first fruits of them that slept."
1 Corinthians 15:51—"We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed."
1 Thess. 4:13—"Concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others."
1 Thess. 4:14—"Them also which sleep in Jesus."'
1 Thess. 4:15—"Not prevent [phthano, "go before, or precede"] them which are asleep."
1 Thess. 5:10—"Whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him."
2 Peter 3:4—"Since the fathers fell asleep."

It will be observed that these references include the great resurrection chapters, 1 Corinthians 15 and 1 Thessalonians 4. It is to be particularly noted that "sleep" is used both of the good and of the evil dead. It is similarly to be observed that koimao to describe the dead was likewise used by the pagan ancients to describe the dead—but without hope of a resurrection or an awakening. By them it was joined with words that excluded the hope of "waking," or with such qualifiers as "eternal," "unawakened," or "everlasting," or "brazen" or "iron" sleep. The contrast is impressive. The Christian hope of glorious awakening made the difference.

5. "SLEEP" IMPLIES ASSURANCE OF "AWAKENING."

Sleep is a tender and hope-inspiring figure of speech, chosen by Inspiration to represent death; for, as noted, sleep implies assurance of a later awakening. The literal use of the term "sleep" is, of course, limited to living persons, while in figurative use it pertains only to the dead. It was employed by Christ Himself in preference to the harsher literal term "death," with its inevitable "sting" (1 Corinthians 15:56).

Speaking figuratively, Jesus said, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep" (John 11:11). However, when Jesus perceived that He was misunderstood, He said "unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead" (v. 14). And He quickly added, "Thy brother shall rise again" (v. 23). Both sets of expressions meant the same.

Equated with the "dead in Christ" in v. 16.

When Paul speaks figuratively of those who "sleep in Jesus" (1 Thess. 4:14), he explains this as literally "the dead in Christ" (v. 16). The term "sleep" softens the impact of the blow by reminding one of its temporary

character and the assured awakening to follow. It is a euphemism—a gentle, comforting word substituted for the harsher, more repellent term. Now note the technical term.

6. "AWAKENING" FROM DEATH-SLEEP Is INSPIRED TERMINOLOGY

To "awake" (exupnizo, "to rouse out of sleep") is Biblically and logically the reverse of "falling asleep" in death.
They are antithetical terms in striking contrast. The classic New Testament example of the use and meaning of the term "awake" is in connection with the aforementioned raising of Lazarus. Observe the entire passage:

"Our friend Lazarus sleepeth [from koimao]; but I go, that I may awake [from exupnizo, "arouse"] him out of sleep. Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well. Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep. Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead" (John
11:11-14). The resurrection followed, as Christ came to the grave and called, "Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth" (vs. 43, 44). That was the "awakening" of Lazarus out of the "sleep" of verse 11. The meaning is identical. Christ said nothing about Lazarus having gone to Heaven, and that He was going to bring him back from glory. He simply inquired where they had laid him. And when Lazarus came forth he did not report having seen anything in the nether world.

In the Old Testament are numerous examples of paralleling usage:
Job 14:12—"Till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep." Psalm 17:15—"I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness."
Isaiah 26:19—"Thy dead men shall live. . . . Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust." Jeremiah 51:39, 57—"Sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake."
Daniel 12:2—"Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake."

The last-day parallel is, of course, that the sleeping dead shall both hear and respond to the voice of the returning Christ, the Life-giver, and shall arise at that transcendent hour. Observe:

John 5:25—"The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." John 5:28, 29—"All that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth."
1 Thess. 4:16—"The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, . . . and the dead in Christ shall rise."

There is thus harmony and symmetry of expression as to "sleeping" and "awaking"—Bible terms for going into and coming out of the death state.

7. TRANSLATION CONCEALS REITERATED "AWAKENING" EMPHASIS

Another but more technical point may well be noted, pertaining to translation. Some sixteen times in 1
Corinthians 15 the resurrection "awakening" from the "sleep" of death is pressed home by the apostle Paul. First of all, as a background he says that Christ "died for our sins" and was "buried," and "rose [from egeiro, "awoke," "roused up from sleep"—the sleep of death] again the third day according to the scriptures" (vs. 3, 4). Then He was seen by Peter, next by the twelve, then by more than five hundred at one time—most of whom were still living when he wrote (about A.D. 57), but "some are fallen asleep"—then seen by James and by all the apostles (vs. 5-7). Finally He was seen by Paul himself (v. 8). Now note how, ten times in eight verses (12-20), Paul in the original Greek stresses the resurrection as "awaking" (from egeiro) from the dead—including that of Christ Himself. Observe:

"Now if Christ be preached that he rose ["awakened"] from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection ["rising up"] of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen ["awakened"]: and if Christ be not risen ["awakened"], then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have

testified of God that he raised up ["awakened"] Christ: whom he raised ["awakened"] not up, if so be that the dead rise ["wake"] not. For if the dead rise ["awaken"] not, then is not Christ raised ["awakened"]: and if Christ be not raised ["awakened"], your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep [from koimao] in Christ are perished" (vs. 12-18). "But now is Christ risen ["awakened"] from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept [from koimao]" (v. 20).

This iterated and reiterated contrast between sleeping and awakening is impressive. And in five additional instances egeiro ("awaken") occurs (1 Corinthians 15:32, 35, 42, 43, and 52).' The term "sleep" enshrines a blessed truth and Biblical fact, for the sleeper is unconscious of any lapse of time between death and resurrection. He simply goes to sleep and later awakes, in the resurrection of the dead.

v 32—"What advantageth it me, if the dead rise ["awaken"] not?" v 35—"How are the dead raised up?"
v 42—"It is raised in incorruption." v 43—"It is raised in glory."
v 52—"The dead shall be raised incorruptible."

Other examples of egeiro occur: Matthew 8:25—"His disciples came to him, and woke him"; Ephesians 5:14— "Awake thou that steepest, and arise from the dead"; Romans 13:11—"Now it is high time to awake out of sleep."

8. BEARS VITAL RELATIONSHIP TO ADVENT HOPE

Christ must come again in order to receive His people unto Himself (John 14:3) and to reunite those separated by death. In this light the Second Advent becomes luminous as the blessed hope of the church. The sole means of meeting and reuniting with our loved ones is the return of Jesus to awaken them, or raise them up, from sleep in their dusty beds. The fact that death has been popularly regarded as the immediate gateway to Paradise is largely responsible for relegating so far into the background the New Testament doctrine of our Lord's return. And it has blurred the resurrection truth. The time has come to give again our Lord's return its rightful, paramount place in the preaching of the gospel.

B. Two Separate General Resurrections—of Righteous and Wicked

There are two verbs and two nouns, respectively, for "resurrect" and "resurrection." The two verbs are: (1) anistemi ("to stand up," "to raise up," "to rise up," "to arise or rise again"), occurring 111 times, 35 of which refer to resurrection (for example: Matthew 17:9; 20:19; John 6:39, 40, 44, 54); and (2) egeiro ("to rouse up from sleep," "to awaken"), occurring 141 times, 70 of which refer to resurrection (for example: Matthew 10:8; 27:63, 64; Luke 20:37; 24:6, 34; John 12:1, 9, 17; Ephesians 1:20; 5:14; etc.).

The two nouns are: (1) anastasis ("a standing up," or "rising as from the dead"), occurring 42 times, always translated resurrection (except Luke 2:34); and (2) egersis ("a waking up as from sleep," "a rousing from sleep," because death is a sleep), as in Matthew 27:53.

1. TWO GENERAL RESURRECTIONS FOLLOW IN SEQUENCE

According to Scripture, after Christ's resurrection as the "first-fruits," two general resurrections are to follow in sequence. First note the Scripture:

"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end" (1 Corinthians 15:22-24). (1) The initial resurrection is that of "Christ the first-fruits" (1 Corinthians 15:23; Acts 26:23). His tremendous, matchless resurrection provides the sole basis and assurance of the resurrection of all men (1 Corinthians 15:16-20), and suggests the nature of the change that will come to our bodies.

(2) Then "afterward they that are Christ's at his [second] coming" (v. 23). This is called the "first resurrection" (Revelation 20:5, 6), the "better resurrection" (Hebrews 11:35), the "resurrection of life" (John 5:29; Daniel 12:2), and the "resurrection of the just" (Luke 14:14; Acts 24:15). Those who partake in it are called "blessed and holy" (Revelation 20:6), for they will not be hurt of the "second death." They are "children of God, being the children of the resurrection" (Luke 20:35, 36)." (3) Finally come the "rest of the dead"—those that "lived not again until the thousand years were finished" (Revelation 20:5).

So, beyond the "first" resurrection looms the "second." This presupposes that the "rest of the dead" (the wicked) were not living during the thousand years. This comprises the resurrection of the unjust (Acts 24:15), the "resurrection of damnation" (John 5:29), the resurrection to "shame and everlasting contempt" (Daniel 12:2). It is the antithesis of the first resurrection. These compass the general

resurrections. And those who came up in the second are, after judgment, cast into the "lake of fire," which is the second death (Revelation 20:6, 12-15).

Bullinger, Lexicon, "Resurrection," pp. 643, 644.

2. RESURRECTION UNIVERSAL IN OPERATION
So the resurrection is universal in its operation—"all [shall] be made alive," just as verily as "all die" (1 Corinthians 15:22). All men must and will be raised to acknowledge the lordship of Christ (Romans 14:10, 11). To those who

acknowledge that lordship now, in this life, there is salvation (chap. 10:9). To those who acknowledge it too late—as a constraint, after the second resurrection—there is only destruction. But that lordship will one day be - acknowledged by all (Phil. 2:9-11; cf. Revelation 19:16), one way or the other.

We must therefore conclude that the general term "resurrection of the dead" (anastasis nekron) includes both the resurrection unto "life" for the just and the resurrection to judgment of the unjust (John 5:29; Acts 24:15).

3. DRAMA OF REBELLION, SIN, AND DEATH OVER
The resurrections now past, the Inspired Record adds, "Then cometh the end, . . . when he shall have put down [from katarged, "render inactive," "abolish," "cause to cease," "bring to nought"] all rule and all authority and power" (1 Corinthians 15:24). Rebellion is subdued. All opposing powers are destroyed, abolished (Romans 6:6; 2 Thess. 2:8; Hebrews 2:14). Then, significantly, Paul immediately adds, "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death" (1 Corinthians 15:26).

Thus the supreme purpose of Christ's incarnation mission is fulfilled, for He came that He might "destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil" (Hebrews 2:14). These "principalities and powers" and "rulers of the darkness" and spiritual hosts of wickedness are consumed by the "everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matthew 25:41). Thus the abolition of death is the last act in the divine drama of the ages (1 Corinthians 15:26; Revelation 20:14). Sin and sinners, death and devil, are gone forever. The drama of time is over. God is all in all. Eternal life in the new earth begins, with the saints restored and safe forevermore.

C. Glory of Our Immortalized Resurrection Bodies

1. RESURRECTION OF BODY INDISPENSABLE TO FUTURE LIFE.
According to the New Testament, a bodily resurrection is indispensable to our future Immortality. Paul declares that without such a consummation of God's redemptive purpose, "they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished" (1 Corinthians 15:16-18). There would be no restoration of the person. So the resurrection body is involved in the promised gift of immortal life, bestowed at the Advent. "This mortal must put on immortality" (v. 53)— something it had not before possessed. It is a bodily resurrection that gives reality and substance to our forthcoming immortal life. (The thought of discarnate immortal souls is wholly un-Biblical. Shades, floating about in mystic aerial regions, are totally foreign to Holy Writ. Such a notion stems from Greek philosophy.)

The human personality requires a resurrection body as an instrument for further life, thought, and activity. That is an integral part of the change, or quickening (Romans 8:11) process, a resurrection-translation act of God, to take place at the Second Advent. The record is clear: "He which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus" (2 Corinthians 4:14). His was an actual bodily resurrection, albeit with a glorified body. But this involves the quickening of our mortal bodies. And this too is imperative but conditional:

"If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken [from zoopoieo, "to make alive," "give life," especially eternal life] your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you" (Romans 8:11). This relationship between the present mortal body and the future glorified body is highly important. It is sown in "dishonour" and "weakness," and raised in "glory" and "power" (1 Corinthians 15:43). Here is the inspired description: "It [the body] is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: ... it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." "To every seed his own body" (vs. 42-44, 38). This latter expression cannot be overemphasized. Identity and personality will be preserved.

2. CONTINUITY OF IDENTITY AND PERSONALITY PRESERVED

This does not mean that the same identical particles of matter at the moment of death will reunite to form the same body in the resurrection. There is a progressive change of bodily structure throughout our present life. But the same essential organization is maintained in the provision of God, and the same personality is preserved without change. The body of the resurrection will maintain the same recognizable pattern and personality.

Even the identity of the same Rhine or Mississippi, the Nile, Hudson, or Amazon, remains despite the passage of thousands of years. Not a drop of water now flowing is identical with the river that flowed at the time of its discovery, yet it is the identical, recognizable river. This, of course, is a crude illustration, but it affords a suggestion.

Further, Paul's reference to the body as the "seed," suggests some sort of vital connection—the future counterpart and the seed from which it springs. There is identity, but not a physical connection in the sense thai

the stalk is built directly from the structure of the seed. "Thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain" (1 Corinthians 15:37). There is continuing personal identity, the continuing core of personality. However, the death of the seed is involved—"That which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die" (v. 36). Christ touches on this same thought: "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit" (John 12:24).

Then comes His explanation: "He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal" (v. 25). As noted, though the physical form of man is constantly changing and being renewed throughout this life, he continues to be the same person—as the new materials are organized and integrated into the same continuing body. We are able to identify the child we knew with the man we now see.

3. RESURRECTION BODIES TO BE VASTLY DIFFERENT

As to the precise nature of the resurrection bodies—"How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?" (1 Corinthians 15:35)—the answer is not revealed. John says, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him" (1 John 3:2). There were quibblers in apostolic days as in ours. These Paul rebuked. Whatever the exact connection between our present mortal bodies and our resurrection bodies, we know that they will be vastly different. There will be a tremendous "change" (1 Corinthians 15:51, 52), as Paul twice emphasizes. All infirmities and defects and earthly limitations will vanish. In Old Testament times Job was waiting until his "change" should come (Job 14:14).

As stated, the precise nature of that change has not been revealed. It is beyond our present knowledge and comprehension. It is a "spiritual body" in contrast with our present "natural body." Paul compares it with a bare kernel of wheat planted in the ground and the sturdy stalk that comes from it. In the glory of the resurrection body the contrast is between mortality and corruption, and Immortality and incorruption. Christ's risen body, with its exemption from the previous laws of time, space, and movement, suggests the nature of the change, or contrast. But we must leave it there.

4. "SPIRITUAL BODIES" PERFECTLY ADAPTED TO RESURRECTION LIFE

Paul assures us that Christ will "fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory" (Phil. 3:21, A.R.V.). He presses on the tremendous "change" (1 Corinthians 15:50, 51) that will take place, and compares our present and future bodies as being that of "bodies terrestrial" and "celestial bodies" (v. 40). He makes the contrast between the pale, dim "glory of the moon" and the brilliant, vitalizing "glory of the sun" (v. 41). And he adds, "So also is the resurrection of the dead" (v. 42).

Paul invoked unusually strong language in dealing with quibblers on this point, employing the term "fool" (aphron, 'without mind," "senseless," "destitute of sound principle"). He was a bit impatient with valueless, hypothetical questions. Christ also twice used the same term in Luke 11:40 and 12:20 in dealing with the hypocritical Pharisees—"Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee.

He contrasts the "image of the earthy" with the "image of the heavenly," and the "bare grain" with the "body that shall be" (1 Corinthians 15:37-49). The contrast is between "dishonour" and "glory," and "weakness" and "power." Paul categorically declares, "There is a natural body [for this life], and there is a spiritual body" (v. 44), for the life to come. "As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly" (v. 49). He does not define or explain the spiritual body. But this we do know: This present, earthly "flesh and blood" body "cannot inherit the kingdom of God" (v. 50), any more than corruption can "inherit" incorruption.

Of this we may be sure: The "spiritual body" will be perfectly adapted to the plane of the resurrection or immortal life to come. And the earthly limitations of corruption and mortality will be put off forever. And what we "put on" is a "building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (2 Corinthians 5:1). That is the source of the resurrection body, and its glorified character. Death and disintegration will be vanquished forevermore. And all this is through Christ Jesus. For "when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory" (Colossians 3:4).

D. Many in Heaven Through Special Resurrection or Translation

1. ENOCH, MOSES, AND ELIJAH ARE EARLIEST TROPHIES.

The Bible explicitly states that a host of redeemed worthies from this earth are already in Heaven. But this is to be particularly noted: All the immortalized from earth who are there have gone by way of one of two

undeviating channels—special resurrection or translation. There are no exceptions. These are the only corridors to glory, the sole gateways to Heaven.

One group passed through death, and was raised immortal and incorruptible; the other escaped death through bodily transformation and translation to glory. Take the earliest example of translation. "Enoch, the seventh from Adam" (Jude 14), was the first representative of the human race to be translated. He was "changed," transformed, immortalized, and taken to Heaven in his glorified translation body, as the earliest trophy of redemption. He thus became a type of the living righteous who will be "changed," and "caught up" at Christ's second coming. Here is the inspired account:

"By faith Enoch was translated [from metatithemi, "transported"] that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him" (Hebrews 11:5).

Moses, on the other hand, was the first to be resurrected from the dead by a special resurrection. Thus, "death reigned from Adam to Moses" (Romans 5:14). He "died" and was "buried" (Deuteronomy 34:5, 6). Just when his resurrection occurred we do not know. But there was a futile challenge by Satan over the right of Michael, the Archangel, to bring Moses forth from the grave (Jude 9). Reverting again to translation, Elijah was more spectacularly translated, as he was taken up to Heaven by a "chariot of fire," evidently transported by angels (Psalm 104:4). Here again is the inspired record:

"And it came to pass, as they [Elijah and Elisha] still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven" (2 Kings 2:11; cf. 6:17).

Elisha witnessed it and cried, "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him [Elijah] no more" (chap. 2:12). These "chariots" are evidently connected with the angels: "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels" (Psalm 68:17).

2. GLORIFIED MOSES AND ELIJAH APPEAR AT TRANSFIGURATION

At the Transfiguration, witnessed by Peter, James, and John, there appeared with the "transfigured" Christ, "Moses and Elias talking with him" (Matthew 17:1-8). That is very specific. Then, after they had conversed concerning Christ's coming death and resurrection, Moses and Elias disappeared, and the disciples "saw no man, save Jesus only" (v. 8). They were overwhelmed by what they had seen. But Jesus charged them to tell no man "until the Son of man be risen again from the dead" (v. 9; cf. Mark 9:4-10). It was this experience that caused the disciples to discuss among themselves just "what the rising from the dead should mean" (Mark 9:10). Light was dawning upon their comprehension.

According to Luke, at the Transfiguration "the fashion of his [Christ's] countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistering" (Luke 9:29). Then these "two men, which were Moses and Elias," similarly "appeared in glory, and spake of his [Christ's] decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem" (v. 31). There was no mistaking their identity. They were clearly the illustrious characters of Bible fame—prototypes of the resurrected and translated saints. This, of course, involves belief in the supernatural, life-giving power of God. And this we affirm.

3. SPECIAL RESURRECTION AT CHRIST'S RESURRECTION

There was also a singular resurrection of "saints" who had been sleeping in death, which occurred in connection with earth quaking phenomena attending the death and resurrection of Jesus, when—"the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his [Christ's] resurrection, and went into the holy city [Jerusalem], and appeared unto many" (Matthew 27:51-53; cf. Romans 1:4).

These glorified risen saints were perhaps trophies from every age. In any event, they were witnesses to the reality of God's power to raise the dead, and afforded supreme proof of the reality of the resurrection by the very fact that they had been raised—and all this at the very time that the Jewish leaders were seeking desperately to conceal the fact of Christ's resurrection and offering money to the Roman soldiers to lie about His resurrection. But incontrovertible witness was thus given both to the Jews and to Christ's followers. These provided unassailable attestation. They may be classed among the "many infallible proofs" (Acts 1:3) of Christ's resurrection.

And when Christ ascended He led with Him this "multitude of captives" (Ephesians 4:8, margin; cf. Psalm 68:17, 18). The chain of death was demonstrably broken. Satan's captives were recaptured by the greater power of Christ, and Christ thus led them up to Heaven in triumphal procession. Thus it was that "having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it" (Colossians 2:15).

4. GOD'S STIPULATED WAY FOR IMMORTALIZATION

According to Paul, the living saints will all be "changed" ("altered") at Christ's second advent, and will "put on" "incorruption" and "immortality." "Changed" is simply another term for "translation." This involves the transformation and glorification of the body of the living, as verily as with the transfiguring glorification of the resurrected dead. The only difference is that for them there is no antecedent sleep in death. Here is Inspiration's detailed portrayal:

"Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the [righteous] dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we [those living at Christ's return] shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality" (1 Corinthians 15:51-53).

There is no other way. This, as emphasized, is God's stipulated plan and provision—resurrection or translation—both occurring simultaneously for the sleeping and living saints, respectively, so that both groups may be "caught up together" "to meet the Lord in the air," thenceforth ever to "be with the Lord" (1 Thess. 4:17) in the heavenly "mansions" (John 14:2, 3) Christ has gone to "prepare" in the Father's house—the city of God, or New Jerusalem,

5. GENERAL RESURRECTION AND TRANSLATION AT CHRIST'S RETURN

According to Luke, Christ ascended personally, in His glorified body, into the welcoming clouds and was "carried up into heaven" (Luke 24:51). The concurring record in Acts states that He was "taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight" (Acts 1:9). Thus He was "taken up" from the disciples "into heaven" (v. 11). And they "looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up" (v. 10). His was a real, a literal ascension. And it will be a real, literal return. Upon the authority of the angels, He "shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (v. 11).

He will return personally, in the clouds, in the same way: "Behold, he cometh with the clouds; and every eye shall see him" (Revelation 1:7)—only this time in transcendent "power and great glory" (Matthew 24:30), with a host of mighty angels to "gather together his elect" from the four quarters of the globe (v. 31). So our "gathering" is dependent upon, and synchronized with, His return. Special resurrections and translations are identical in process, only carried out in advance and limited in number.

Terms and Usages: Final Disposition of the Wicked

The fate of the wicked—the unrepentant irreconcilables—is one of the most solemn and tragic aspects in the entire area embracing the nature and destiny of fallen man. It is sobering and disturbing to contemplate. Nevertheless, the justice and integrity of God, as well as His love and mercy (not to mention the lot of the hardened sinner), are inextricably bound up therewith.

We now address ourselves to this crucial question. In the all-wise punitive acts of God, manifest in the final disposition of confirmed

sinners, we find His majestic equity and infinite rectitude and righteousness towering above the dreadful misconceptions and fabrications devised by the imaginations of men—travesties that have marred the centuries, first under pagan, then Catholic, and finally under Protestant hands.

A. Multiple Terms Affirm Destruction, Perishing, Extinction

1. ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS SIGNIFY UTTER "DESTRUCTION."
Like the inspired penmen of the Old Testament, the New Testament writers used the strongest terms at their command to assert a total bringing to nought, or ultimate excision, both of evildoers and of Satan, the source of evil, and of his fallen angels. Many of these New Testament terms, it is to be noted, are borrowed from the Greek Septuagint translation of the Old Testament, likewise distinctly declaring the total extinction, or absolute suppression and abolition of the wicked. Thus we are led dependably into the Greek equivalents.

But let us begin with the simplest and most elemental evidence. Here are some twenty of the most common expressions, as they appear in the English Authorized Version translation, with sample supporting texts. Observe the scope and comprehensiveness of the coverage, consistently stressing total obliteration. Here are the leading ones, alphabetically arranged:

BLOT OUT OF EXISTENCE.—Hebrews 9:26; Revelation 3:5; 18:21. BRING TO NOUGHT.—1 Corinthians 1:19.

CAST AWAY, CAST OFF.—Matthew 13:42, 48, 50; John 12:31.

CONSUME, DEVOUR UTTERLY.—Matthew 3:12; 13:30, 40; 2 Thess. 2:8; Hebrews 12:29; Revelation 18:8. CRUSH.—Romans

16:20.

CUT OFF, CUT DOWN.—Matthew 3:10; 7:19; Luke 13:7, 9; John 15:2; Acts 3:23; 23:13, 31; Romans 11:20, 22, 24. DEATH.—

Romans 5:20; 6:21, 23; 7:5; Revelation 21:8.

DESTROY.—Matthew 10:28; 27:20; Romans 6:6; 7:6 (1 Corinthians 1:19); 2:6; 5:5; 15:24, 26; Galatians 5:15; 1 Thess. 5:3; 2 Thess. 1:9; 2:8; 1 Tim. 6:9; 2 Tim. 1:10; Hebrews 2:14; 1 John 3:8. DEVOUR.—Hebrews 10:27; Revelation 11:5; 20:9.

DIE.—John 5:24; 6:50; 8:24; Romans 7:6, 10; 8:13; 1 Corinthians 15:22, 32; Ephesians 2:1, 5; Phil. 2:27; 1 Peter 2:24. DROWN.—1

Tim. 1:19; 6:9; 2 Peter 3:11, 12.

FALL.—Matthew 7:27; Luke 6:49. FOUND No MORE.—Revelation 18:21.

GRIND TO POWDER.—Matthew 21:44; Luke 20:18.

KILL OUTRIGHT, PUT TO DEATH.—Matthew 10:28; 21:41; 22:7; Mark 12:9; Luke 19:27; John 10:10; Romans 7:11; 8:13; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Colossians 3:15; Revelation 2:23.
LOSE LIFE.—Matthew 7:13; Mark 4:38; John 11:42; 17:12; Acts 8:20; Romans 9:22; Phil. 3:19; 2 Thess. 2:3; 1 Tim. 6:9; 2 Peter 2:1, 2; 3:7, 16; Revelation 17:8, 11.

NEVER SEE LIFE.—John 3:36; 5:40; Acts 13:46; 1 John 3:15; 5:12- OVERTHROW.—Luke 1:52.

PERISH.—Acts 13:41; 1 Corinthians 3:17; Galatians 6:8; 2 Peter 1:4; 2:12; Revelation 11:18. ROOT OUT.—Jude 12.

RUIN.—Matthew 7:27; Luke 6:49; 2 Corinthians 10:8; 13:10. SWALLOW UP.—1 Corinthians 15:54; 1 Peter 5:8. THROW

DOWN.—Revelation 18:21.

VANISH AWAY.—Hebrews 8:13.

These are, of course, all English translations. So, let us turn next to the original Greek terms, and seek out their exact meanings. These are likewise listed alphabetically. But we should first note the observation of a noted Anglican scholar of a generation back, who likewise made a list and then an analysis.

One, for example was Denniston (The Perishing Soul), who lists apollumi, olothreuo, exolothreuo, diaphtheiro, kataphtheiro, exaleipho, analisko, aphanito, ektribo, kathairo, kata-ballo, kataluo, kataskapto.—J. M. Denniston, The Perishing Soul (2d ed., 1874), p. 79.

An exhaustive philological study of more than fifty roots found in the Old Testament Hebrew (with New Testament equivalents) was made by scholarly Dr. Emanuel Petavel, of the University of Lausanne, and appears in The Problem of Immortality (1892), Supplement VI ("List of Biblical Terms Used to Denote Destruction), pp. 445-452. These are terms used to signify the destruction of animated beings as the ultimate fate of the impenitent. They set forth the complete, final obliteration of the wicked, and are accompanied by the texts wherein the expressions are found.

In the Old Testament' such terms as the following are typical: CUT OFF (karath)—Psalm 37:9, 34; Ezekiel 28:16; CONSUME (fco'ar)—Malachi 4:1, 3; Psalm 21:9; DESTROY (shachath]—Psalm 55:23; 145:20; DEVOUR, BURN up, or CONSUME ('akal)—Psalm 21:9; PERISH Cab ad)—Ps 37:20; 68:10. '

2. CONSTABLE'S CONSIDERED SUPPORTING CONCLUSIONS

While various men have developed similar lists, one of the most scholarly analytical tables of the leading Greek terms by which the New Testament describes the future punishment of the wicked, either by way of "infliction or deprivation," is given by Canon Henry Constable, Prebendary of York, in his Duration and Nature of Future Punishment (6th ed., London, 1886, pp. 58, 59). Here he lists thirteen principal terms, together with a tabulation of "all the meanings," as applied to each term. The result is most impressive. Constable's considered conclusion is: "A single glance will show that what we understand as the terrible punishment of the wicked, viz., their 'loss of existence,' is found under every one of the above terms" (p. 60).

B. Greek Terms Affirm "Destroy," "Consume," "Perish," "Obliterate"

1. LEADING GREEK TERMS DEFINED

While the New Testament witness on the ultimate and utter destruction of the incorrigibly wicked is in perfect agreement with that of the Old Testament/ there is now a change of language."

Therefore a new set of terms appears. Here are the leading expressions and their cognates. Note them individually, with illustrative texts, and observe their inescapable collective force and intent. The selections differ slightly from other lists, but the witness is the same. Here are fourteen leading words:

(1) Analiskd—to consume, destroy (2 Thess. 2:8).
(2) Apoleia—death, especially by violence, loss of things, ruin, waste (Phil. 3:19; 1 Tim. 6:9).
(3) Apollumi—io destroy utterly (23 times), come to an end, ruin to lose utterly, to be utterly and finally ruined and destroyed cause to perish—stronger form of ollumi, to end life, put to death, cause to perish (33 times), bring to nought (Matthew 10:28; 21:41; 22:7; Luke 17:27, 29; John 3:16; Romans 2:12; 2 Corinthians 4:3). In all the New Testament there is no word that is more distinctly fixed than that of apollumi*

(4) Apothnesko—die out, expire, cease (John 11:16, 26; Romans 8:13, 34; Revelation 9:6; 16:3). (5) Diaphtheiro—to spoil throughout,

corrupt utterly (Revelation 11:18).

(6) Exolothreuo—to destroy utterly, slay wholly, dissolve. In the Septuagint it is some eighty times rendered harath, "cut off" (Acts 3:23; cf. Genesis 17:14; Exodus 30:33; 31:14).

(7) Katakaio—to burn up, or burn down (Matthew 3:12; Luke 3:17).

(8) Katanalisko—to consume wholly or thoroughly (intensive of analisho, 2 Thess. 2:8) (Hebrews 12:39).

(9) Katarged—to render inactive, idle, bring to nought, make void, abolish (2 Thess. 2:8). When the unquenchable fire burns out, and the undying worm ceases, death itself is destroyed (katarged) (1 Corinthians 15:26).

(10) Kolasis—punishment, cut off. A result, not a process (cf. Matthew 3:10; Luke 3:17). (11) Olethros (olothreutes)—death, ruin, that

which causes death (2 Thess. 1:9).

(12) Phtheiro (kataphtheiro)—to deprave, mar, spoil, corrupt (1 Corinthians 3:17).

(13) Phlhora (diaphthord)—corruption, spoiling, destruction (Acts 2:27, 31; Galatians 6:8).

(14) Thanatos—extinction of life, death by judgment of court, or judgment of God against sin (the second death, Revelation 20:6, 14; 21:8) (Romans 6:21, 23).

These Greek words—the main terms and their cognates—involving penal punishing to a greater or less degree, and for a longer or shorter period, always connote the ultimate loss of life, final and complete termination of being. They all mean to end life or to take life, to cause to cease to be.

Dr. R. F. Weymouth, previously mentioned Greek authority, in a statement in 1870 to the editor of the English Independent, declared: "We maintain that its meaning [that of apollumi] is always to destroyt to cause to perish, and in the middle voice to perish, to cease to be."—From author's authorized release to Dr. E. Petavel, in The Problem of Immortality (1892), supplement No. XIV, p. 489. (Italics in original.)

2. NOT ONE IN LIST IMPLIES ETERNAL TORMENT

Death, destruction, perishing, perdition, are thus seen to be virtually interchangeable terms. These terrible words are used frequently by both Paul and John. But not one term in this entire tabulation implies the idea of eternal
torment. The most frequently used words for "destroy" and "destruction" are the verb apollumi and the noun apoleia. John uses the verb in the pre-eminent "John 3:16" ("should not perish") verse. Paul uses the noun in Philippians 3:19—"whose end is destruction." And the same Greek word is translated "perdition" in Philippians
1:28. Thus "perdition" is equivalent to "destruction," and these in turn are equated with "perishing" and being
"lost" (2 Corinthians 4:3).

The end of the wicked is sufficiently terrible without adding, from pagan sources, what God has not included. "The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23), and the end of sin and incorrigible man is utter and final destruction. An illuminating confirmation of this appears in John 11, in Caiaphas' statement: "It is expedient for us, that one man should die [apothnesko, "expire," "die out"] for the people, and that the whole nation perish [apollumi, "be utterly destroyed"] not" (John 11:50).

In John's mind the term "die" bore the same meaning as to "perish" or suffer "destruction" (apollumi).* That is the over-all witness of the Greek. But let us note the leading terms in greater detail.

C. Weymouth's Devastating Charge of Manipulated Meanings

After more closely examining the full force of six of the strongest Greek terms, all signifying ultimate and total destruction, the significance of the classic charge of Greek authority Dr. Richard F. Weymouth—appearing at the close—will become apparent. See, for example, Dr. R. F. Weymouth's "Philological Study of the Meaning of Apollumi," appearing by authorization of the author in Petavel's The Problem of Immortality (1892), pp. 489-
495. But first let us probe into six of the strongest words:

(1) "APOLEIA": UTTER LOSS OF EXISTENCE

As to the fate of the wicked, no other expression is more common or emphatic than apoleia—the sentence
pronounced upon all who, having heard the summons to repentance and faith in Christ, have resisted in defiance. Christ said, "Broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction [apoleian]" (Matthew 7:13). And Paul speaks similarly of "vessels of wrath fitted to destruction [apoleian]" (Romans 9:22). This is the destruction forever of "body and soul"—utter and final ruin, which will never be reversed. It is the second death, from which there is no return.

No word in the Greek tongue is more significant of the utter loss of existence than apoleia. This various lexicons attest. Thus Peter, in

rebuking the perfidy of Simon Magus, who sought to purchase the power of God with money, was met by Peter's declaration, "Thy money perish [apoleian] with thee" (Acts 8:20)—literally, "Thy money go with thee to destruction." Such will be the end of the wicked.

(2) "APOLLUMI": DESTROY UTTERLY, KILL, SLAY

Along side the Greek noun (apoleia} is the verb apollumi, used to signify the punishment God will inflict upon wicked men and demons. It is to destroy utterly, cause to perish, kill, slay, be undone. The fundamental thought is loss, ruin, perish, to come to an end. Apollumi is five times applied in Matthew to persons: When Herod attempted to take the life of the infant Jesus (Matthew 2:13); when the Pharisees plotted to deprive Jesus of life when He had grown to manhood (Matthew 12:14); when the lord of the vineyard decreed death to the unfaithful husbandman (Matthew 21:41); when the king punished with death the slaying of his servants (Matthew 22:7); when Christ solemnly declared that God can "destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matthew 10:28). (Cf. Mark 9:22; John 10:10.)

The same verb is used seven times in Luke: (a) To take away life from man (Luke 6:9; 9:56); (b) the universal death produced by the Flood (Luke 17:27, 29); (c) the plots of the enemies of Christ against His life (Luke 19:47); (d) the decree of death to the unfaithful husbandmen (Luke 20:16); (e) the wicked spirits, meeting with Christ, filled with terror lest He should have come, before they anticipated, to destroy them (Luke 4:34). (Cf. 1 Corinthians 15:18; 2 Peter 3:6.)

In ten of these passages reference is to loss of existence here; in the other two it is loss of the eternal hereafter. For this second loss of life, the second and eternal coming death, Hell (Gehenna), has been provided. The lost will there suffer complete destruction. There the devils will also be visited with the loss of the existence to which they desperately cling. Such utter blotting out is a fearful thought to these fallen angels—an obliteration they know to be their inevitable doom.

(3) "APHANIZO": DISAPPEAR, VANISH OUT OF EXISTENCE

Brief mention must be made of three other Greek terms relative to future punishment. The first is aphanizo. Thus Paul, warning Jewish hearers at Antioch, says, "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish [aphanizo]" (Acts 13:41)—meaning disappear, vanish utterly, to be heard of no more. This is the term used by James when speaking of the transitoriness of this present life (James 4:14), and also by Paul to describe the consummation of retribution, when the wicked rise from their graves to see what they have rejected, and marvel at their folly (Luke 13:27-29), and then, like a "vapour" that "vanishes away [aphanizo]," pass out of existence, disappear (James 4:14).

(4) "PHTHEIRO": DESTROY BY DEPRIVING OF EXISTENCE

Another is phtheiro—destroy, corrupt, defile, used to express future punishment, in two senses, to deprave and corrupt, and to destroy by depriving of existence. "If any man defile [phtheiro] the temple of God, .him shall God destroy [phtheird]"—the same Greek word (1 Corinthians 3:17). The first is the sinner's guilty act; the second is God's punishment hereafter by destruction.

(5) "DIAPHTHEIRO": INTENSIFIED FORM OF DESTROY UTTERLY

In its composite form (diaphtheiro) this verb combines the same two senses and intensifies their force. It signifies, "to destroy utterly," and "kill," as well as lead astray and corrupt. In the Apocalypse it is used to describe the future punishment where John says that God will "destroy [diaphtheiro] them which destroy the earth" (Revelation 11:18)—the same verb in both cases. (See also 2 Peter 2:12.)

(6) "EXOLOTHREUO": UTTER DESTRUCTION BY DEATH

Another Greek verb and noun for "destroy" and "destruction," exolothreud, and olethros, signify utter destruction by death. Thus, "Every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed [exolothreud] from among the people" (Acts 3:23), and the wicked "shall be punished with everlasting destruction [olethros] from the presence of the Lord" (2 Thess. 1:9; 1 Thess. 5:3; 1 Tim. 6:9).

That is a cross section of the basic testimony of the Greek. Little wonder that the illustrious Dr. Weymouth, of Mill Hill, master of the Greek text of the New Testament, editor of The Resultant Greek Testament, and translator of The New Testament in Modern Speech, strikingly declared in an authorized published statement:

"My mind fails to conceive a grosser misinterpretation of language than when the five or six strongest words which the Greek tongue

possesses, signifying 'destroy,' or 'destruction,' are explained to mean main taining an everlasting but wretched existence. To translate black as white is nothing to this." *

Quoted in Edward White's Life in Christ (3d ed., 1878), p. 365.

D. Succinct Summary of Over-all Evidence

We now tersely summarize our findings:

(1) There is no principle in Scripture that demands the perpetual existence of the damned or the indestructibility of the individual incapable of becoming eternally holy and happy. Eternal, conscious suffering not only is repugnant to the moral sense of man but is utterly opposed to the revealed portrayal of the love and justice of God. Moreover, there would have to be indestructible life for the endurance of end less torments. But as the wicked do not possess such life, there could not automatically be endless torments for them. And the Infinite Power which can and did create also can and will dis create.

(2) The punishment of the wicked is irremedial and definitive, and in that sense eternal. But the expressions "eternal punishment," "unquenchable fire," et cetera, mean, basically, that there will be no deliverance, no revival or ultimate restoration of the wicked. They will absolutely cease to be. The point is not the nature of the fire but of what is in the fire.

The "first death" does not shut out the hope of being brought to life again, but the "second," or "eternal, death" does. The "lake of fire," which is the "second death" (Revelation 20:14, 15), puts the period at the end to the dying life of the obstinate sinner. It marks the final suppression of all life. It is the point of no return.

(3) Ordinary fire might be quenched before it has entirely consumed what it is reducing to ashes. "Unquenchable fire" cannot be put out before it destroys utterly. But the fire does not continue on after having burned out, and the victim does not escape, since he is destroyed. Such fire is thus the sym bol of total destruction. Far from indicating eternal torments, it sets forth inextinguishable destruction.

(4) There will, of course, be accompanying suffering, proportionate to the demands of the just judgment of God—then eternal cessation of being, in obedience to the requisites of divine justice and righteous law. The suffering is but a preliminary phase of the total punishment.

(5) By the word "annihilation" (played up by antagonists of Conditionalism), if used, is simply meant the extinction of the conscious life or personality and the termination of all of its faculties. Death always designates destruction. The sin ner leads a hopelessly dying life, ending finally in the "second death," which is complete and determinative. When the ruin is complete it puts an end to the existence of the sinner.
Therein is the blended mercy and justice of God. The punishment of the wicked involves not only death but loss of eternal life and denial of Immortality. The punishment is not merely negative, a failure to receive the reward of life; it is positive, a punishment for sin and deprivation of life.

(6) The elimination of evil and evildoers by way of extinction is thus seen to be in conformity with the declarations of Scripture, the dictates of reason, and the demands of equity. And the very nature and integrity of God, as immaculate holiness and the personification of almighty infinite power, imply that He will not tolerate evil in His universe forever. That He has plainly disclosed.

Note this cumulative documented series and its climax. Satan and his cohorts will be destroyed (Romans 16:20; Hebrews 2:14, 15; cf. Genesis 3:15). The "lawless one" will be brought to nought (2 Thess. 2:8). The great rebellion will be suppressed (Revelation 19:20; cf. Daniel 7:11, 26). There will be no more curse (Revelation 22:3). Death will be abolished (2 Tim. 1:10; 1 Corinthians 15:26; Revelation 21:4; cf. Isaiah 25:8). Death will forever lose its sting (1 Corinthians 15:55,
56). Death and Hades join Satan in the abyss of destruction—the "lake of fire and brimstone" (Revelation 20:14).

Sinners are no more. That is the ultimate faith of the irreconcilables. But God will be all in all to those who survive the scrutiny of the final judgment (1 Corinthians 15:28), and the redeemed will live on in glorious triumph forevermore (Matthew 25:46). Evil will then have disappeared, and grace will "much more" abound (Romans 5:20). It is the end of sin. There will thus be a clean universe forever.

Summing Up the Case for Biblical Conditionalism

A. Conditionalism Accentuated and Enforced in New Testament

1. COMPLETE HARMONY BETWEEN TESTAMENTS

Immortality, set forth as conditional in the Old Testament, is even more conspicuously declared to be conditional in the New. The later innovation of the inherent continuity and indestructibility of the human soul,
introduced into the Christian Church in a time of developing apostasy, finds no support in Christ's personal teaching or in the subsequent apostolic theology set forth in the New Testament.

On the contrary, the New Testament completely sustains the uniform position of Moses and the prophets, giving it precision, amplification, finality, and majesty. And it is of more than passing interest that, in so doing, the New Testament often borrows the terms employed in the Septuagint translation to bring over into the Greek the corresponding words and intent of the original Hebrew, as pertains to this issue. It thus forms an invaluable connecting link between the Old and the New in this specific field.

Like the Old Testament, the New proclaims the eternity of God but has nothing to say of any innate, inalienable Immortality possessed by man. Neither the term nor the thought can be found between Matthew 1 and Revelation 22. Immortality results from personal faith in the personal power and provision of Almighty God, who has purposed and provided Immortality for man as a gift through Christ—but on clearly enunciated conditions. The redeemed, righteous, and obedient shall live; the ungodly, obstinate sinners shall be completely destroyed (2 Thess. 1:9; cf. Psalm 92:9). That is the gist of Conditionalism.

2. IMMORTALIZATION ACCENTUATED AND AMPLIFIED IN NEW TESTAMENT

This important addition, however, is to be noted. In the New Testament the horizons are definitely widened and
the foundations more firmly buttressed and expanded. The path to the grave becomes brighter and more luminous as the gospel day begins to dawn. Eternity of life for the one, and eternity of ultimate non existence for the other, outlined in the Old Testament, is more fully revealed and accentuated in the New.

Jesus, supreme Authority and Witness of all time, as concerns man, not only upholds but intensifies and delimits the conditions of immortalization. Man becomes immortal only by grace, assured through faith in Christ and His righteous ness, which is first imputed and then imparted to the believer. Then, upon Christ's return, comes glorification and realized immortalization for the righteous.

This is the uniqueness of the gospel—that Jesus offers in and through His own person the sole means whereby a man may obtain righteousness and then Immortality. It is not man's inherently. Christ's expiatory death gives assurance of divine pardon, and the pledge of imperishable life becomes the portion of all who unite themselves to the risen, triumphant Christ by faith. Such is the fundamental offer of the New Testament and the declared aim of the gospel. This was the message still proclaimed by Christ after His resurrection, shortly before His parting commission and ascension. Here is John's record: "These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20:31).

There it is, compressed into a single sentence. In this climactic passage, life is used in its full sense and force— life at the highest level, life that is to be never ending and all embracing; life that will be imperishable, life based on belief in, and acceptance of, Christ's offer of eternal life. That again is the essence of Conditionalism.

3. IMMORTALITY AN ACQUISITION, NOT INHERENT POSSESSION

"Life" in the New Testament means actual life, and "death" means the diametric opposite of life—the
deprivation of all life, the end of all activity, the cessation of all individual faculties. Death, without any escape or resuscitation—absolute death, four times called the "second death"—terminates in the complete cessation of being of the wicked. It is the end of the recalcitrant human entity. Christ came that "who soever believeth in him should not perish [apollumi, "be utterly and finally destroyed," "brought to nought"], but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). That is the matchless provision of the gospel.

If one can "perish," obviously he is not by nature immortal. And if he is not by nature immortal, there is nothing inconsistent in saying, in conformity with Scripture, that Christ must confer Immortality upon man if he is to

live forever. Consequently all New Testament texts that directly or indirectly state that Christ is our life, and confers eternal life, such as John 3:16, confirm the Conditional-Immortality postulate. This signifies that true believers, escaping the total destruction that awaits the impenitent sinner, acquire an imperishable and perpetual life through Christ alone. Immortality is therefore an acquisition, not an inherent possession. That, once more, is the essence of Conditionalism.

4. CONTRASTING POSITIONS SUCCINCTLY SET FORTH

Conditionalists do not differ from Immortal-Soulists over the fact of a future life, but over the nature and source of that life and the time of receiving it. "Immortality" has been overlaid and loaded down with philosophical speculations and devious traditions. Immortal-Soulists insist that death is not an interruption or cessation of the natural life of man, but is simply entrance upon a new and glorified stage in that life. That, they insist, was the ancient belief of the nations of antiquity.

Presumptive evidence of the Innate Immortality of the soul is often put forth on the basis of its general belief among the nations of antiquity. But an appeal to a consensus sentium does not constitute proof, any more than does the argument of man's inner aspirations. The fact that the vast majority once believed the world to be flat did not make it so. Universal hunger for Immortality is_ implanted by God as an incentive to seeking and finding immortality. But it must be in God's way and upon His terms.

They hold that, instead of terminating at death, the real life of man simply intensifies and enlarges into a new sphere of activity, either in holiness and happiness, or sin and misery, and that man will continue to live on forever by virtue of the innate essence of life within him, being sustained by some in defeasible power, so as to suffer forever, if incorrigibly wicked. On the contrary Conditionalists hold that since the Fall death terminates the natural life of man, and that the life hereafter is not natural, inherited from Adam, but supernatural, received from God. They hold, furthermore, that only through the vicarious death and triumphant resurrection of Christ is there any resurrection or life whatever for man here after—for "if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished" (1 Corinthians 15:17, 18).

Immortality has thus by Christ been brought within reach of rebellious creatures otherwise destined to absolute death. In fact, He came to reveal and proclaim the secret of immortalization. That is Heaven's glad tidings for man. When once this majestic truth is grasped, it throws a floodlight upon all other saving truths. That again is Conditionalism.

5. IMMORTAL-SOULISM IS IMMORTALITY WITHOUT A SAVIOUR

Conditionalists believe in the supernatural resurrection of the dead, in a general judgment, and in the absolute finality of that judgment. They believe in the "second death" for the wicked, and thus in the finality of their doom. In contrast they believe in the "life everlasting" of the righteous, raised through Christ—and that this is the highest and most glorious of all possible life, eternal life, the impartation of God's own pure and blessed immortal life, based upon entrance into the proffered new and living relationship to Jesus Christ.

This, then, is the basic issue—whether we are immortalized by Christ, through the preparatory new birth and subsequent resurrection, or whether we are immortal by our own natural birth from Adam. In other words, it is whether Immortality, as the "gift of God," is "eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:23), or whether there is inherent Immortality without a Saviour, and His atoning death and saving life.

And it should here be stressed (as will be seen in Part IV) that the earliest, or Apostolic, Church Fathers maintained this Conditionalist position. The doctrinal deviation of one segment of the later Fathers was caused by the infiltration and acceptance of the Platonic philosophy, received into an increasingly confused and vacillating church. And, at the same time, the Platonized philosophy of the Alexandrian Jews added the pressure of its divergent weight upon the faltering theology of the Fathers. There was thus a dual pressure that proved overwhelming to a growing majority. A large segment of Christianity succumbed, and Conditionalism went into virtual eclipse for centuries.

6. CONDITIONALISM IS POSITIVE, NOT NEGATIVE

Again, Conditionalism is a positive, not a negative, position and pro vision. It is to be emphasized that Conditionalists hold Immortality for the good alone to be a fundamental proviso of the gospel. Thus the apostle John says, "He that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (1 John 2:17). This gives the basis of distinction and the assurance o£ the permanence of the obedient. Sin, on the contrary, leads to disintegration and ruin, while sowing to the Spirit leads to the reaping of "life everlasting" (Galatians 6:8).

To view Conditionalism as largely a question of the final future punishment of the wicked is to miss its real significance. That is merely looking at the reverse side of the pattern. The glorious provision of the more abundant life is its central concept, its positive motivating principle. That is the heart of Conditionalism.

7. MORE GAINED THROUGH CHRIST THAN LOST THROUGH ADAM

There is yet another angle that must not be missed— the justice of God, blended with His goodness and mercy, implicit in Conditionalism. The trial of our first parents in Eden could not have been made under conditions more favorable to a successful outcome. They were swayed by no sinful tendencies, had no compelling habits, and possessed no bent toward evil.

But the tragic results of the Edenic test proved that the human race was not yet fit for Immortality. If God had not purposed to provide eternal life through another probation, mankind's case would have been hopeless. But we came under the operation of a marvelous system, a divine provision of grace, by which eternal life is offered to us again by a new birth, effected through a Second Adam, the reception of the righteousness of Christ, and a subsequent resurrection from the dead. That was the divine provision and process.

"And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul [or being]; the last Adam was made a quickening [life-giving] spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural [psuchikon, "possessing animal life"]; and afterward that which is spiritual [pneumatikon, belonging to the Spirit]. The first man [Adam] is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. . . . And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption" (1 Corinthians 15:45-50).

The same eminent apostle adds, "That which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die" (v. 36). Death, as explained by Inspiration, is a somber but inevitable part of this world's mottled picture. It is therefore plain, from the gospel, that we gain infinitely more in Christ than we lost in Adam. What we lost in Adam was an earthly Paradise, but what we gain through the Second Adam is a celestial Paradise forevermore. Christ came not simply to repair the ruin of the Fall and to bring mankind back in penitence to God but to raise lost but ransomed man to a state infinitely higher than that of Adam in his first innocency in Eden.

The first Adam had but a potential, contingent life, which he forfeited for himself and his posterity under the temptation and the Fall. But the Second Adam proved Himself superior to the seductions of the great deceiver. He possesses absolute sinlessness and righteousness in His own right. And this righteousness, along with eternal life, He bestows upon His own through the supernatural second birth and a resurrection from among the dead. It is first imputed, then actually imparted. And this bestowal the great adversary can never again take away. Thus Christ said:

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand" (John 10:27, 28).

"Because I live, ye shall live also" (John 14:19).

"I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die" (John 11:25, 26).

That is the glory and the triumph of the gospel. That is the gift of God through Jesus Christ. And that is the process and the principle of Conditional Immortality.

B. Issues Illuminated Through Significant Series of "Two's"

Within the New Testament a significant series of "two's" stands forth, augmenting and amplifying the basic teachings begun in the Old Testament. These complete the unique testimony of the Word on the two worlds, two Adams, two progenitors, two births, two covenants, two classes, two kingdoms, two advents, two lives, two deaths, two resurrections, two ways, and two eternal destinies—the irrevocable endings of these divergent ways. Comparisons and contrasts are introduced by Christ and His apostles that throw a floodlight of understanding on this question of the origin, nature, and destiny of man. A survey of the inevitable implications of this series is desirable, because the traditional concept of the continuing persistence of a single, unending life—an innately, indefeasibly immortal life for all men—has tragically blurred or made void those distinctions so sharply drawn in Holy Writ that otherwise would have remained transparently clear.

It seems to have been the studied aim of human philosophy to ignore or obscure these distinctions or to mystify and confound them.

And the medieval papal church and the Protestant churches that followed in her footsteps here, have so molded their creeds and fashioned their theologies as to perpetuate this confusion. It is therefore incumbent upon us to re-examine this provocative series given to guide us. This additional factor should, however, be noted at the outset. The divine intimations of restoration, early given to man to keep the race from utter demoralization and discouragement, in time became distorted by darkened minds into perverted postulates regarding the soul. These were thence forth passed on by tradition from generation to generation. This is obviously the origin of those twisted notions of the future state that came to prevail throughout the ancient pagan world.

Finally they brought division and ruin to the faith of the Jewish church through their adoption. This occurred shortly before the proclamation of the gospel of Christ began, which was designed to restore the purity of revealed truth and the radiance of inspired light and to put the darkness of perversion to flight. Pressured by hopes and fears, men had given free rein to their imaginations, thus distorting the divine provisions into fanciful notions and fallacious theories concerning the soul, both here and hereafter. Now note this Biblical series of two's:

1. TWO WORLDS: TEMPORAL AND ETERNAL

As to the two worlds, the first one is graphically described in Genesis 1 and 2. Upon creation it was pronounced "very good" (Genesis 1:31), in accordance with its nature. But its nature, cursed because of the fall and sin of man, became dominantly material and earthly. Death and decay came to characterize this present order.

Then progressively, first in the Old Testament and next in the New, there is revealed a better, more glorious world to come—eternal in nature and structure, under the divine order, and fitted to continue forever (Hebrews 13:14). It is specifically called the "world to come" (Mark 10:30; Luke 18:30; Hebrews 2:5; 6:5). It is the "better country," the "better land," desired by the patriarchs of old (Hebrews 11:16).

And it is here tied in inseparably with "eternal life," or "life everlasting," for its ransomed citizens. Thus, "The things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal" (2 Corinthians 4:18). The forecast and nature of this "world to come" were but gradually unfolded in the Old Testament. Isaiah prophesied of the new earth that God had promised to create (Isaiah 65:17). It would supersede the old, and remain forever (Isaiah 66:22). But in the New Testament, Peter tells more explicitly of the coming "new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Peter 3:13).

The glories of the second Paradise, of which the Edenic first was a type, are still more fully and clearly unfolded by the seer of Patmos. Here in the Revelation, John portrays the establishment of this "new earth," to come after the present earth has "passed away" (Revelation 21:1)—a new earth reserved exclusively for the immortally redeemed, with its essential tree and water of life (Revelation 22). And this "better country," with its immortalized inhabitants, remains forever.

2. TWO ADAMS: THE NATURAL, THEN THE SPIRITUAL

Next are the two Adams. The first man was formed out of the "dust of the ground" (Genesis 2:7). He was the highest and no blest of all earthly creatures. Yet he was essentially earthly—as he soon proved himself to be, and as his very name, "Adam," indicates. He "became a living soul" (v. 7), endowed with life like the animals beneath him. But he differed from the brute creation in that he was endowed with a capacity for a higher life— the unending life of the spiritual world beyond, as intended for him by his Creator.

But this could only be secured by becoming established in holiness, without which he could neither retain Paradise nor enjoy it. Tested, and failing through sin, and thus proving unworthy of the boon prepared for him, he sank to the condition of a perishable earthly creature. And as such he became the progenitor of an earthly mortal posterity. "That was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual" (1 Corinthians 15:46). Another Progenitor was needed.

Then came the Second, or Last, Adam (1 Corinthians 15:45-47), born of a woman, yet begotten of God. He was the Son of man, yet was the Son of God. He was both divine and human—Heaven's provided link between this lower world of darkness and death and that higher world of light and life, of which He is the designated Lord. "In all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15), He overcame where Adam fell, dying as a member of the human family for the redemption of man, yet possessed of absolute, original Immortality in His own right, which could not be lost, and being made perfect through suffering, "he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Hebrews 5:9).

And to "as many as received him," He gives "power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (John 1:12). That is God's provision for the redemption of man and the restoration of his forfeited life.

3. SECOND ADAM: PROGENITOR OF IMMORTAL RACE

As noted, the first Adam was the progenitor of a race fallen like himself—earthly, carnal, sinful, mortal. It is incontestably clear that Adam's descendants could not therefore inherit from him an Immortality which he did not himself possess, and which because of his fall he failed to secure for himself. But the Second Adam is the progenitor of a race who, transformed into His likeness, are pure in heart and spiritual in nature, and who are to inherit from Him His own Immortal Life at His second advent. Though now subject to physical death, they will, in due time, enter upon that "inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (1 Peter 1:4, 5). He, then, is our spiritual progenitor.

4. TWO BIRTHS: FIRST FLESHLY, SECOND SPIRITUAL AND ETERNAL

There are thus two births, or begettings. No child of Adam can inherit eternal life except he be born (begotten) "again" (another, "by divine power") from "above," from Heaven (cf. John 3:3). "That which is born [begotten] of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born [begotten] of the Spirit is spirit. ... Ye must be born again" (vs. 6, 7).

From Adam we inherited a mortal, transitory life. For a life beyond, we must have a life ingenerated by the Holy Spirit—the life provided from Christ. This is the life uniformly and repeatedly spoken of by our Lord as "the life everlasting"—a life directly from Him, who alone can make us "meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light" (Colossians 1:12).

5. TWO COVENANTS: FIRST OF WORKS, SECOND OF FAITH.

The dispensation of grace brings us under a new covenant, or ministration. The first covenant was a covenant of works. "This do, and thou shalt live." It was legal. Its rewards, penalties, and motives were earthly, though elevated. It could "never . . . make the comers thereunto perfect" (Hebrews 10:1) —that is, complete. "For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second" (Hebrews 8:7).

The second, or new, covenant is a covenant of faith. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31; cf. 13:39). This requires an implicit trust in an omnipotent Saviour. That was necessary that we might receive endless life. The new covenant's appeals are to the higher nature, now begotten within the new man by the Spirit of God. Its motives and rewards are spiritual, heavenly, eternal (Hebrews 7; 8; 9). And it all centers about restoration of the lost life.

6. TWO CLASSES: CARNAL AND PERISHING, HEAVENLY AND ABIDING

Mankind is divided into two classes—those destined for life and Immortality, and those headed for death and destruction. These two classes are always placed in juxtaposition, comparison being made by contrast. The most familiar categories are:

Sinners and saints Wicked and righteous Unbelievers and believers Reprobates and heirs
Enemies of God and friends of God
Foolish and wise Tares and wheat Dross and gold
Children of this world and children of the kingdom
Children of the wicked one (or wrath) and children of God (or the Highest)

Those who live after the flesh, and those who live after the Spirit The first class is carnally-minded. They live after the flesh, are controlled by worldly motives, seek for worldly gain, and pursue the things that perish with the using. And when the world is finally destroyed, at the last day, they must perish with it, along with their treasures, for they have no portion or inheritance beyond.

The second class is spiritually-minded, and led by the Spirit of God. Through the Spirit they mortify the deeds of the flesh (Romans 8:13). They are controlled by spiritual influences, seek those things which are above, that are pure and eternal. Their choice is the "better part," which shall never be taken away (Luke 10:42). They, and they alone, will have eternal life.

7. TWO KINGDOMS: OF GOD AND OF SATAN

There are likewise two kingdoms. Briefly, one is of this world, over which the great enemy of God and man bears rule, as prince of this world (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11). It is a kingdom of evil, disorder, sorrow, darkness, sin, and death. It is a kingdom doomed to overthrow, and to utter and irremedial ruin and destruction. The other kingdom is the kingdom of God, of Heaven, of our Lord, the Prince of life (Acts 3:15). It is a kingdom of light and glory and power. It is a kingdom of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost (Romans 14:17); which, established by the Son of God as His everlasting kingdom,

shall endure forever. It is "not of this world" (John 18:36). The immortalized saints will possess it (Daniel 7:27).

8. TWO ADVENTS: IN THE FLESH, AND IN POWER AND GLORY

The establishment of this kingdom involves two advents. First, the Son of God came in the flesh, as a babe in Bethlehem, at the appointed time, as the Son of man, to live among men "made under the law" (Galatians 4:4), to suffer and die. And then, victorious over the power of death, He rose and ascended on high leading "captivity [aixmalosian, "body of captives," "multitude of captives," margin, Ephesians 4:8] captive." Christ gave His own assurance that He will come again at the appointed time to gather the fruits of His victory, to raise the dead, and execute judgment upon the world, destroying all that is vile and sinful and destructible. Then He will make all things new. "And unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin [apart from sin] unto salvation" (Hebrews 9:28). And in that "new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness," Christ shall reign as King over His redeemed people forever. So two comings of one Saviour and Lord are necessitated.

Cf. Matthew 27:52, 53; Romans 1:4.

9. TWO RESURRECTIONS: TO "LIFE" AND TO "DAMNATION."

Concurrent with the Second Advent comes the resurrection of the righteous dead, or sleeping saints (1 Thess. 4:16, 17; 1 Corinthians 15:52). The resurrection is in two installments. "They that are Christ's [come forth] at his coming" (1 Corinthians 15:23). This is given pre-eminence. It is called the "first," the "better," resurrection, the resurrection unto "life." This is the "hope ... of the dead" in Christ (Acts 23:6). The "rest of the dead" (the wicked) are not called forth until the close of the thousand years (Revelation 20:5). They will then come forth to hear the just decision of the judgment as it affects them and to perish under the execution of that judgment (v. 13).

So all will "hear the voice of the Son of God," and all who "hear" will live again (John 5:25)—"they that have done good" are brought forth unto the "resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (v. 29). The latter are consigned to the second death, from which there is no recall. Christ will lose none of the trophies of His redemptive grace and work (chap. 6:39), but will raise each one who believes in Him to "everlasting life"—"raise him up at the last day" (v. 44; cf. 11:24, 25).

Paul concurs by declaring that there shall be a resurrection both of the "just," and of the "unjust" (Acts 24:15). And those who rise to everlasting life will have glorified, incorruptible, immortalized bodies (1 Corinthians 15:42-44, 52-55)—bodies changed into the immortal likeness of Christ's glorious body (Phil. 3:21). In dismal contrast will be those brought forth to hear their sentence of doom, then to pass, after due punishment, into complete cessation of being.

10. FINALITY OF SEPARATION OCCURS AT SECOND ADVENT.

The final separation of all mankind into the two classes is made manifest and actually takes place at Christ's second coming in transcendent glory. Then the righteous only are resurrected from the dead, while the wicked ("the rest of the dead"—Revelation 20:5) await their later resurrection turn and summons (1 Corinthians 15:23). The righteous living will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, at His return (1 Thess. 4:17), while the living wicked will be smitten down by death through the brightness of His coming (2 Thess. 2:8). Thus, under the impressive figure of the "sheep" and the "goats," so well known at that time "he [Christ] shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left" (Matthew 25:32, 33).

Those on the left will, at the appointed time, "go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous [on the right] into life eternal" (v. 46), to "inherit the kingdom prepared" for them "from the foundation of the world" (v. 34). Mark it well: These final endings do not represent simply two types and conditions of perpetual life (of everlasting happiness, or of eternal misery), but everlasting life on the one hand, in contradistinction to everlasting punishment by the second death, on the other, from which there is no resurrection. The first death cuts off from temporal life; the second death cuts off from eternal life. It ends all hope of further life forever.

11. TWO DEATHS: FIRST DEATH FOR ALL, SECOND ONLY FOR WICKED

There are thus the first and second deaths. These are given great prominence in the Biblical depiction. But confusion and misunderstanding arose from imbibing the principles of the Platonic philosophy, which denies the actuality of the first death by assuming that man is an immortal being. Consequently, for such there is no place for a second death.

The natural, or first, death is in consequence of the sin of the race rather than as punishment of personal transgressions. All die, good and bad alike. To put it another way, we die the first time primarily because of Adam's generic sin. The punishment for personal sins

is the "second death" (Revelation 20:6, 14; 21:8). Or to put it still another way: The portion of the saved will be the second life, eternal life, immortal life, while the portion of the lost will be the second death of utter destruction.

According to the uniform testimony of the Word, the second death itself is the final end of the sinner's career. "Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (James 1:15). Furthermore, if there be no actual death in the first "death," there can, perforce, be no actual resurrection from the "dead." Consequently, all the awe-inspiring depictions of the Second Advent—the power and glory, the hosts of resplendent attending angels, the opening of the graves, the dead coming forth, and the glad reunions for the righteous forevermore—are looked upon as simply Oriental figures of speech. They are construed to mean nothing more than the emergence of the spirit from its encumbering body-prison, released like a balloon when the cord is cut that ties it to earth, so that it can soar above to the realms of bliss. That is the fanciful picture inherited from pagan philosophy and Christian deviation.

12. SECOND DEATH FOLLOWS SECOND RESURRECTION

The "second death"—named only in the Apocalypse, but referred to in principle many times elsewhere—is not merely the natural death that comes upon all men at the close of this life, but is a death coming after the resurrection, restricted to those who are adjudged unworthy of eternal life. Four times this term "second death" is employed—and invariably placed in contrast with life everlasting, which is given to the righteous. Note them again:

"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. ... He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death" (Revelation 2:10, 11).

"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power" (Revelation 20:6).

"And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (vs. 11-15).

Then, after a glowing description of the glories of the heavenly Paradise, when God shall "wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away"—the revelator declares: "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brim stone: which is the second death" (Revelation 21:8).

13. SECOND DEATH FOR IRRECLAIMABLY WICKED ONLY

Now it is undeniable that there can be no second death with out a first death. And the second must be an actual death, like the first, otherwise there could be no propriety in employing the term "second." As stated, the first death is the death to which all earthly creatures are subject. Man alone has a resurrection, and another life offered by an omnipotent Saviour through a resurrection from the dead. So the first death is the common lot of all men from Adam onward, irrespective of character or conduct as individuals. But "as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Corinthians 15:22).

The "second death" is the destiny only of those who "neglect so great salvation" (Hebrews 2:3), offered through Christ. Consequently, the second death is solely for the irreclaimably wicked. We who live in the present life are all born to die once. But we must be born again, by a heavenly spiritual birth, if we are to avoid the second

death, and thus live for ever. As the first death puts an end to man's earthly life, and he reverts to the dust from which he was formed, so the second death precludes entrance upon the life beyond, and remands all who fall under its doom of destruction, both "soul and body" (Matthew 10:28), to the non existence from which they were first called.

Whether the process of destruction be longer or shorter, according to the just mandates of the judgment, the end of the process is death. As Paul says, "whose end [of the "enemies of the cross," Phil. 3:18] is destruction" (v. 19), and "the end of those things is death" (Romans 6:21; cf. 1:32). Death is therefore the final end of sin, the final issue of the conflict between Christ and Satan, the final consummation of the cruel experiment of sin, so vividly pictured in the Revelation. For the righteous

the first death lasts only until the first resurrection. For the wicked, the second death, following the second resurrection, lasts forever.

14. THE TWO WAYS: WAY OF LIFE, AND WAY OF DEATH.

Two opposite "ways" are set forth in Scripture, along with the fact that all men tread one or the other. Moses of old was called upon to declare to God's ancient people: "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I [the Lord] have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live" (Deuteronomy 30:19).

In verse 15 "life and good" and "death and evil" are tied inseparably together in the contrasting couplets. Later, Jeremiah repeated the same solemn dictum, broadening each into a "way": "Thus saith the Lord; Behold, I set before you the way of life, and the way of death" (Jeremiah 21:8). But how, it might be asked, could the way of holiness be called the "way everlasting" as the psalmist puts it, in contrast with the "wicked way" (Psalm 139:24), if both ways are everlasting—one with everlasting holiness and happiness, the other everlasting sin and misery? Then the wise man warns, "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Proverbs 14:12; 16:25). It has one end. Next, Ezekiel throws these ways into vivid contrast, declaring that "the soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezekiel 18:20), but the repentant righteous shall "save his soul alive" (v. 27). And he declares: "I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye" (v. 32). Christ Himself picks up and presses this theme of the two "ways":

"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" (Matthew 7:13, 14).

And as might be expected, Paul likewise stresses the end of the two ways:

"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live" (Romans 8:13).

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man sow eth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (Galatians 6:7, 8).

15. DESTINED ENDINGS OF THE TWO WAYS

Summarizing: After His resurrection Christ was received up into Heaven as a pledge of the coming restoration of humanity, and as proof of the eternal union now established between God and redeemed man. When Christ appears again, the second time, He will raise the sleeping saints and translate the living ones (1 Corinthians 15:21-24, 51-57). And when the appointed hour shall come, the wicked dead—whose names have been blotted out of the book of life—will be brought forth from their graves to receive sentence and to be consumed by the second death, which involves utter destruction of body and soul, along with the obliteration of Satan, the malign author of sin, ruin, and death (Matthew 25:31, 32, 41, 46)—and all his evil cohorts with him.

He and his evil minions and all men and demons who follow him will perish utterly in the lake of fire and brim stone (Revelation 20:5-15). And all this because of choosing the evil and rejecting the good. This involves the extinction of all life, the utter end of the individual human personality. Nothing remains but the elements of which it was composed. And these disintegrate, and the person becomes as though he had not been.

The promised new heaven and new earth will replace this age-old, sin-scarred battleground, and a clean universe will be brought into being—without sin, sinners, or Satan to mar (Revelation 21; 22). The righteous will have all received Immortality and incorruption. Then it is that they will "shine forth as the sun" (Matthew 13:43), and "as the stars for ever and ever" (Daniel 12:3). Then God will be "all in all," and the glory of the Lord will fill the earth forever (Hab. 2:14; cf. Isaiah 11:9). Those are the ultimate issues, the outcome of the two ways of Life and Death.

C. Fundamental Fallacy of Immortal-Soulist Concept

Before closing this chapter let us face this incontestable fact frankly: Something happened long ago in the theological world. The radical distinction between the natural and the supernatural, as pertains to the nature and destiny of man, came to be confused and flouted, along with a denial of the gulf that is fixed in Scripture between the physical, earthly, and transitory, and that which is spiritual, heavenly, and eternal—a distinction explicitly spelled out by Inspiration. An unwarranted, mystical, allegorical interpretation has been imposed upon the pivotal words of Scripture, such as "soul," "death," "resurrection," "destruction." This whole area of doctrine

has been arbitrarily brought under a specious system of allegorization, or spiritualization, borrowed from Philo the Jew and Origen the Neoplatonic Christian philosopher. "Death," instead of being recognized as an unconscious sleep, is considered by multiplied millions to be the mystic door by which the righteous enter forever upon that higher state of existence for which they have been preparing here below.

And as for the irreparably wicked, "death" is likewise conceived to be the inexorable door by which the wicked enter upon a hopeless state of paralleling eternal life, only in sin and misery. To such, "death" is still eternal existence. So to the Immortal-Soulist, the "second" death is simply unending life in ceaseless sin and irremediable torment. Such contenders are completely baffled in attempting to explain the "second death" aspect—merely making it unalterable continuance for ever, instead of a penalized ending, and thus missing the fundamental point of the comparison.

Beyond question, the notion of Innate Immortality started somewhere, some time. And history attests that it stems back through Protestantism to the older Catholicism, and thence back to the early Christian and Jewish apostasies, and prior to that back to pagan philosophy—and, before all these, back to the original lie of Satan, uttered within the gates of Eden. Such is the indelible trail of this delusive fiction that has insinuated itself into the teachings of Christianity and has established itself as a preponderant belief of both Catholicism and Protestantism. But such a lineage is the reason we do not hesitate to challenge its validity and to urge its repudiation.

1. DUALISM NOT PART OF DIVINE PLAN OF THE AGES

There is also a related involvement in the Eternal Torment dogma. If Satan and his demonic and human followers are not to be and cannot be destroyed, then Christ cannot become "Lord of all," nor His kingdom a universal kingdom. In such an event, a special segment of His kingdom would have to be portioned off, for all eternity, as a special habitation for enemies that He cannot conquer and destroy. He can torment them and isolate them, but they can still blaspheme His name and defy His power to harm them further—and that forever- more. So they say.

Picture the scene: Raging hosts below, with groans and blasphemies, living on forever under a pagan dualism spawned in Persia of old. But the dualistic concept of Persian Zoroastrianism was based on the contention that there are two eternal principles (Ormuzd and Ahriman), one eternally good and the other everlastingly evil; that these were both without beginning and both without end, and so continue on in eternal, unending conflict with each other.

On the contrary, Christian theologians who are proponents of Immortal-Soulism, while holding that there are two such opposing principles, and principals, now at war with each other, say that only the Godhead had no beginning and was eternally existent throughout the eternity of the past. They recognize that evil, stemming from Satan as author, is an innovation and had a beginning. But they illogically hold that now, having begun to be, it must forever remain in being, endlessly marring and challenging God's once perfect universe. More than that, they maintain, or concede, that God Himself cannot put an end to its existence.

That is a tremendously serious charge to make, and one that is completely at variance with the Sacred Word, which declares that God will finally extirpate all evil from the universe. What He has created He can destroy. The truth is that evil is but a tragic episode—a temporary interlude—in the divine, eternal plan of the ages. And as it had a beginning in time, so will it end within the confines of time, before the aeons of the eternity of the future begin to unroll. Sin is relatively incidental and passing, not integral and perpetual. The time will come when it will end. The "lake of fire" will mark the exodus of sin and death forever.

Thus the subtle, delusive, dual fiction of Innate Immortality and Endless Torment obscures the glory of the gospel and weakens its power and appeal (1) by denying to Christ His chief glory—the bestowal of life eternal upon the righteous, and (2) by denying His ultimate triumph in the destruction of all His foes. That is why we stand upon the Bible platform of Conditionalism. That is why we are Conditionalists.

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