

Articles by Sir Robert Anderson

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A Great Lesson

Someone has been kind enough to send me a copy of a prophetic magazine issued just fourteen years ago (August, 1880). My unknown friend gives no indication of his reason for sending me this paper; but one article contained in it attracts my attention, and I seize on it "to point a moral."

"The Crisis Of The End" is the startling title of this article, and its avowed purpose is to meet the unbeliever's objection to the study of prophecy that no two expositors agree. To refute this it gives a list of 120 writers — many of them authors of repute, some of them of undoubted eminence — "all of whom reckon some year between 1866 and 1890 to be most probably the crisis of the end."

The Article proceeds to set out the authorities, specifying the name of each author, the title of his book, and the year of its publication. And these authorities are grouped according to the data on which their calculations are based. "Fifty-five writers ground their calculations principally on the 1335 years of Daniel xii. 12." Fifty-seven "on the 1260 years (Rev. xi. 3; xii. 6) which measures (sic) the duration of the chief power of the Papacy from its full establishment to its final downfall." The others rely "chiefly on the 2300 years (Daniel viii. 14)." Years, mark, in every case, though the Scriptures specify "days."

Now is there nothing to be learned from all this? We can well understand how in the darkness of former centuries, or amidst the excitement caused by the startling events of the first half of our own, Christians

should be thus misled. But have these foolish and yet disastrous blunders no voice of warning for us? The folly of them the lapse of years has proved, and how disastrous they are eternity alone will unfold. To the "sure word of prophecy" (2 Peter 1:19) we do well indeed to take heed as to a light shining in a dark place. And unnumbered thousands can testify to its power to strengthen faith in these days of doubt and blasphemy. But who can tell the number of those who have been turned against the truth by the failure of all these human dogmas and theories which have well-nigh supplanted the word of God in the minds of so many! If the matter were not so intensely solemn it would be highly amusing to realise that only a dozen years ago the unanimity prevailing among the prophecy-mongers was appealed to silence the objections of unbelievers. The unbelievers have short memories where the exposure of their own ignorance and folly is in question. But they remember these things. And they are entitled to remember them. For these predictions were not offered as the outcome of human foresight; they are put forward as bearing the sanction and authority of the inspired Scriptures. And the word of God is blasphemed because of their failure.

The study of prophecy is working positive mischief, and not good, in the case of large numbers of its votaries. Just as it behoves us - things have come to such a pass - to emphasize constantly, and almost aggressively, the difference between a Christian minister and a priest, and between Christian ordinances and priestly rites, so we need emphatically and without ceasing to bear a testimony against this false and baneful system of prophetic study. It becomes us to cherish the kindest

and most generous thoughts of the good and holy men who have erred thus in the past. But to suppose that we shall succeed where they have failed is entirely in keeping with the ineffable conceit which marks the day we live in. Their failure should promote in us humility, and not pride. It was due to no ignorance on their part of the text of Scripture or the facts of history, nor yet to any moral or spiritual unfitness for the task they undertook. And anyone who enters now on the path so strewn with the wreckage of their mistakes deserves to be denounced as a pedant or a charlatan. A few years ago the striking agreement of their united testimony was pointed to in proof of its truth. We point to it today in proof that the entire system which they followed was false.

Chronology must be allowed no place, as we seek to discount the Church's hopes. The Lord's return, the promised kingdom, and the coming glory are no fabled myths. They are realities, more real than any which press upon us in our daily life. But if, in accordance with the natural instincts of our hearts, we raise the question, "when shall these things be?" the answer comes from the lips of our blessed Lord himself: "Take heed that no man deceive you (Matthew 24:3-4)." "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in His own power (Acts 1:6-7)."

His coming is the near horizon of our hopes. Saints have waited for His return ever since the day He was caught up to heaven. The apostles looked for it. The Church's million martyrs yearned and prayed for it. They died with their faces turned towards the heavens which hid Him from their gaze. And that hope seems growing brighter even amidst, the vulgar glare of this prosaic

age, in which scoffers scoff more insolently than ever, asking "Where is the promise of His coming? (2 Peter 3:4)" The promise of His coming is in the sure word of God, and in the hearts of His people. And the delay in its fulfilment is to be measured by the long-suffering of God, and not by the lapse of years upon human calendars (2 Peter iii. 3-9).

It may be "at even, or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning" — at any stage of the passing day. But with Him a day is as a thousand years, and possibly, our children's children shall still be waiting its accomplishment. And if His coming should be even then deferred, and if I might fain think that any words of mine would be read and remembered, then I should like to leave this protest and warning against a system which has brought this hope into contempt by linking its fulfilment with events upon our history date-charts. God has linked it only with the Cross. It was not dull fanaticism which led the early saints to look for it while Pagan Rome still ruled the world and the apostasy of Christendom existed but in crnbrvc. It is neither ignorance nor prejudice which leads us to look for it today with vision unclouded by thoughts about the fall of empires or the decrees of the popes. We take fast hold of the promise that "Yet a little while and the Coming One will come and will not tarry (Hebrews 10:37)."

And our part is not to puzzle out the date of His return by the help of astronomers and chronologists, but to cherish the hope of it in its ennobling and purifying power, and to be like men who are waiting for their Lord.

Christ and Criticism

In his "Founders of Old Testament Criticism" Professor Cheyne of Oxford gives the foremost place to Eichhorn. He hails him, in fact, as the founder of the cult. And according to this same authority, what led Eichhorn to enter on his task was "his hope to contribute to the winning back of the educated classes to religion." The rationalism of Germany at the close of the eighteenth century would accept the Bible only on the terms of bringing it down to the level of a human book, and the problem which had to be solved was to get rid of the element of miracle which pervades it. Working on the labours of his predecessors, Eichhorn achieved this to his own satisfaction by appealing to the oriental habit of thought, which seizes upon ultimate causes and ignores intermediate processes. This commended itself on two grounds. It had an undoubted element of truth, and it was consistent with reverence for Holy Scripture. For of the founder of the "Higher Criticism" it was said, what cannot be said of any of his successors, that "faith in that which is holy, even in the miracles of the Bible, was never shattered by Eichhorn in any youthful mind." In the view of his successors, however, Eichhorn's hypothesis was open to the fatal objection that it was altogether inadequate. So the next generation of critics adopted the more drastic theory that the Mosaic books were "mosaic" in the sense that they were literary forgeries of a late date, composed of materials supplied by ancient documents and the myths and legends of the Hebrew race. And though this theory has been modified from time to time during the last century, it remains substantially the "critical" view of the Pentateuch. But it

is open to two main objections, either of which would be fatal. It is inconsistent with the evidence. And it directly challenges the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ as a teacher; for one of the few undisputed facts in this controversy is that our Lord accredited the books of Moses as having divine authority.

THE TRUE AND THE COUNTERFEIT.

It may be well to deal first with the least important of these objections. And here we must distinguish between the true Higher Criticism and its counterfeit. The rationalistic 'Higher Criticism,' when putting the Pentateuch upon its trial, began with the verdict and then cast about to find the evidence; whereas, true criticism enters upon its inquiries with an open mind and pursues them without prejudice. The difference may be aptly illustrated by the position assumed by a typical French judge and by an ideal English judge in a criminal trial. The one aims at convicting the accused, the other at elucidating the truth. "The proper function of the Higher Criticism is to determine the origin, date, and literary structure of an ancient writing." This is Professor Driver's description of true criticism. But the aim of the counterfeit is to disprove the genuineness of the ancient writings. The justice of this statement is established by the fact that Hebraists and theologians of the highest eminence, whose investigation of the Pentateuch problem has convinced them of the genuineness of the books, are not recognized at all. In Britain, at least - and I am not competent to speak of Germany or America - no theologian of the first rank has adopted their "assured results." But the judgment of such men as Pusey, Lightfoot and Salmon, not to speak of men who are still with us, they contemptuously

ignore; for the rationalistic Higher Critic is not one who investigates the evidence, but one who accepts the verdict.

THE PHILOLOGICAL INQUIRY.

If, as its apostles sometimes urge, the Higher Criticism is a purely philological inquiry, two obvious conclusions follow. The first is that its verdict must be in favour of the Mosaic books; for each of the books contains peculiar words suited to the time and circumstances to which it is traditionally assigned. This is admitted, and the critics attribute the presence of such words to the Jesuitical skill of the priestly forgers. But this only lends weight to the further conclusion that Higher Criticism is wholly incompetent to deal with the main issue on which it claims to adjudicate. For the genuineness of the Pentateuch must be decided on the same principles on which the genuineness of ancient documents is dealt with in our courts of justice. And the language of the documents is only one part of the needed evidence, and not the most important part. And fitness for dealing with evidence depends upon qualities to which Hebraists, as such, have no special claim. Indeed, their writings afford signal proofs of their unfitness for inquiries which they insist on regarding as their special preserve.

Take, for example, Professor Driver's grave assertion that the presence of two Greek words in Daniel (they are the names of musical instruments) demand a date for the book subsequent to the Greek conquest. It has been established by Professor Sayce and others that the intercourse between Babylon and Greece in, and before, the days of Nebuchadnezzar would amply account for the presence in the Chaldean capital of musical

instruments with Greek names. And Colonel Conder, moreover - a very high authority - considers the words to be Akkadian, and not Greek at all! But apart from all this, we can imagine the reception that would be given to such a statement by any competent tribunal. The story bears repeating - it is a record of facts - that at a church bazaar in Lincoln some years ago, the alarm was raised that pickpockets were at work, and two ladies had lost their purses. The empty purses were afterwards found in the pocket of the Bishop of the Diocese! On the evidence of the two purses the Bishop should be convicted as a thief, and on the evidence of the two words the book of Daniel should be convicted as a forgery!

HISTORICAL BLUNDER.

Here is another typical item in the Critics' indictment of Daniel. The book opens by recording Nebuchadnezzar's siege of Jerusalem in the third year of Jehoiakim, a statement the correctness of which is confirmed by history, sacred and secular. Berosus, the Chaldean historian, tells us that during this expedition Nebuchadnezzar received tidings of his father's death, and that, committing to others the care of his army and of his Jewish and other prisoners, "he himself hastened home across the desert." But the German skeptics, having decided that Daniel was a forgery, had to find evidence to support their verdict. And so they made the brilliant discovery that Berosus was here referring to the expedition of the following year, when Nebuchadnezzar won the battle of Carchemish against the army of the king of Egypt, and that he had not at that time invaded Judea at all. But Carchemish is on the Euphrates, and the idea of "hastening home" from there

to Babylon across the desert is worthy of a schoolboy's essay! That he crossed the desert is proof that he set out from Judea; and his Jewish captives were, of course, Daniel and his companion princes. His invasion of Judea took place before his accession, in Jehoiakam's third year, whereas the battle of Carchemish was fought after his accession, in the king of Judah's fourth year, as the biblical books record. But this grotesque blunder of Bertholdt's "Book of Daniel" in the beginning of the nineteenth century is gravely reproduced in Professor Driver's "Book of Daniel" at the beginning of the twentieth century.

CRITICAL PROFANITY.

But to return to Moses. According to "the critical hypothesis," the books of the Pentateuch are literary forgeries of the Exilic Era, the work of the Jerusalem priests of those evil days. From the Book of Jeremiah we know that those men were profane apostates; and if "the critical hypothesis" be true, they were infinitely worse than even the prophet's inspired denunciations of them indicate. For no eighteenth century atheist ever sank to a lower depth of profanity than is displayed by their use of the Sacred Name. In the preface to his "Darkness and Dawn," Dean Farrar claims that he "never touches the early preachers of Christianity with the finger of fiction." When his story makes Apostles speak, he has "confined their words to the words of a revelation." But the authors of the Pentateuch "touched with the finger of fiction" not only the holy men of the ancient days, but their Jehovah God. "Jehovah spake unto Moses, saying." This and kindred formulas are repeated times without number in the Mosaic books. If this be romance, a lower

type of profanity is inconceivable, unless it be that of the man who fails to be shocked and revolted by it.

But no; facts prove that this judgment is unjust. For men of unfeigned piety and deep reverence for divine things can be so blinded by the superstitions of "religion" that the imprimatur of the church enables them to regard these discredited books as Holy Scripture. As critics they brand the Pentateuch as a tissue of myth and legend and fraud, but as religionists they assure us that this "implies no denial of its inspiration or disparagement of its contents."

ERRORS REFUTED BY FACTS.

In controversy it is of the greatest importance to allow opponents to state their position in their own words; and here is Professor Driver's statement of the case against the Books of Moses:

We can only argue on grounds of probability derived from our view of the progress of the art of writing, or of literary composition, or of the rise and growth of the prophetic tone and feeling in ancient Israel, or of the period at which the traditions contained in the narratives might have taken shape, or of the probability that they would have been written down before the impetus given to culture by the monarchy had taken effect, and similar considerations, for estimating most of which, though plausible arguments on one side or the other may be advanced, a standard on which we can confidently rely scarcely admits of being fixed. ("Introduction," 6th ed., page 123.)

This modest reference to "literary composition" and "the art of writing" is characteristic. It is intended to gloss over the abandonment of one of the chief points in the

original attack. Had "Driver's Introduction" appeared twenty years earlier, the assumption that such a literature as the Pentateuch could belong to the age of Moses would doubtless have been branded as an anachronism. For one of the main grounds on which the books were assigned to the latter days of the monarchy was that the Hebrews of six centuries earlier were an illiterate people. And after that error had been refuted by archaeological discoveries, it was still maintained that a code of laws so advanced, and so elaborate, as that of Moses could not have originated in such an age. This figment, however, was in its turn exploded, when the spade of the explorer brought to light the now famous Code of Khammurabi, the Amraphel of Genesis, who was king of Babylon in the time of Abraham. Instead, however, of donning the white sheet when confronted by this new witness, the critics, with great effrontery, pointed to the newly-found Code as the original of the laws of Sinai. Such a conclusion is natural on the part of men who treat the Pentateuch as merely human. But the critics cannot have it both ways. The Moses who copied Khammurabi must have been the real Moses of the Exodus, and not the mythical Moses of the Exile, who wrote long centuries after Khammurabi had been forgotten!

AN INCREDIBLE THEORY.

The evidence of the Khammurabi Code refutes an important count in the critics' indictment of the Pentateuch; but we can call another witness whose testimony demolishes their whole case. The Pentateuch, as we all know, and the Pentateuch alone, constitutes the Bible of the Samaritans. Who, then, were the Samaritans? And how and when did they obtain the

Pentateuch? Here again the critics shall speak for themselves. Among the distinguished men who have championed their crusade in Britain there has been none more esteemed, none more scholarly, than the late Professor Robertson Smith; and here is an extract from his "Samaritans" article in the "Encyclopedia Britannica":

They (the Samaritans) regard themselves as Israelites, descendants of the ten tribes, and claim to possess the orthodox religion of Moses * * * The priestly law, which is throughout based on the practice of the priests in Jerusalem before the Captivity, was reduced to form after the Exile, and was published by Ezra as the law of the rebuilt temple of Zion. The Samaritans must, therefore, have derived their Pentateuch from the Jews after Ezra's reforms." And in the same paragraph he says that, according to the contention of the Samaritans, "not only the temple of Zion, but the earlier temple of Shiloh and the priesthood of Eli, were schismatical." And yet, as he goes on to say, "the Samaritan religion was built on the Pentateuch alone."

Now mark what this implies. We know something of racial bitterness. We know more, unfortunately, of the fierce bitterness of religious strife. And both these elements combined to alienate the Samaritans from the Jews. But more than this, in the post-exilic period distrust and dislike were turned to intense hatred - "abhorrence" is Robertson Smith's word - by the sternness and contempt with which the Jews spurned their proffered help in the work of reconstruction at Jerusalem, and refused to acknowledge them in any way. And yet we are asked to believe that, at this very time and in these very circumstances, the Samaritans, while

hating the Jews much as Orangemen hate the Jesuits, and denouncing the whole Jewish cult as schismatical, not only accepted these Jewish books relating to that cult as the "service books" of their own ritual, but adopted them as their "Bible," to the exclusion even of the writings of their own Israelite prophets, and the venerated and sacred books which record the history of their kings. In the whole range of controversy, religious or secular, was there ever propounded a theory more utterly incredible and preposterous!

ANOTHER PREPOSTEROUS POSITION.

No less preposterous are the grounds on which this conclusion is commended to us. Here is a statement of them, quoted from the standard textbook of the cult, Hasting's "Bible Dictionary":

There is at least one valid ground for the conclusion that the Pentateuch was first accepted by the Samaritans after the Exile. Why was their request to be allowed to take part in the building of the second temple refused by the heads of the Jerusalem community? Very probably because the Jews were aware that the Samaritans did not as yet possess the Law-Book. It is hard to suppose that otherwise they would have met with this refusal. Further, anyone who, like the present writer, regards the modern criticism of the Pentateuch as essentially correct, has a second decisive reason for adopting the above view. (Professor Konig's article, "Samaritan Pentateuch," page 68.)

Here are two "decisive reasons" for holding that "the Pentateuch was first accepted by the Samaritans after the Exile." First, because "very probably" it was because they had not those forged books that the Jews spurned

their help; and so they went home and adopted the forged books as their Bible And, secondly, because criticism has proved that the books were not in existence till then. To characterize the writings of these scholars as they deserve is not a grateful task but the time has come to throw off reserve, when such drivel as this is gravely put forward to induce us to tear from our Bible the Holy Scriptures on which our Divine Lord based His claims to Messiahship.

THE IDEA OF SACRIFICE A REVELATION.

The refutation of the Higher Criticism does not prove that the Pentateuch is inspired of God. The writer who would set himself to establish such a thesis as that within the limits of a Review Article might well be admired for his enthusiasm and daring, but certainly not for his modesty or discretion. Neither does it decide questions which lie within the legitimate province of the true Higher Criticism, as the authorship of Genesis. It is incredible that for the thousands of years that elapsed before the days of Moses, God left His people on earth without a revelation. It is plain, moreover, that many of the ordinances divinely entrusted to Moses were but a renewal of an earlier revelation. The religion of Babylon is clear evidence of such a primeval revelation. How else can the universality of sacrifice be accounted for? Could such a practice have originated in a human brain?

If some demented creature conceived the idea that killing a beast before his enemy's door would propitiate him, his neighbours would no doubt have suppressed him. And if he evolved the belief that his god would be appeased by such an offensive practice, he must have supposed his god to be as mad as himself. The fact that

sacrifice prevailed among all races can be explained only by a primeval revelation. And the Bible student will recognize that God thus sought to impress on men that death was the penalty of sin, and to lead them to look forward to a great blood shedding that would bring life and blessing to mankind. But Babylon was to the ancient world what Rome has been to Christendom. It corrupted every divine ordinance and truth, and perpetuated them as thus corrupted. And in the Pentateuch we have the divine re-issue of the true cult. The figment that the debased and corrupt version was the original may satisfy some professors of Hebrew, but no one who has any practical knowledge of human nature would entertain it.

INSUFFICIENT EVIDENCE.

At this stage, however, what concerns us is not the divine authority of the books, but the human error and folly of the critical attack upon them. The only historical basis of that attack is the fact that in the revival under Josiah, "the book of the law" was found in the temple by Hilkiah, the high priest, to whom the young king entrusted the duty of cleansing and renovating the long neglected shrine. A most natural discovery it was, seeing that Moses had in express terms commanded that it should be kept there (2 Kings 22:8; Deut. 31:26). But according to the critics, the whole business was a detestable trick of the priests. For they it was who forged the books and invented the command, and then hid the product of their infamous work where they knew it would be found.

And apart from this, the only foundation for "the assured results of modern criticism," as they themselves

acknowledge, consists of "grounds of probability" and "plausible arguments"! In no civilized country would an habitual criminal be convicted of petty larceny on such evidence as this; and yet it is on these grounds that we are called upon to give up the sacred books which our Divine Lord accredited as "the Word of God" and made the basis of His doctrinal teaching.

CHRIST OR CRITICISM?

And this brings us to the second, and incomparably the graver, objection to "the assured results of modern criticism." That the Lord Jesus Christ identified Himself with the Hebrew Scriptures, and in a very special way with the Book of Moses, no one disputes. And this being so, we must make choice between Christ and Criticism. For if "the critical hypothesis" of the Pentateuch be sustained, the conclusion is seemingly inevitable, either that He was not divine, or that the records of His teaching are untrustworthy.

Which alternative shall we adopt? If the second, then every claim to inspiration must be abandoned, and agnosticism must supplant faith in the case of every fearless thinker. Inspiration is far too great a question for incidental treatment here; but two remarks with respect to it may not be inopportune. Behind the frauds of Spiritualism there lies the fact, attested by men of high character, some of whom are eminent as scientists and scholars, that definite communications are received in precise words from the world of spirits. And this being so, to deny that the Spirit of God could thus communicate truth to men, or, in other words, to reject verbal inspiration on a priori grounds, betrays the stupidity of systematized unbelief. And, secondly, it is

amazing that any one who regards the coming of Christ as God's supreme revelation of Himself can imagine that (to put it on no higher ground than "Providence") the Divine Spirit could fail to ensure that mankind should have a trustworthy and true record of His mission and His teaching.

A MORE HOPELESS DILEMMA.

But if the Gospel narrative be authentic, we are driven back upon the alternative that He of whom they speak could not be divine. "Not so," the critics protest, "for did He not Himself confess His ignorance? And is not this explained by the Apostle's statement that in His humiliation He emptied Himself of His Deity?" And the inference drawn from this (to quote the standard textbook of the cult) is that the Lord of Glory "held the current Jewish notions respecting the divine authority and revelation of the Old Testament." But even if this conclusion - as portentous as it is profane - could be established, instead of affording an escape from the dilemma in which the Higher Criticism involves its votaries, it would only serve to make that dilemma more hopeless and more terrible. For what chiefly concerns us is not that, the Lord's doctrinal teaching was false, but that in unequivocal terms, and with extreme solemnity, He declared again and again that His teaching was not His own but His Father's, and that the very words in which He conveyed it were God-given.

A few years ago the devout were distressed by the proceedings of a certain Chicago "prophet," who claimed divine authority for his lucubrations. Kindly disposed people, rejecting a severer estimate of the man and his platform utterances, regarded him merely as a

profane fool. Shall the critics betray us into forming a similarly indulgent estimate of -- My pen refuses to complete the sentence!

And will it be believed that the only scriptural basis offered us for this astounding position is a verse in one of the Gospels and a word in one of the Epistles! Passing strange it is that men who handle Holy Scripture with such freedom when it conflicts with their "assured results" should attach such enormous importance to an isolated verse or a single word, when it can be misused to support them. The verse is Mark 13:32, where the Lord says, with reference to His coming again: "Of that day and hour knoweth no one; no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." But this follows immediately upon the words: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away."

THE WORDS OF GOD.

The Lord's words were not "inspired"; they were the words of God in a still higher sense. "The people were astonished at His teaching," we are told, "for he taught them as one having exousia." The word occurs again in Acts 1:7, where He says that times and seasons "the Father hath put in His own exousia." And this is explained by Phil. 2:6-7: "He counted it not a prize (or a thing to be grasped) to be on an equality with God, but emptied Himself"- the word on which the kenosis theory of the critics depends. And He not only stripped Himself of His glory as God; He gave up His liberty as a man. For He never spoke His own words, but only the words which the Father gave Him to speak. And this was the limitation of His "authority"; so that, beyond what the Father gave Him to speak, He knew nothing and was

silent. But when He spoke, "He taught them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes." (Matthew 7:29) From their scribes they were used to receive definite teaching, but it was teaching based on "the law and the prophets." But here was One who stood apart and taught them from a wholly different plane. "For," He declared, "I spake not from Myself; but the Father which sent Me, He hath given Me a commandment what I should say and what I should speak. The things, therefore, which I speak, even as the Father hath said unto Me, so I speak" (John 12:49, 50, R. V.).

And let us not forget that it was not merely the substance of His teaching that was divine, but the very language in which it was conveyed. So that in His prayer on the night of the betrayal He could say, not only "I have given them Thy word" (John 17:14), but "I have given them the words which Thou gavest Me" (John 17:8). His words, therefore, about Moses and the Hebrew Scriptures were not, as the critics, with such daring and seeming profanity, maintain, the lucubrations of a superstitious and ignorant Jew; they were the words of God, and conveyed truth that was divine and eternal.

When in the dark days of the Exile, God needed a prophet who would speak only as He gave him words, He struck Ezekiel dumb. Two judgments already rested on that people - the seventy years' Servitude to Babylon, and then the Captivity - and they were warned that continued impenitence would bring on them the still more terrible judgment of the seventy years' desolations. And till that last judgment fell, Ezekiel remained dumb (Ezek. 3:26; 24:27; 33:22). But the Lord Jesus Christ needed no such discipline. He came to do

the Father's will, and no words ever passed His lips save the words given Him to speak.

In this connection, moreover, two facts which are strangely overlooked claim prominent notice. The first is that in Mark 13 the antithesis is not at all between man and God, but between the Son of God and the Father. And the second is that He had been re-invested with all that, according to Phil. 2, He laid aside in coming into the world. "All things have been delivered unto Me of My Father," He declared; and this at a time when the proofs that "He was despised and rejected of men" (Isaiah 53:3) were pressing on Him. His reassuming the glory awaited His return to heaven, but here on earth the all things were already His (Matt. 11:27).

AFTER THE KENOSIS.

The foregoing is surely an adequate reply to the kenosis figment of the critics; but if any should still doubt or cavil, there is another answer which is complete and crushing. Whatever may have been the limitations under which He rested during His ministry on earth, He was released from them when He rose from the dead. And it was in His post-resurrection teaching that He gave the fullest and clearest testimony to the Hebrew Scriptures. Then it was that, "beginning at Moses, and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself" (Luke 24:27). And again, confirming all His previous teaching about those Scriptures, "He said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of

Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning Me" (Luke 24:44).

And the record adds: "Then opened He their mind that they might understand the Scriptures" (Luke 24:45).

And the rest of the New Testament is the fruit of that ministry, enlarged and unfolded by the Holy Spirit given to lead them into all truth. And in every part of the New Testament the Divine authority of the Hebrew Scriptures, and especially of the Books of Moses, is either taught or assumed.

THE VITAL ISSUE.

Certain it is, then, that the vital issue in this controversy is not the value of the Pentateuch, but the Deity of Christ. And yet the present article does not pretend to deal with the truth of the Deity. Its humble aim is not even to establish the authority of the Scriptures, but merely to discredit the critical attack upon them by exposing its real character and its utter feebleness. The writer's method, therefore, has been mainly destructive criticism, the critics' favorite weapon being thus turned against themselves.

A DEMAND FOR CORRECT STATEMENT.

One cannot but feel distress at having to accord such treatment to certain distinguished men whose reverence for divine things is beyond reproach. A like distress is felt at times by those who have experience in dealing with sedition, or in suppressing riots. But when men who are entitled to consideration and respect thrust themselves into "the line of fire," they must take the consequences. These distinguished men will not fail to receive to the full the deference to which they are entitled, if only they will dissociate themselves from the

dishonest claptrap of this crusade ("the assured results of modern criticism"; "all scholars are with us"; and so on- bluster and falsehood by which the weak and ignorant are browbeaten or deceived) and acknowledge that their "assured results" are mere hypotheses, repudiated by Hebraists and theologians as competent and eminent as themselves.

THINGS TO FEAR.

The effects of this "Higher Criticism" are extremely grave. For it has dethroned the Bible in the home, and the good, old practice of "family worship" is rapidly dying out. And great national interests also are involved. For who can doubt that the prosperity and power of the Protestant nations of the world are due to the influence of the Bible upon character and conduct? Races of men who for generations have been taught to think for themselves in matters of the highest moment will naturally excel in every sphere of effort or of enterprise. And more than this, no one who is trained in the fear of God will fail in his duty to his neighbour, but will prove himself a good citizen. But the dethronement of the Bible leads practically to the dethronement of God; and in Germany and America, and now in England, the effects of this are declaring themselves in ways, and to an extent, well fitted to cause anxiety for the future.

CHRIST SUPREME.

If a personal word may be pardoned in conclusion, the writer would appeal to every book he has written in proof that he is no champion of a rigid, traditional "orthodoxy."

With a single limitation, he would advocate full and free criticism of Holy Scripture. And that one limitation is

that the words of the Lord Jesus Christ shall be deemed a bar to criticism and "an end of controversy" on every subject expressly dealt with in His teaching. "The Son of God is come"; and by Him came both grace and TRUTH (John 1:17). And from His hand it is that we have received the Scriptures of the Old Testament.

Daniel the Prophet

"The subject of these Conferences, as publicly announced, is threefold:

1. the inspiration of Holy Scripture
2. the Jews
3. the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ

I am this evening going to take up a part of Scripture that will combine each portion of that subject, I mean the book of the prophet Daniel. Of course, within the limits of a half-hour's address, my remarks must be desultory, but it will be my aim to suggest thoughts to your minds, and perhaps to set at rest some here who are troubled about this wonderful book. It has for long centuries been a favourite ground of attack upon Holy Scripture, and we have come upon a time when a very large number of Christians deem it to be indefensible. And the reason why this book has been such a favourite ground of attack is because that, unlike other portions of Scripture, it is impossible to dispose of it without undermining its authority altogether. When scepticism comes face to face with other Messianic prophecies in the Old Testament, such as the 22nd Psalm, or the 53rd chapter of Isaiah, it is very easy indeed to dismiss them from consideration. You only require to be unspiritual - and most sceptics are unspiritual - and dogmatic, and nothing is more clear than that these Scriptures have a meaning wholly different to that which the Christian assigns to them. But here in this book, written at the period to which it is properly assigned, by the great prophet-prince of the captivity, you have prophecies

which for all time make it stand out as a witness for God, and it cannot be silenced. Now the book is attacked upon two principal grounds.

1. One is the language of it, which we are told stamps it at once as a book of a later day. I do not attempt to go into that this evening; first, because I have no personal right to speak on a subject which is a specialty of scholars; and, secondly, because it would occupy a large share of the time allotted to me. Our ablest scholars utterly repudiate the conclusions at which the higher critics have arrived upon this subject. One, a great man who is gone - Dr. Pusey, of Oxford - whose magnificent book still stands as the ablest and best defence of the book of Daniel, says that the language of the book is exactly what you would expect at the age in which the book was written. But there is another very remarkable testimony. One of our ablest philologists - Professor Margoliouth, of Oxford - has given it as his deliberate opinion that the language of the book of Daniel is inconsistent with the theory that it was written at the late date to which the higher critics assign it.

2. The other ground of attack is what they call historical difficulties; and here again I would say this, and I do not say it in a corner, but publicly, that the position taken up by higher critics is recognized today as untenable, and men are withdrawing from the ground which was occupied a while ago. I do not speak of writings such as the recent book of Archdeacon Farrar's, which appeals to "the man in the street." He has steeped his mind in the writings of the German sceptics and rationalists, who do not even agree with each other, taking in all that they have taught, and giving it out in one undigested mass, with no original contribution whatever, except

that amazing rhetoric that so charms and delights the uncultured and uneducated. You will thus sometimes find two statements on one page of Archdeacon Farrar's book which are altogether contradictory. All our best scholars recognize that these objections are no longer tenable, except in a modified form; and such men as Professor Driver, of Oxford, who is the author of the book which is now recognized as the standard in higher criticism, puts them forward with reserve, guarding himself by saying that future discoveries of inscriptions may lead us still further to modify our judgment. As an example of these difficulties, the sceptics appeal to the statement in the fifth chapter about Belshazzar. You find it in books of admirable repute, and in Archbishop Usher's chronology, which has been placed upon the marginal columns of our Bibles, that Belshazzar was simply a second name of the last king of Babylon; but this was proved absolutely untrue, and so it was urged that this Belshazzar was a myth, and that the whole statement regarding him is a blunder. Then came the deciphering of the cuneiform inscriptions by Sir Henry Rawlinson, who died a few weeks ago; and in an inscription of Nabonidus, Belshazzar is mentioned as his son, and as holding a position in the government in Babylon. Here, of course, is the solution of the whole difficulty. Nabonidus is absent at the head of the army, his son is left as regent in Babylon. And this explains the statement in the fifth chapter, that Belshazzar promised that anyone who would interpret the mysterious writing should be the third ruler in the kingdom. He could not make him second, because he was in that position himself.

There is another subject - Darius the Mede. Any day it is possible we may find some inscriptions that may clear up this difficulty, which in my judgment is the only historical difficulty in regard to Daniel; but the history of that period is in such a state of hopeless confusion, that it is impossible to attempt now to settle it. Professor Sayce, of Oxford, in a book which has attracted a good deal of notice, quotes an inscription by Cyrus describing his taking Babylon, and this inscription does not name Darius; so Professor Sayce rejects Darius the Mede. In this inscription, however, there are two great gaps, and no one knows whether Darius the Mede was named on one of the lost portions. Another point is that obviously all Cyrus said about his capture of Babylon is not to be taken as gospel. It was his obvious interest, it exactly fitted his purposes to represent himself, not as the conqueror of Babylon, but as the friend of the people and their gods. But it is the sweet simplicity of a Sunday-school to accept the inscription of a heathen king as if it were the inspired word of the true God!

It will be impossible for me to take in detail the numerous other questions connected with this book. For example, we are told that the name Nebuchadnezzar is misspelt, there being an "n" where there ought to be an "r," in the middle of it; so also "Abednego" should be "Abednebo," and so on with other names. They tell us that there are Persian words which could not have found their place there until after the Persian supremacy; and the same with Greek words, of which there are two. In regard to these foreign words we are simply reasoning in the dark. There is no book of Scripture, and certainly no book apart from Scripture, that can be compared with Daniel. The books of Jeremiah and, Ezekiel are, in a

sense, contemporary - the prophet in Jerusalem and the priest-prophet in captivity; but Daniel was a man of higher culture, a ruler and statesman. There is no reasonable doubt that he was a scholar. How natural then that he should have words at hand that the others had not. The Jewish tradition of the Talmud testifies that the book was edited by the men of the Great Synagogue. There is no reason whatever to doubt the truth of that tradition; and their object in editing the book was to make it suitable for the Jews of Palestine at the time that they were about to place it in their hands, some centuries after it was written. Here is an explanation of all the difficulties. Of course they would alter the spelling of the words according to the orthography of their own time. How natural that if they found strange and uncouth words, just as we should if we were editing Chaucer, they should substitute for them other words more, familiar to the people. There is no one of these difficulties that may not be thus explained.

The time allotted to me precludes my going through the Book chapter by chapter. But let us turn to the ninth chapter, as I want to give you the explanation of the great prophecy of the seventy weeks. The beginning of the chapter states that the vision was in the first year of Darius the Mede, after the capture of Babylon. The old man Daniel had been well-nigh threescore years and ten in captivity, and most of that time in a position of great authority and influence in Babylon; but still, to the very last of his old age, his heart was fresh in desires for his people, and in yearnings over God's glory in connection with His people. And now one of the great eras in connection with the captivity was about to run out. But of the era of servitude a year yet remained, and Daniel

looked for light in some direction that would give ground of hope that his people were about to be restored to their inheritance, but all was absolutely dark. And then he seems to have come for the first time to understand the meaning of that further judgment of the desolations, so hopelessly muddled by Archdeacon Farrar. You have the era of the servitude which began in the war of Jehoiakim, you have the era of the captivity which began at the commencement of the reign of Jehoiachin his son, and then you have the era of the desolations which dated from the last year of the reign of Zedekiah. He seems for the first time to have realised the meaning of the judgment of the desolations; and he is led to pray an earnest prayer that God would give light as to His purposes for His people. In answer to this prayer God sent the angel messenger with this wonderful message. Archdeacon Farrar would tell, you that Gabriel was a myth, invented by the writer of this, "novel," as he calls this book of Daniel. It was that same Gabriel who in after years God sent to tell those who were waiting for the redemption of Israel that the time had come, and that the Saviour was to be born in Bethlehem. He sent Gabriel to him with this message (Luke 1:11-20, 26-38).

And now I want you to look at the 24th verse, and try for a moment to forget everything you have ever heard upon the subject, and just let us approach it as level-headed people, with the intelligence of our knowledge of God's earthly people and God's promises. Could anything be more certain or more clear than the message which God gives His servant that seventy weeks were to be meted out as the period to intervene before Daniel's city and people were to be brought into

full Messianic blessing? He speaks of seventy years in his prayer, and the message in answer is, "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon the holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy." The term "most Holy" is never used of a person in Scripture, only of a place, the holiest of all in the temple.

Now let me repeat what I said. These words were not fulfilled in the death of Christ, or what we call His first coming. They imply the absolute realisation of full Messianic blessing for his people and city. From the next verse is derived this period of sixty-nine weeks: "Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times (Daniel 9:25)." Here is a statement than which nothing can be more definite.

I often wish, on an occasion like this, I could get an honest Parsee or Hindoo, who knows absolutely nothing about our prophecies, and ask him a question on a point like this; for while the book of Daniel has suffered but little at the hands of its assailants, it has suffered grievously at the hands of its exponents. I would ask the Parsee this question, Was Jerusalem ever restored or rebuilt? Yes, he would say. Under what circumstances, and at what time? He would reply by a firman or commandment by Artaxerxes in the 20th year of his reign. This is a matter of history; it is not a matter with

any question about it. You will find it in the 2nd chapter of Nehemiah.

Well, from the going forth of the commandment was to be seven times 69, or 483 years. And here in this verse the period was described as "unto Messiah the Prince." Nothing can be plainer than that Messiah the Prince should be manifested at the close of this period. The only question arises is to the length of the year in question. It may seem to us strange and unreasonable to raise such a question, but at the period of this prophecy the year in common use was 360 days, not 365. If we can find what the period of the desolations was we can get the period of the weeks. The desolations began on the tenth day of the tenth month in the ninth year of Zedekiah (2 Kings xxv. i). It was the day on which the armies of Nebuchadnezzar invested Jerusalem - from that day all agricultural pursuits were suspended in the land; and the close of the era is mentioned in the book of Haggai. Look at the last chapter, and the 15th verse:

"Consider now from this day and upward, from the four and twentieth day of the ninth month, even from the day that the foundation of the Lord's temple was laid, consider it. Is the seed yet in the barn? yea, as yet the vine, and the fig tree, and the pomegranate, and the olive tree, hath not brought forth: from this day will I bless you." This was in the second year of Darius, and now we can measure this period of the desolations. We know exactly how the Jewish year was arranged. It was the year beginning with the new moon of the vernal equinox. If then you measure out the days between these two periods, from the 1510 March in the year 589 to the 1st April in the year 520, you will find the interval was 25,200 days; and that is exactly, to the very day,

seventy years of 360 days. So also in regard to the prophetic period, we have simply to measure out the years from the date of the first day of the Jewish new year in the 20th reign of Artaxerxes, 445 b.c; and I was so extremely careful to have it right, that I wrote to the Astronomer-Royal to ask him to give me the date, so that there is no manner of question about it. From that day you calculate 483 prophetic years (173,889 days), and what date do you think they will bring you to? They will bring you to that day in the Lord's ministry on earth when He allowed His disciples to proclaim Him as the Messiah, the Son of David, as he entered into Jerusalem in mock triumph, in fulfilment of Zechariah's prophecy. And as He wept over Jerusalem; not as when He wept at the grave of Lazarus, the silent tears falling from His eyes, but with an outburst of grief He said, "If thou hadst known, even thou, in this day, the things which belong to thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes." (Luke xix. 28-44.) It seemed that though He had been despised and rejected, still up to this time the way of repentance was open; but this day their decision was to be final and irrevocable, and so He uttered these sad and solemn words.

Now here is something which sets up for us the book of Daniel, and raises it above all the doubts that criticism can cast upon it. I do not care where you fix the date of the book; it thus contains a prophecy which reaches down to the days of our blessed Lord, a prophecy which was fulfilled with a definiteness and accuracy which renders it absolutely impossible and preposterous to suppose that it was a mere coincidence. Remember also, as you read the book of Daniel, and consider the doubts that are cast upon it, that it is inseparably connected

with the book of the Revelation, that book which we prize, and justly prize, as the end of the Canon of Holy Scripture. All the dropped threads of promise and prophecy are there gathered up, and a sequence and cohesion given to the whole. The apocalypse of the Old Testament and the apocalypse of the New Testament must stand or fall together. I spoke to you of Gabriel, and his appearance in the gospel. Michael, whom you read of in the 12th chapter of Daniel as "the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people," appears again in the 12th chapter of Revelation as making war on behalf of God's people on the earth. But there is something more important even than this. In the 24th chapter of St. Matthew's gospel our Lord Himself refers to the Book of Daniel. It is a book for all time, and His people shall read it in days to come when you and I are passed from the scene; and when they are gathered at Jerusalem they will take it up to learn God's mind about them, and what their course is to be in the difficulties and trials of that awful period. The Lord gives this definite note of warning: "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet..." Our Lord's words adopt that prophecy, and it is from His hands that we receive the book. Let us be careful then not to trifle with doubts and difficulties, which endanger the foundation on which our faith rests. God grant that Christians may realize that this is God's book, not a novel nor a mere history, but that there is a responsibility and a blessing connected with it. Let us rise to the responsibility, and let us see that we do not lose the blessing.

Election and Lordship

There is a special subject I want to speak about, but I will begin with this vexed question of Election, for there are many people here, I dare say, who are distressed and troubled about it. I would like to say this, that if the doctrine of Election is the ground of your confidence before God, I would very tenderly and earnestly ask you to reconsider your whole position. God never intended that His people should be saved by a doctrine, or, to make a stronger statement still, that they should be...

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It speaks to us of His love, which, like everything else connected with Himself, is timeless; and if you ask what particular date is to be attached to it, you do not understand what you are talking about - it is before all time, before the foundation of the world (Matthew 25:34; Ephesians 1:4).

It speaks to us also of the unchangeableness of His purpose. And if you search the scriptures upon this

subject (and there is no book to open up the scriptures like the Bible itself) you will find by use of the word in the passages where it occurs that for the people of God Election has to do with privilege and dignity this is the characteristic thought in it. Who is the elect of God? The Lord Jesus Christ himself.

The Jew in many respects knows his Bible better than we do. And their taunt at the cross was "Let Him save Himself if He be the Christ the Elect of God." (Luke 23:35). "

A title, I say, of dignity and affection. You and I, if we are indeed in Him, are in the elect, and we, too, are the Elect of God. So we read: "As the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on," (Colossians 3:12) etc. That does not mean that we are people who, for some inscrutable reason, are separated off from other people, and put into a position which makes us independent of the grace of God, independent of His mercy to us in Christ. If you have that thought of Election get rid of it. We are as much dependent upon God our Saviour, dependent for our life here upon earth, and for the eternity that is before us, as if there was not a word about election in the Bible. Is it possible that there is a Christian here who shrinks back from the statement of this truth, and would like to have something, as it were, paid over the counter that would make us independent of our Saviour God? Banish the thought, and learn to have truer and worthier thoughts about Him and His salvation.

Two other thoughts before I pass away from this. First of all, the truth of Election is wholly distinct from any thought of reprobation. God never elects people to damnation. That is a corollary upon what I said before;

and if time permitted I might turn to Scripture after Scripture to enforce the truth of it. And, secondly, I want very definitely to press - and it is very helpful to those who are seeking to bring the Gospel before others - that this truth of Election in no way affects the question as to the persons and the classes to whom the Gospel is addressed. You know the kind of theology which we generally connect with the term Calvinism, and which would teach us that the work of Christ has relation only to a certain definitely limited number of people in the world, and that all the rest are beyond the reach of grace. Well, if what I have said just now be true, this is utterly false. You point to an unconverted man passing down the road, and ask me "Is that man elect?" I answer "Most certainly not"; if he is not in Christ he has no right whatever to a title of dignity and privilege that belongs primarily to the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and to us only as in Him. But that does not touch this question. So far as the death of Christ is concerned, its relation to that man is expressed by the words of the Gospel message. Are they true words? I don't mean can we so state them that no one will detect that they are not true? The Gospel has not got a pulpit side, and another side turned to the people. No! it is like God Himself, absolutely and unreservedly true. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) "Who gave Himself a ransom for all, the testimony to be borne in its own times." (1 Timothy 2:6)

I will read you a few words which, though only from a man, are of very much higher authority than any Calvinist dare to pretend to. "Though Christ suffered for

the sins of the whole world, and is offered through God's benignity indiscriminately to all, yet all do not receive Him." Whose words do you think these are? They are the words of Calvin himself, in his commentary upon Romans 5, and the editor of the English edition of his works, adds these notable words: "It appears from this sentence that Calvin held general redemption."

These words I have verified myself. I came the other day upon another quotation from Calvin in the writings of Bishop Ryle, of Liverpool, and I give them on his authority. On John 3, he says, "Christ employed the universal term whosoever both to invite indiscriminately all to partake of life, and to cut off every excuse from unbelievers. Such is the import of the term world. Though there is nothing in the world that is worthy of God's favour, yet He shows Himself to be reconciled to the whole world when He invites all men without exception to the faith of Christ."

Now this leads me to say - and I am sure I carry with me here the sympathy and conviction of every Christian - that every question about salvation is falsely stated, and every thought about salvation is wrong in some way unless it connects itself with God as the centre. If you have been trying to work out your personal salvation, or to get proof of it apart from God, you have begun at the wrong end, and you will never find settled peace. I know we are very proud of ourselves, for it is quite characteristic of this end of the nineteenth century talk to suppose that we are wonderful creatures. But in His presence we are just like insects creeping upon the ground; we are very contemptible creatures indeed. The angels who never sinned are more wonderful creatures than we are, aye, and the angels that sinned too. But

God has set His love upon us. He so loved us that He gave His only begotten Son to die for us, and now God Himself has become our Saviour. In the words of the old prophet, "The Lord Jehovah has become our salvation." (Isaiah 12:2) What a magnificent truth this is. If the Lord Jehovah has become my salvation, then my salvation is become a part of the very ground plan of the universe of God; and it calls forth the word, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" (Romans 8:33) It is not intended that the elect should start up and exclaim, "What wonderful people we are, to be sure!" Our thoughts should be of God, His power, His faithfulness, His mercy, His grace and His love. And we are in God's hands now; who then shall lay anything to our charge? We have seen something like this in the history of our own country in the last few years. What are a handful of soldiers to this nation? A general who knows his business is willing to sacrifice whole regiments for the sake of gaining a victory; but if you have a handful of Englishmen shut up in Chitral the whole power of England is pledged to bring deliverance to them; and I venture to say that this country would sacrifice thousands of men and millions of money to accomplish this, once it declared it would deliver them. And you, who are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, have to do with God's purposes as revealed in Him, and when you get hold of this and know that He has linked you with His own glory, you cease to rack your brains about your Election; you learn to think about the throne of God and its steadfastness, about the Blood of Christ and its preciousness, about the Word of God that endureth for ever; and there you have a confidence and peace that nothing can shake, either in this world or in the world that is to come.

This leads me to another thought. One great reason of the confusion which exists in the minds of Christians about all kinds of things is because they know little or nothing about Christianity. I am using the word in a special sense. This is called a Christian country, just as we talk of China as a heathen country. But - though you have no right to deny that use of the word, for it is quite legitimate - it is not its only meaning. In a deeper sense of the word the Christian is one who is in Christ, and in this sense no one has a right to call himself a Christian who has not eternal life in Christ. But there is yet another meaning of the word. No one, albeit he is in Christ, and has eternal life, has any right whatever to be acknowledged as a Christian before men unless he is living a Christ life upon earth. To live as a man of the world, and yet hold yourself out to be a Christian - this is shameful and wrong. If you will live a worldly life, keep your Christianity to yourself, and don't stumble other people, both Christians and the unconverted around you, by claiming to be a Christian. In the meanness of your spirit thank God in secret that He has saved your miserable soul, but don't retard His work in the world by telling others you are a Christian.

But even this does not exhaust the meaning of the word Christian. There is another most important thought connected with it which is too much ignored. If you ask whether a man is a lawyer, you may mean merely whether he is by profession barrister or solicitor, or the object of your inquiry may be to ascertain whether he is really versed in the knowledge of the law. Now, do you see my last thought about the meaning of the word Christian? It is one who is versed in the doctrine of Christianity. How very little there is of it! The Lord Jesus

Christ has come. He is the centre of all truth; and He has called us to stand with Himself in the midst of all the truth that has been revealed to us in the Word, not only for the present, but as regards the past and the future, so that in the full intelligence of all this we should live out our life here for Him. And this is what it means to be a Christian.

Some people are very indignant when you speak about dispensational truth, but you will never know anything about Christianity until you understand dispensational truth. Years ago, in a country town where I was holding some meetings, a gentleman came to help me. He had only recently been converted, and a friend had been trying to teach him dispensational truth, but it only made him angry. "So you mean to tell me," he demanded, "that this verse and that verse is not for me?" And so on. Our discussion continued till we set out for the meeting. At the meeting he took up Luke 14, and read about the great man who made a great supper, and bade many. He talked about the invitation, which he told the hearers was for them, and pressed them to accept it. So he went on preaching what he considered a clear Gospel. He next described the servants going out to the highways and hedges, and bringing in the poor, maimed, halt, and blind, and then he came to the words, "For none of these men that were bidden shall taste of my supper." As he turned round and looked at me, he stumbled, halted, and hesitated, and abruptly sat down. I got up and gave out a hymn, and while we were singing it he disappeared. When the meeting was over I went home and found him doubled up on the sofa sobbing like a child. "I see it all now," said he, "I have been setting myself against the truth of God. God did

that which is described in the parable, He made a great supper and invited His friends, but now the word has gone forth - 'not one of those men that were bidden shall taste of My supper.'"

Now, I do not want to offend you, but that, is where you have come in - the poor, maimed, halt, blind - the dregs of the streets: that is what we are before God, and He has brought us into the banquet that His friends refused. We are now God's elect, and have this wonderful place of privilege and blessing, and are united immediately in the closest relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

I met a friend of mine the other day, one of those enthusiastic people I am half afraid of, because they try to force me beyond my pace, and it is not always safe to allow people to force you beyond your pace; and he took hold of me and almost gave me a shake, as he said, "I hope you are looking for the King." "No," I said, "I am not looking for the King." "What?" he said, "Don't you believe in the coming of the Lord?" "Of course I do! I am looking for the Lord from heaven, but I am not looking for the King." He is King and Priest too, but it is not in that character He is coming. The great characteristic truth of the present dispensation is Lordship - the Lordship of Christ.

I was asked the other night, by Mr. Andrew Murray, what special truth was wanted at the present time on account of the state of the Church? I have thought of it a good deal since, and I would say that it is the truth, so utterly neglected, of the Lordship of Christ. You ask, "Is it not obedience?" That is only a sequence, a corollary upon the other. Let us get hold of this, that He is LORD,

and then will come in obedience. It is the great purpose which God has in view in all that He is working out. He has given Him the name that is above every name, not only in this world, but in that which is to come. And I give my judgment humbly, but confidently, that there is only one name which is above every name in this world, or the world which is to come - the great, incommunicable name of Jehovah; but He has given Him that name that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow - a name that speaks of humiliation, oh, how deep! We forget its significance. It was a common name among the Jews, more common than Samuel, or Daniel; yet in that name every knee shall bow, of knees in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Philippians 2:10-11). It is for this that the great purpose of the ages is slowly working out. Think of this, any of you here that are troubled about those questions that have been alluded to as to the condition of the lost; get rid of your theology upon that subject, and get hold of the truth that there will not be a creature in the universe but will bow before Him and own Him Lord.

What, then, is the Christian position, and what is the Christian life? Is it to anticipate the realization of the prayer, "Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven" (Matthew 6:10)? Is it our thought that, so far as it rests with us, His will should be done on earth as it is done in heaven? We talk about the future when all shall show it. But do our lives show it now? It is possible to take up the most blessed truths which we receive from this Word, or hear from the lips of others, and yet to make them our own opinions, and so degrade them till they become our own fads, instead of so receiving them

that they shall bring us to His feet in the acknowledgment of His Lordship, and create in us deeper and more earnest longings to be in the true place of service.

Christianity is not based upon the teaching of Christ while on earth; we have heard Him who speaks from Heaven, and this is the special revelation of Christianity. Do not mistake me; it is not that any portion of this book is to be disregarded, for everything that belongs to Him belongs to us and what is there that does not belong to Him? What is there that does not concern His glory? But when I speak of the special revelation of Christianity, I mean the revelation that dates, not from the cross, much less from His life on earth before the cross, not even from His resurrection as He talked and walked with His disciples in His body of glory, but from His place in Ascension at the right hand of God. The voice that speaks to us speaks from heaven. And if we are Christians, we are looking for the Lord from heaven.

In closing I want to ask you, as you talk about the Coming, do you realize the meaning of the word? Am I wrong in thinking that when you speak of the Coming you are thinking mainly, if not exclusively, of an event to be fulfilled in the future? But the word *parousia* means literally His "Presence." It speaks of His being with us. If it be in relation to earth, it speaks of His being here. It is only in a secondary sense that it means the actual fact of His arrival, and yet we take that as though it were the exclusive meaning of the word. And if we get hold of this thought that it is not a strange thing that the Lord should be present with His people, I think it will revolutionize the ideas which some of us have upon this whole subject. It is the strangest thing in the world that

He should be absent. If a man has to go abroad - it may be as a servant of his country, or as a bread-winner - in such circumstances that he cannot have his wife and children with him, are they not always longing to be together again? And when you talk about his coming back, people do not exclaim, "What an extraordinary idea!" He longs to come back simply because his loved ones are here. Everybody understands this, for the children of this world are wiser than the children of light (Luke 16:8). So also, if the Lord Jesus has gone away He is certainly coming back again. And yet they tell me that in America, in certain circles, a man's head is thought affected if he talks about the Lord's coming, as though it were some extraordinary craze he had taken hold of. Oh, have you ever known what it is, in all this talk about the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, to have felt a want, so that the words, "Come, Lord Jesus," (Revelation 22:20) are no mere cuckoo cry, but the expression of a deep longing, caused by a real sense of His absence - a want of Himself?

Letter to E.W. Bullinger

Dr. Bullinger had a large circle of friends. Two prominent men who were very close to him were Sir Robert Anderson and Rev. Sholto Douglas. Both shared his strong stand on Protestantism and interest in prophetic studies; both had been among the original trustees of Things to Come. They were also personal friends of his and frequently spent time with him on weekends and holidays.

Sir Robert Anderson was born in Ireland in 1841. His father was the Crown Solicitor for Dublin, his mother a member of the peerage. Though Sir Robert was called to the Irish Bar in 1863 and the English Bar in 1870, he never practised law, but rather became involved in public service. He rose to the position of Assistant Commissioner of Police and head of the Criminal Investigation Department in London and retired in 1901 after a distinguished career.

Following his retirement, Sir Robert devoted himself to writing and teaching, principally on Biblical subjects with particular emphasis on prophecy. Anderson was a frequent speaker at the Mildmay Conferences and the Prophecy Investigation Society; he also chaired and spoke at Annual Meetings of the Trinitarian Bible Society. (Although not personally active in the work of the Society, Anderson gave his time and lent his prestige to their Annual Meetings out of respect for its secretary. As he said at one Annual Meeting, "As a prefatory word, I may say that any dislike I feel to being in the chair is overborne by the pleasure of standing beside my friend Dr. Bullinger, and of doing anything, no matter how

little, to help him in the great work in which he is engaged." Sir Robert was one of the earliest members of the National Club, a private social club in London founded by men holding strongly Evangelical views, of which Dr. Bullinger was an honorary member.

Of Sir Robert's literary efforts it was said:

The quality in Sir Robert Anderson's books, as well as in his numerous other writings, which appealed with special force to many people, was the strength and certainty of his own (Bullinger's) beliefs and the clearness of their expression.... 'Your writings are specially helpful to me', wrote a very old friend... 'there is always in every chapter that which you must either accept or reject. You must stop and think, and not pass on unheeding.'

Dr. Bullinger said of one of Sir Robert's books: "I feel I have a fuller, better and deeper knowledge of 'my Lord and my God', and praise Him and bless you for it?"

The two men did not always agree on Biblical matters, as can be seen by the following letter:

Dear Bullinger,

I am deeply touched by the graciousness and cordiality of your notice of "Forgotten Truths". I know well how unreservedly you sympathise with very much there is in it, and your praise of that element is not stinted.

But I am fully aware that on certain matters respecting which you feel strongly I have gone counter to you. But on whatever side is the truth - yours or mine - there is no doubt on which side is the grace!

R.Anderson

Quotes

"If we could only realise that Christ is all, what a power there would be in our Christianity! Remember that if we get near to Christ we shall get near to each other. If a number of people are met in a large room, where the windows look out upon beautiful scenery and everything is an attraction, you will find some will go to the windows, others will gather round the bookcases, others round the fireplace, and so on; but if they are invited there to meet some person of commanding presence and attraction, everything else is forgotten. If Christ had the place in our creed and heart that He ought to have, there would be personal loyalty and personal love, and this is just what He claims."

"Nowhere does the Bible enjoin upon the Christian to become a pilgrim; and, using the word in its spiritual sense, the visit of a Romanist to Rome, for example, is the very antithesis of a 'pilgrimage.' 'What!' (our readers will exclaim with indignant surprise) 'Does not the Scripture tell us we ought to become pilgrims?' The answer is a great big NO. The aim which human religion always sets before its votaries is to gain Divine favour by efforts to become something that they are not; the true effort of the Christian life is to realise and live up to what, by God's grace, we are. The Christian is a pilgrim; let him see to it that he lives as a pilgrim."

"Here, then, is the answer to the question, 'What is it about?' The Bible is about Christ. The public facts of His life and death are matters of evidence, and undisputed; but the hidden facts on which faith depends are entirely matters of revelation. For example, no one doubts that

'Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures (1 Corinthians 15:3),' and the only Scriptures then in existence were those we call the Old Testament. To disparage them, therefore, is to undermine faith, for if they be not what Christ said they were, it is certain that He was not what He declared Himself to be; and, as we have seen, the Kenosis theories of the critics are here of no avail. The real question at issue, therefore, is not the authority of the Bible, but the Deity of Christ, and in defending the Bible "we are contending for our all.'

"You know the First Epistle to the Corinthians, with all its wealth of truth and exhortation, and rebuke and warning. And now the Apostle takes up the pen to sign it: 'The salutation of me, Paul, with mine own hand. If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ let him be anathema (1 Corinthians 16:21-22)'; let him be accursed. It is an awful word. I do not think we should use these words first against those who seem to us to come under them, but use them rather by turning them like a searchlight upon our own hearts and lives."

"My eye fell upon an advertisement in The Times today. It is headed, 'A religion of common sense'. There is no religion of common sense, but there are plenty of religions of uncommon nonsense. There is a religion of Divine revelation, and this is what we want."

"The movements I have indicated - and especially the New Theology, Spiritualism and Christian Science - are but divisions of the great army which is even now being marshalled and trained for the terrible struggle of the latter days. What is the distinctive peril of these awfully solemn times? Atheism has been killed by the growth of an enlightened rationalism, as has also the blind and

stupid infidelity of Hume. And drunkenness, dishonesty and vice are denounced as earnestly by men of the world as by the Christian. Our distinctive peril is in none of these, but in a subtle kind of spurious Christianity - a cult that teaches the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of men, and inculcates a high philanthropy and a pure and charming code of ethics, and that adopts every Christian truth, excepting only what is vital - everything except the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ and redemption by the blood of His cross."

Spiritualism, the New Theology, Christian Science, etc. - all these systems acknowledge God, but all agree in ignoring sin and Satan, death and judgment to come. And their ultimate aim is to disparage and dethrone the Lord Jesus Christ. For, as Luther phrased it, Satan 'hath no other business in hand.' Every 'spirit' cult is anti-Christian." - In Evangelical Christendom.

Why should we not investigate for ourselves these intensely interesting phenomena? The answer is two-fold: 1st. Because of the Divine prohibition; and 2nd. Because of warnings derived from the experience of others. "For those who yield themselves to spirit influence cannot shake free from that influence at will, and many a Christian life has been wrecked by frequenting spiritualistic séances." - Article on Spiritualism in The Association News.

Sin and Judgment to Come

The Book of Judges records that in evil days when civil war was raging in Israel, the tribe of Benjamin boasted of having 700 men who "could sling stones at a hair breadth and not miss" (Judges 20:16). Nearly two hundred times the Hebrew word *chatha*, here translated "miss," is rendered "sin" in our English Bible; and this striking fact may teach us that while "all unrighteousness is sin" (1 John 5:17), the root-thought of sin is far deeper. Man is a sinner because, like a clock that does not tell the time, he fails to fulfill the purpose of his being. And that purpose is (as the Westminster divines admirably state it), "to glorify God and enjoy Him forever." Our Maker intended that "we should be to the praise of His glory" (Ephesians 1:12). But we utterly fail of this; we "come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). Man is a sinner not merely because of what he does, but by reason of what he is.

MAN A FAILURE

That man is a failure is denied by none save the sort of people who say in their heart, "There is no God" (Psalm 14:1; 53:1). For, are we not conscious of baffled aspirations, and unsatisfied longings after the infinite? Some there are, indeed, we are told, who have no such aspirations. There are seeming exceptions, no doubt - Mr. A.J. Balfour instances "street arabs and advanced thinkers" - but such exceptions can be explained. And these aspirations and longings - these cravings of our higher being - are quite distinct from the groan of the lower creation. How, then, can we account for them? The atheistical evolution which has superseded

Darwinism can tell us nothing here. They are a part of the mass of proof that man is by nature a religious being; and that indisputable fact points to the further fact that he is God's creature. People who are endowed with an abnormal capacity for "simple faith" may possibly attribute the intellectual and aesthetical phenomena of man's being to the great "primordial germ," a germ which was not created at all, but (according to the philosophy of one of Mark Twain's amusing stories), "only just happened." But most of us are so dull-witted that we cannot rise to belief in an effect without an adequate cause; and if we accepted the almighty germ hypothesis we should regard it as a more amazing display of creative power than the "Mosaic cosmogony" described.

WHY A FAILURE?

But all this, which is so clear to every free and fearless thinker, gives rise to a difficulty of the first magnitude. If man be a failure, how can he be a creature of a God who is infinite in wisdom and goodness and power? He is like a bird with a broken wing, and God does not make birds with broken wings. If a bird cannot fly, the merest baby concludes that something must have happened to it. And by an equally simple process of reasoning we conclude that some evil has happened to our race. And here the Eden Fall affords an adequate explanation of the strange anomalies of our being, and no other explanation of them is forthcoming. Certain it is, then, that man is God's creature, and no less certain is it that he is a fallen creature. Even if Scripture were silent here, the patent facts would lead us to infer that some disaster such as that which Genesis records must have befallen the human race.

MAN WITHOUT EXCUSE

But, while this avails to solve one difficulty, it suggests another. The dogma of the moral depravity of man, and irremediable, cannot be reconciled with divine justice in punishing sin. If by the law of his fallen nature man were incapable of doing right, it would be clearly inequitable to punish him for doing wrong. If the Fall had made him crooked - backed, to punish him for not standing upright, would be worthy of an unscrupulous and cruel tyrant. But we must distinguish between theological dogma and divine truth. That man is without excuse (Romans 1:20) is the clear testimony of Holy Writ. This, moreover, is asserted emphatically of the heathen; and its truth is fully established by the fact that even heathendom has produced some clean, upright lives. Such cases, no doubt, are few and far between; but that in no way affects the principle of the argument; for, what some have done all might do. True it is that in the antediluvian age the entire race was sunk in vice; and such was also the condition of the Canaanites in later times. But the divine judgments that fell on them are proof that their condition was not solely an inevitable consequence of the Fall. For, in that case the judgments would have been a display, not of divine justice, but of ruthless vengeance.

DEPRAVITY IN RELIGIOUS NATURE

And, further, if this dogma were true, all unregenerate men would be equally degraded, whereas, in fact, the unconverted religionist can maintain as high a standard of morality as the spiritual Christian. In this respect the life of Saul the Pharisee was as perfect as that of Paul the Apostle of the Lord. His own testimony to this is

unequivocal (Acts 26:4-5; Phil. 3:4-6). No less so is his confession that, notwithstanding his life of blameless morality, he was a persecuting blasphemer and the chief of sinners (1 Tim. 1:13).

The solution of this seeming enigma is to be found in the fact so plainly declared in the Scripture, that it is not in the moral, but in the religious or the spiritual sphere, that man is hopelessly depraved and lost. Hence the terrible word - as true of those who stand on a pinnacle of high morality as of those who wallow in filthy sin - "they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Romans 8:8). "The ox knows his owner, and the ass his master's crib." But, as for us, we have gone astray like lost sheep (Psalm 119:176; Isaiah 53:6). The natural man does not know his God.

MAN A SINNER IN CHARACTER

While then sin has many aspects, man is a sinner, I repeat, primarily and essentially, not because of what he does but because of what he is. And this brings into prominence the obvious truth that sin is to be judged from the divine, and not from the human, standpoint. It relates to God's requirements and not to man's estimate of himself. And this applies to all the many aspects in which sin may be regarded. "It may be contemplated as the missing of a mark or aim; it is then the overpassing or transgressing of a line; it is then the disobedience to a voice; in which case it is the falling where one should have stood upright; this will be ignorance of what one ought to have known; this will be a diminishing of that which should have been rendered in full measure which is non-observance of a law, which is a discord, and then it is and in other ways almost out of number."

This well known passage from Archbishop Trench's "Synonyms" must not be taken as a theological statement of doctrine. As Dr. Trench notices on a later page, the word *ajhaprta* has a far wider scope than "the missing of a mark or aim." It is used in the New Testament as the generic term for sin. And *ajhaprta* has a far deeper significance than the "non-observance of a law." We read in (Rom. 8:7), he is stating what is a fact in the experience of all thoughtful men. It is not that men by nature prefer evil to good; that betokens a condition due to vicious practices. "Given up to a reprobate mind" is the apostle's description of those who are thus depraved by the indulgence of "shameful passions." The subject is a delicate and unsavory one; but all who have experience of criminals can testify that the practice of unnatural vices destroys all power of appreciating the natural virtues. As the first chapter of Romans tells us, the slaves of such vices sink to the degradations, not only of "doing such things," but of "taking pleasure in them that do them" (Rom. 1:24-32). All power of recovery is gone - there is nothing in them to which appeal can be made. (*I cannot refrain from saying that if I can intelligently "justify the ways of God" in destroying the cities of the plain, and decreeing the extermination of the Canaanites, I owe it to knowledge gained in police work in London, for unnatural vice seems to be hereditary.)

But this is abnormal. Notwithstanding indulgence in "natural" vice, there is in man a latent sense of self-respect which may be invoked. Even a great criminal is not insensible to such an appeal. For, although his powers of self-control may be almost paralyzed, he does not call evil good, but acknowledges it to be evil. And

thus to borrow the apostle's words, he "consents unto the law that it is good" (Romans 7:16). But, if he does so, it is because he recognizes it to be the law of his own better nature. He is thinking of what is due to himself. Speak to him of what is due to God, and the latent enmity of the "carnal mind" (Romans 8:7) is at once aroused. In the case of one who has had a religious training, the manifestations of that enmity may be modified or restrained; but he is conscious of it none the less.

Thoughtful men of the world, I repeat, do not share the doubts which some theologians entertain as to the truth of Scriptural teaching on this subject. For, every waking hour brings proof "that the relationship between man and his Maker has become obscured, and that even when he knows the will of God there is something in his nature which prompts him to rebel against it." Such a state of things, moreover, is obviously abnormal, and if the divine account of it he rejected, it must remain a mystery unsolved and unsoluble. The Eden Fall explains it, and no other explanation can be offered.

THE ROOT OF SIN

It might be argued that an unpremeditated sin - a sin in which mind and will have no part - is a contradiction in terms. But this we need not discuss, for it is enough for the present purpose to notice the obvious fact that with unfallen beings such a sin would be impossible. As the Epistle of James declares, every sin is the outcome of an evil desire (James 1:14-15). And eating the forbidden fruit was the result of a desire excited by yielding to the tempter's wiles. When a woman harbours the thought of breaking her marriage vow she ceases to be pure; and

once our parents lent a willing ear to Satan's gospel, "Ye shall not surely die," "Ye shall be as gods knowing good and evil," (Genesis 3:4-5) their fall was an accomplished fact. The overt act of disobedience, which followed as of course, was but the outward manifestation of it. And, as their ruin was accomplished, not by the corruption of their morals, but by the undermining of their faith in God, it is not, I repeat, in the moral, but in the spiritual sphere, that the ruin is complete and hopeless.

RECONCILIATION THE GREAT NEED

Therefore also is it that while "patient continuance in well doing" is within the human capacity, Rom. 2:6-11 applies to all whether with or without a divine revelation; but of course the test and standard would be different with the Jew and the heathen, and the denial of this not only supplies an adequate apology for a life of sin, but impugns the justice of the divine judgment which awaits it - no amount of success, no measure of attainment, in this sphere can avail to put us right with God. If my house be in darkness owing to the electric current having been cut off, no amount of care bestowed upon my plant and fittings will restore the light. My first need is to have the current renewed. And so here; man by nature is "alienated from the life of God" (Ephesians 4:18), and his first need is to be reconciled to God. And apart from redemption reconciliation is impossible.

NEO-CHRISTIANISM

A discussion of the sin question apart from God's remedy for sin would present the truth in a perspective so wholly false as to suggest positive error. But before passing on to speak of the remedy something more needs to be said about the disease. For the loose

thoughts so prevalent today respecting the atonement are largely due to an utterly inadequate appreciation of sin; and this again depends on ignorance of God. Sin in every respect of it has, of course, a relation to a savage; and as man is God's creature the standard is, again of course, divine perfection. But the God of the neo-Christianism of the day - we must not call it Christianity - is a weak and gentle human "Jesus" who has supplanted the God of both nature and revelation.

The element of the folly in religious heresies affords material for an interesting psychological study. If the Gospels be not authentic, then, so far as the teaching of Christ is concerned, intelligent agnosticism will be the attitude of every one who is not a superstitious religionist. But if the records of the ministry be trustworthy, it is certain, first, that the Hebrew Scriptures were the foundation of the Lord's teaching; and secondly, that His warnings of divine judgment upon sin were more terrible than even the thunders of Sinai. During all the age in which the echoes of those thunders mingled with the worship of His people, the prophetic spirit could discern the advent of a future day of full redemption. And it was in the calm and sunshine of the dawning of that long promised day that He spoke of a doom more terrible than that which engulfed the sinners of Sodom and Gomorrah, for all who saw His works and heard His words, and yet repented not (Matthew 11:23-24).

THE PERFECT STANDARD

And here we may get hold of a great principle which will help us to reconcile seemingly conflicting statements of Scripture, and to silence some of the cavils of unbelief.

The thoughtful will recognise that in divine judgment the standard must be perfection. And when thus tested, both the proud religionist Christendom "exalted to heaven" like Capernaum by outward privilege and blessing, and the typical savage of a degraded heathendom, must stand together. If God accepted a lower standard than perfect righteousness He would declare Himself unrighteous; and the great problem of redemption is not how He can be just in condemning, but how He can be just in forgiving. In a criminal court "guilty or not guilty" is the first question to be dealt with in every case, and this levels all distinctions; and so it is here; all men "come short," and therefore "all the world" is brought in "guilty before God." But after verdict comes the sentence and at this stage the question of degrees of guilt demands consideration. And at "the Great Assize" that question will be decided with perfect equity. For some there will be many stripes, for others there will be few (Luke 12:45-48). In the vision given us of that awful scene we read that "the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their Works" (Rev. 20:12).

And this will be the scope and purpose of the judgment of the Great Day. The transcendent question of the ultimate fate of men must be settled before the advent of that day; for the resurrection will declare it and the resurrection precedes the judgment. For there is a "resurrection unto life," and a 'resurrection unto judgment" (John 5:29). While the redeemed, we are expressly told, will be "raised in glory"- and "we know that we shall be like Him" (1 John 3:2), with bodies "fashioned like unto His glorious body" (Phil. 3:21) - the lost will be raised in bodies; but here I pause, for

Scripture is almost silent on this subject, and conjecture is unsafe. It may be that just as criminals leave a prison in garb like that they wore on entering it, so the doomed may reappear in bodies akin to those that were the instruments of their vices and sins on earth. If the saved are to be raised in glory and honor and incorruption (1 Cor. 15:42-44), may not the lost be recalled to bodily life in corruption, dishonour and shame?

JUDGMENT TO COME

But though the supreme issue of the destiny of men does not await that awful inquest, "judgment to come" is a reality for all. For it is of the people of God that the Word declares "we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ," and "every one of us shall give account of himself to God" (Rom. 14:10, 12). And that judgment will bring reward to some and loss to others.

Incalculable harm results from that sort of teaching which dings into the ears of the unconverted that they have no power to live a pure and decent life, and which deludes the Christian into thinking that at death he will forfeit his personality by losing all knowledge of the past, and that heaven is a fool's paradise where waters of Lethe will wipe out our memories of earth. "We must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Cor. 5:10).

But this judgment of "the bema of Christ" has only an incidental bearing on the theme of the present article, and it must not be confounded with the judgment of the "great white throne." From judgment in that sense the believer has absolute immunity: 'He cometh not into

judgment, but hath passed out of death into life" (John 4:26), is the Lord's explicit declaration. He gives the "right to become children of God" "to them that believe on His Name" (John 1:12); and it is not by recourse to a criminal court that we deal with the lapses and misdeeds of our children.

DEGREES OF REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS

We have seen then that man is a sinner in virtue both of what he is and what he does. We do what we ought not, and leave undone what we ought to do. For sin may be due to ignorance or carelessness, as well as to evil passions which incite to acts that stifle conscience and outrage law. And we have seen also that every sin gives rise to two great questions which need to be distinguished, though they are in a sense inseparable. The one finds expression in the formula, "guilty or not guilty," and in respect of this no element of limitation or degree is possible. But after verdict, sentence; and when punishment is in question, degrees of guilt are infinite.

It has been said that no two of the redeemed will have the same heaven; and in that sense no two of the lost will have the same hell. This is not a concession to popular heresies on this subject. For the figment of a hell of limited duration either traduces the character of God, or practically denies the work of Christ. If the extinction of being were the fate of the impenitent, to keep them in suffering for an aeon or a century would savor of the cruelty of a tyrant who, having decreed a criminal's death, deferred the execution of the sentence in order to torture him. Far worse indeed than this, for, *ex hypothesi*, the resurrection of the unjust could have

no other purpose than to increase their capacity for suffering.

Or, if we adopt the alternative heresy - that hell is a punitive and purgatorial discipline through which the sinner will pass to heaven - we disparage the atonement and undermine the truth of grace. If the prisoner gains his discharge by serving out his sentence, where does grace come in? And if the sinner's sufferings can expiate his sin, the most that can be said for the death of Christ is that it opened a short and easy way to the same goal that could be reached by a tedious and painful journey. But further, unless the sinner is to be made righteous and holy before he enters hell - and in that case, why not let him enter heaven at once? - he will continue unceasingly to sin; and as every fresh sin will involve a fresh penalty, his punishment can never end.

FALSE ARGUMENT

Every treatise in support of these heresies relies on the argument that the words in our English Version, which connote endless duration, represent words in the original text which have no significance. But this argument is exploded by the fact that the critic would be compelled to use these very words if he were set the task of retranslating our version into Greek. For that language has no other terminology to express the thought. Arid yet it is by trading on *ad captandum* arguments of this kind, and by the prejudices which are naturally excited by partial or exaggerated statements of truth, that these heresies win their way. Attention is thus diverted from the insuperable difficulties which beset them, and from their bearing on the truth of the atonement.

But Christianity sweeps away all these errors. The God of Sinai has not repented of His thunders, but He has fully revealed Himself in Christ. And the wonder of the revelation is not punishment but pardon. The great mystery of the Gospel is how God can be just and yet the Justifier of sinful men (Romans 3:26). And the Scriptures which reveal that mystery make it clear as light that this is possible only through redemption: "not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 2:2). Redemption is only and altogether by the death of Christ. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). To bring in limitations here is to limit God.

THE CROSS OF CHRIST

In the wisdom of God the full revelation of "eternal judgment" and the doom of the lost, awaited the supreme manifestation of divine grace and love in the Gospel of Christ; and when these awful themes are separated from the Gospel, truth is presented in such a false perspective that it seems to savour of error. For not even the divine law and the penalties of disobedience will enable us to realize aright the gravity and heinousness of sin. This we can learn only at the Cross of Christ. Our estimate of sin will be proportionate to our appreciation of the cost of our redemption. Not "silver and gold" - human standards of value are useless here - but "the precious blood of Christ" (1 Peter 1:18-19). Seemingly more unbelievable than the wildest superstitions of human cults is the Gospel of our salvation. That He who was "Son of God" in all which that title signifies - God manifest in the flesh; for "all

things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made" (John 1:3) - came down to earth, and having lived in rejection and contempt, died a death of shame, and that in virtue of his death He is the propitiation for the world. (1 John 2:2, R. V.)

Here, and only here, can we know the true character and depths of human sin, and here alone can we know, so far as the finite mind can ever know it, the wonders of a divine love that passes knowledge.

And the benefit is to "whosoever believeth." It was by unbelief that man first turned away from God; how fitting, then, it is that our return to Him should be by faith. If this Gospel is true - and how few there are who really believe it to be true! - who can dare to impugn the justice of "ever-lasting punishment"? For Christ has opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers; the way to God is free, and whosoever will may come. There is no artifice in this and grace is not a cloak to cover favouritism. Unsolved mysteries there are in Holy Writ, but when we read of "God our Saviour," who willeth that all men should be saved; and of "Christ Jesus who gave Himself a ransom for all" (1 Tim. 2:3-6), we are standing in the full clear light of day.

This much is as clear as words can make it - and nothing more than this concerns us - that the consequences of accepting or rejecting Christ are final and eternal. But who are they who shall be held guilty of rejecting? What of those who, though living in Christendom, have never heard the Gospel aright? And what of the heathen who have never heard at all? No one can claim to solve these problems without seeming profanely to assume the role of umpire between God and men. We know, and it is our

joy to know, that the decision of all such questions rests with a God of perfect justice and infinite love. And let this be our answer to those who demand a solution of them. Unhesitating faith is our right attitude in presence of divine revelation, but where Scripture is silent let us keep silence.*

*The scope of this article is limited not only by exigencies of space but by the nature of the subject. Therefore it contains no special reference to the work of the Holy Spirit.

Spirit Manifestations and the Gift of Tongues

What does the Bible say about... MIRACULOUS GIFTS?

We live in a day of extravagant claims of the miraculous workings of the Holy Spirit. Every Christian must be prepared to evaluate these claims and determine reasonable expectations regarding the work of the Spirit in his or her own life. Noted apologist Sir Robert Anderson considers history and searches the Scriptures to determine what is of God and what is of the great deceiver.

"The days we live in are intensely solemn. The stupid materialism of the science of yesterday has been exploded by the facts of spiritualism, vouched for by some of our leading scientists of today. And the blind infidelity of the past has thus given place to a craving to get into touch with the realities of the unseen world.

This morbid influence has invaded the sphere of religious thought and life, and even spiritual Christians are being corrupted by it. It creates a tendency to make the great facts and truths of the divine revelation of Christianity subordinate to subjective spiritual manifestations, and to the emotions and experiences which such manifestations are fitted to produce. Among the many phases of this movement none is more striking than that of which the distinctive characteristic is what is termed "the gift of tongues." In many lands, our own included, there are coteries of earnest Christians who are revelling in the enjoyment of this "gift." Under the compelling influence of an entirely preter-human power,

men and women are inspired to utter thoughts which are not their own, in a language of which they are ignorant. The facts are indisputable, and the only question open to us is as to their significance.

The first inquiry which will suggest itself to the thoughtful is whether any light upon this subject can be derived from the history of similar religious movements in the past. And we shall find what we seek in events recorded by men whom those of us who are getting on in life count as our contemporaries.

The beginning of the third decade of the nineteenth century was a time of religious revival. In some places the movement was characterized by the study of the Bible with increased earnestness and intelligence and in others by united prayer for manifest tokens of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. A movement of this latter type centred around the picturesque personality of Edward Irving. At twenty-seven years of age this brilliantly gifted man became assistant minister in the great Malachi 4:

"The power came upon me, and I was made to read in the power. My voice raised far beyond its natural pitch, with constrained repetitions of parts, and with the same inward uplifting which at the presence of the power I had always before experienced. When I knelt down to pray, I was carried out to pray in the power for the presence and blessing of God in the midst of the church; in all this I had great joy and peace, without any of the strugglings which had attended my former utterances in power."

He next describes an evening spent at a friend's house with Mr. Irving and others of the coterie. He says:

"After prayer, Mrs. J. C. was made to testify that now was the time of the great struggle and power of Satan in the midst of us; that now we must take to ourselves the whole armour of God and stand up against him; for he was coming in like a flood upon the Church, and fearful was his power. The pastor observed that this utterance taught us our duty, as standing in the Church to wrestle against the enemy; and whilst he was going on to ask some question, the power fell upon me, and I was made to speak; and for two hours or upwards, with very little interval, the power continued upon me, and I gave forth what we all regarded as prophecies concerning the Church and the nation... These prophecies were mingled with others most glorious and gracious, as they appeared to us - declaring the Spirit should be abundantly poured forth, and a faithful and mighty people should be gathered in this land.... The power which then rested on me was far more mighty than before, laying down my mind and body in perfect obedience, and carrying me on without confusion or excitement. Excitement there might appear to a bystander, but to myself it was calmness and peace. Every former visitation of the power had been very brief; but now it continued, and seemed to rest upon me all the evening. The things I was made to utter flashed in upon my mind without forethought, without expectation, and without any plan or arrangement; all was the work of the moment, and I was as the passive instrument of the power which used me."

After narrating a number of similar experiences, he remarks:

"To those who have been used to watch over the workings of their own minds, and who have never been

visited with any power beyond the mere vagaries of excitement, it may seem inexplicable how persons can be brought to surrender their own judgment, and act upon an impulse, or under a power working in them, without daring to question that power. The process is, however, very simple, and the reasons supporting it are very plausible, and - the premises admitted - perfectly logical. My own case may be an example; accustomed to try the powers and weaknesses of my own mind in public and in private; in business and in religious meetings; in speaking and in prayer; in reasoning and in exposition; I found, on a sudden, in the midst of my accustomed course, a power coming upon me which was altogether new - an unnatural, and in many cases a most appalling utterance given to us - matters uttered by me in this power of which I had never thought, and many of which I did not understand until long after they were uttered - an enlarged comprehension and clearness of view given to me on points which were really the truth of God (though mingled with many things which I have since seen not to be truth, but which then had the form of truth) - great setting out of Christ, great joy and freedom in prayer, and seemingly great nearness of communion with God, in the midst of the workings of the power; the course of the power quite contrary to the course of excitement. It was manifest to me that the power was supernatural; it was therefore a spirit. It seemed to me to bear witness to Christ, and to work the fruits of the Spirit of God. The conclusion was inevitable, that it was the Spirit of God; and if so the deduction was immediate, that it ought in all things to be obeyed. If I understood not the words I was made to utter, it was consistent with the idea of the utterances of the Spirit, that deep and mysterious things should be spoken. If I

were commanded to do a thing of which I saw not the use, was I to dare to pause upon God's command? If, indeed, the things were clearly contrary to God's truth, it would have been clear God had not spoken it; but if it was a thing indifferent, surely (I reasoned) God is to be obeyed. If anyone is once persuaded that the Spirit of God speaks in him by any particular mode or communication, it will henceforth be his study only to discern that he does not mistake his own feelings or impulses for that communication; for, when the communication is decided to be from God, faithfulness to God steps in, and all the faith and love and simple reliance on God, which the Christian through faith possesses, will be enlisted to perform the command. Awful, therefore, is the mistake, if a seducing spirit is entertained as the Holy Spirit of Jehovah.

The more devoted the Christian seduced, the more implicit the obedience to the seducing spirit.

Statements of this kind are discounted by anyone who is inclined to scepticism, especially if he knows much of human nature, and, I must add, of religious revivals. But their significance will be appreciated by all who were acquainted with their author, the late Mr. Robert Baxter. Ecclesiastically he was not Scottish, but Anglican, and at this time he was a "high churchman." He had been in the habit of teaching the poor in the parish where he lived. But, he tells us, he habitually refrained from praying at such meetings, "conceiving that the privilege of leading in public prayer belonged alone to the ordained minister." I enjoyed his acquaintance for many years and often met him in Christian work. I had heard of his connection with Irvingism, but his "Narrative of Facts" published in 1833 by Jas. Nisbet & Co. and long

out of print, never came into my hands till a few weeks ago. The man, as I knew him, was a typical English Parliamentary lawyer, reserved, slow of speech, and noted for soundness of judgment. And as I here read of his pouring out a torrent of unpremeditated words, sometimes for two hours at a stretch, and of his cramming a handkerchief to his mouth at private prayer, lest his "inspired" bellowings should disturb the household, my distress and amazement are unbounded that anyone could suppose that the spirit which energized him was divine.

I must here add yet one more extract from his book descriptive of his Sunday services during this period:

The power came upon me in an exhortation to the people to lay aside their books, and bow themselves before the Lord, to worship Him in spirit and in truth; that the Lord was at hand; and as a witness to His people, God was now sending forth a ministry, not ministering in the flesh, but in the Spirit, who should teach and minister in the utterance of the Spirit, and, in due time, be endowed with all the mighty power of the Spirit. After some further opening the people were called to pray, and, kneeling down, the power of utterance continued with me for about an hour, in prayer and intercession for the Church and nation, King, ministers, and people; for the outpouring of the Spirit, the change of heart and life, and the exaltation of God in the earth. As the power ceased, I stayed, and while they sang, I went into the vestry to fetch a Bible. Here I was wholly impotent, and appeared to myself as though I had no strength to exhort the people. My sister, under the nervous excitement of anxiety, was seized with an hysterical fit. All my confidence in God seemed for the

moment to desert me, and I felt as though my mouth was shut for ever. It was, however, but a moment; the power came down again upon me, and I read with great power the sixty-first chapter of Isaiah, and preached in the power for upwards of an hour; after which I dismissed the people with the customary benediction. In the afternoon service I took the same course, and the power was with me in prayer and preaching as in the morning....

I have been much confounded by the fact occurring in this instance, as also in most others of the public testimonies on preaching; that Christ was preached in such power, and with such clearness, and the exhortations to repentance so energetic and arousing, that it is hard to believe the person delivering it could be under the delusion of Satan. Yet so it was, and the fact stands before us as a proof the most fearful errors may be propounded under the guise of greater light and zeal for God's truth. "As an angel of light" (2 Corinthians 11:14) is an array of truth, as well as holiness and love, which nevertheless Satan is permitted to put on, to accomplish and sustain his delusions. It is yet more mysterious, and yet not less true, that the truth so spoken was carried to the hearts of several who, on this day, heard it, and these services were made the means of awakening them, so far as the change of conduct and earnest longing after Christ from that day forward can be an evidence of it.

The words "as an angel of light" recur as a refrain throughout the narrative. Many a one will exclaim: "How could a movement which denounces the devil and all his works, and which promotes piety and honours Christ, be satanic?" But this ignores the solemn warning of our

divine Lord, "They shall deceive, if it were possible, the very elect (Matthew 24:24)" A moment's thought might satisfy us that the false could never deceive the elect if it did not simulate all the characteristics of the true: honour paid to Christ, a high tone of spirituality, and a beautiful code of morals.

The very existence of the devil is a subject for jesting with men of the world. And the devil of "the Christian religion" has but little in common with the Satan of Scripture. Yet it is from Scripture alone that we can learn anything about his personality. Mentions of him in the Old Testament are few, but they are as significant as they are explicit. From the first page of Holy Writ to the last he is presented to us as "the deceiver." The story of the fall in Eden is generally misread. Eve was "thoroughly deceived" (1 Timothy 2:14). She was "beguiled" into accepting what he put before her, because it seemed to be in the line of God's purpose. She had misunderstood the words of the divine command and warning by taking them literally. The "tree of knowledge" was given to enable man to raise himself to a higher plane of being, and God would never damn His children for doing that which their own reason told them must be right. Such way, Satan's teaching, and it is precisely what is preached in numberless "Christian" pulpits today. The devil did not attack the morals of our first parents, but he undermined and corrupted their faith.

So was it also in his dealings with Job. His effort was to estrange the patriarch from God by making him doubt the divine goodness. The Lord's words in Luke 22:31 seem to throw light on this mysterious narrative. The Revised Version marginal reading gives it, "Satan hath

obtained you by asking"; Dean Alford's gloss is, "Hath obtained you - his desire is granted." The disciples were to be given over to the evil one to be tempted and sifted, just as Job had been, but the Lord's intercession and grace protected and restored them.

Certain other Old Testament passages might also deserve notice, such as Zechariah 3, where Satan sought to hinder the services of the high priest. But suffice it here to emphasize that in every case the sphere of his temptations was not morals but what is popularly called "religion."

When we turn to the New Testament I would claim prominence for the eighth chapter of John. "Ye are of your father the devil," was the Lord's scathing reply to the Jews when, in rejecting His teaching, they fell back upon that figment of apostates, the fatherhood of God. "Ye are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father it is your will to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and has not stood in the truth because truth is not in him. When he speaketh the lie, he speaketh of his own, for he is a liar, and the father of it" (John 8:44). "A murderer from the beginning" - the beginning of what? Not of his own existence, for he was created in perfectness and beauty; nor of the existence of man, for, before the Eden fall, he had already dragged down others in his ruin. His being a murderer connects itself immediately with the truth which he refused, and the lie of which he is the father. These words of our divine Lord give us a glimpse into a past eternity, when, to the heavenly intelligences, the great mystery of God (Colossians 2:2) was first made known - the purpose of the ages, that a firstborn was to be revealed and that "in all things He might have the preeminence" (Colossians

1:18). The greatest of these heavenly beings, whom we now know as Satan, claimed that place, and, rebelling against the divine counsels, he set himself from that hour to thwart them. Thus it was that he devised the ruin of our race. And in view of the promise to Eve, he may possibly have thought that either Cain or Abel was his rival, and so he won Cain over to his side and contrived the death of Abel. But it is in the temptation of Christ that he and his lie are fully manifested. He claimed to meet the Lord on more than equal terms. Not one Christian in a thousand realizes the significance of the narrative. Having "led Him up" and given Him that mysterious vision of the kingdoms of the world, the devil said to Him, "To Thee will I give all this authority and the glory of them; for it hath been delivered unto me, and to whomsoever I will I give it. If Thou therefore wilt worship me it shall all be Thine" (Luke 4:6-7, RV).

This was not the raving of profanity or madness. It was the bold assertion of a disputed right. Satan claims to be the firstborn, the rightful heir of creation, the true Messiah, and as such he claims the homage of mankind. Men dream of a devil with horns and hoofs, an obscene monster who tempts the depraved to acts of atrocity or shame. But the Satan of Holy Writ "fashions himself into an angel of light," and "his ministers fashion themselves as ministers of righteousness" (2 Corinthians 11:14-15, RV). Do angels of light or ministers of righteousness corrupt men's morals, or incite them to commit acts of vice or crime?

Such is the Satan of Scripture, a very different being from the mythical devil of Christendom, who though omnipresent - for he is always at the side of every man and woman and child - devotes his powers to making

children disobedient and adults vicious. The Satan with whom we have to do is "the old serpent" of Eden, "the power of darkness" of the betrayal and crucifixion of the Son of God - that awful being whose divinely given title is "the god of this world" (2 Corinthians 4:4) - not the instigator of its vices and its crimes, but the controller of its religion. Through ignorance of all this, people are deluded into assuming that any man who displays "spiritual power" and is "a minister of righteousness" must be a minister of Christ. In these solemn days when the Christian dispensation is drawing to a close and the professing church is drifting to its predicted doom, Satan is preparing the way for the supreme delusion of a travesty of the incarnation. For "the man of sin" (2 Thessalonians 2:3) will be energized by him "with all power and signs and lying wonders" (2 Thessalonians 2:9) to impersonate the Christ and thus to command the worship of mankind. What wonder is it then if he feigns to honour Christ and bears testimony to His advent!

In common with Christians generally, Mr. Baxter attributes all spiritual power to either God or Satan; demons are altogether ignored. But the Gospels testify to the activity of demons during the ministry of Christ on earth, and the Epistles warn us of a renewal of demoniacal activity in the "latter times," before His return. "All Scripture is God-breathed," but it would seem that sometimes the revelation was made with special definiteness, and this particular warning is prefaced by the words, "the Spirit saith expressly." And it relates not to any new development of moral evil in the world, but to a new apostasy in the professing church, a cult promoted by "seducing spirits" of a highly

sensitive spirituality, and a more fastidious morality than Christianity itself will sanction (1 Timothy 4).

The Gospel narrative indicates that some demons were base and filthy spirits that exercised a brutalizing influence upon their victims. But the Lord plainly indicated that these were a class apart ("this kind," Mark 9:29). They were all 11 unclean spirits," but in Jewish use the word akathartos connoted spiritual defilement. That it did not imply moral pollution is proved by the fact that demoniacs were allowed to frequent the synagogues. And the crowning proof is the fact that the Lord Jesus was charged with having a demon though not even His most malignant enemies ever accused Him of moral evil. It was only by prayer that these filthy spirits could be cast out, whereas pious demons acknowledged Christ and came out when His disciples commanded them to do so in His name.

The most mysterious fact about these demons was their eagerness to acknowledge the Lord and to pay Him homage. For we read, "Devils came out of many, crying out and saying, Thou art Christ, the Son of God. And He, rebuking them, suffered them not to speak; for they knew that He was Christ" (Luke 4:41). It is an incidental but most striking proof of His deity that while the Jews rejected Him and His own disciples halted in their confession of Him, the demons, under some strange compulsion, gave this clear, bold testimony to His divine character and mission. This was not an isolated incident. We read again that "the unclean spirits, whensoever they beheld Him, fell down before Him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God" (Mark 3:11, RV). The mystery of it all is immensely deepened by reference to 1 John 4:2-3; and Mr. Baxter tells us that it was the

seeming failure of the test there indicated that confirmed Edward Irving and his followers in their delusion. And the record adds, "He charged them much that they should not make Him known." The Lord refused their homage, and it is impossible to believe that, at this time, Satan could have prompted it. Indeed, the facts disprove the figment that demons are mere puppets of Satan and that they act only under his orders. As fallen members of the heavenly hierarchy, they probably differ from one another not only in their capacities but in their idiosyncracies. If the present-day apostasies of spiritualism, Christian Science, and the new theology are winning more converts than Christianity, it is because the demons who inspire them are pure and, in a real sense, both pious and beneficent. No one but a professional sceptic will doubt that the spiritualists have real dealings with the unseen world; but the intelligent Christian will recognize that it is not the dead who appear to them, but demons who personate the dead.

The career of H. J. Prince, of the Agapemone, deserves a passing notice in this connection. There lies before me, as I write, a statement from the pen of his relative, the late Mr. A. A. Rees of Sunderland, whom I knew personally as a man of sound judgment and a true Christian minister. For five years, at Lampeter College, Prince and he were best friends. And he adds:

Nor did I ever see or hear of an individual more thoroughly devoted to God than he was during that period.... His private life, of which I was a perpetual eyewitness, was in harmony with what he appeared to be in public.... He was unusually blessed, both in the edification of saints and the conversion of sinners, long

before he entered the public ministry. He was a man of prayer and self-denial; and few were more deeply acquainted with the Scripture.

He then goes on to speak of Prince's fall. A book he read about the ministry of the Holy Spirit led him to give himself up unreservedly to the Spirit's guidance. From that time his desires deepened to do the will of God in all things. As he grew in this habit of yielding absolutely to spiritual guidance, the Bible became less and less his study, and he ended by neglecting it altogether. Being thus guided in every detail of his daily life, he no longer needed the written Word, and the total abnegation of his own judgment followed. This complete surrender of mind and will - his entire personality - to what he believed to be the guidance of the Holy Spirit, left him a prey to the terrible delusions in which he was at last engulfed.

It behooves us to profit by these warnings - "Experience keeps a dear school, yet fools will learn in no other." But we are to walk "not as fools, but as wise." And wisdom consists in "understanding what the will of the Lord is" (Ephesians 5:15, 17). Divine wisdom alone will avail us, for we have to do with beings "greater in power and might" (2 Peter 2:11) than ourselves.

The only unique element in Irvingism was its personnel. The leaders were of a very different calibre from the men who led in earlier movements of a similar kind. Irving himself was lacking in judgment. But the men who surrounded him - English lawyers, bankers, merchants - were in every way fitted to command confidence. They were eminent both as men and as Christians. And yet neither their natural shrewdness nor

their spiritual attainments saved them from becoming the dupes of "seducing spirits."

We are right in judging the Irvingite movement by what we see of it today, but the story of its origin is most solemn, and it is pathetic in the extreme. As we read of the wonderful meetings in which these great and good men poured out their hearts in yearning prayer for Pentecostal blessing; as we read of the deep, deep peace, and the ecstasy of joy, which they experienced when "the power" fell on them, and "great signs and wonders" awed them - gifts of tongues, gifts of prophecy, gifts of healing - we share their aspirations, we emulate their faith, and we long for such experiences. Then when we turn the page to find that all these gifts, which seemed so heavenly, were counterfeits, our first impulse might well be to forsake the path of discipleship and to doubt the faithfulness of God.

But such thoughts as these are evil. It behooves us rather to turn to the Epistle to the Ephesians and to read its concluding exhortations as not one in a hundred of us has ever read them before.

"Be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of His might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world - rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Wherefore take up the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and, having done all, to stand" (Ephesians 6:10-13, RV).

To master the baser passions of our nature is commonly supposed to be the normal effort of the Christian life. But these have to do with "flesh and blood," whereas "our wrestling is not against flesh and blood." "Put off all these" is the divine exhortation here; be done with them once for all. And thus the ground is cleared for the true conflict of the life of faith. Men do not need the panoply of God to enable them to lead a clean and honest life. Esoteric Buddhism or even the new theology will avail for that. If men had not this power, the coming judgment would be an outrage upon justice. But the path of true discipleship lies across the battlefield on which the supreme conflict of the ages is in progress. God's great purpose is to exalt Christ, and, as Luther writes, "The devil hath no other business in hand but this only, to persecute and vex Christ." His aim is not to degrade men but to draw them away from Christ, not to corrupt their morals but to blind their minds to the light of the gospel of Christ (2 Corinthians 4:4). And "the day" will declare it that, just as prairie dogs will drive the straying sheep to the shelter of the fold, multitudes of the redeemed have fled to the cross to escape from temptations to moral evil, while the snares of false religion have engulfed untold millions of men in everlasting perdition.

If then the supreme purpose of God is the exaltation of Christ, "that in all things He may have the preeminence," the startling question suggests itself whether the disasters which sometimes befall the best of men when they take up the cult of the Holy Spirit may not be due to the fact that this is a departure from the line of that divine purpose. The Holy Spirit is "the power behind the throne." "He shall not speak from Himself,"

the Lord declared (John 16:13, RV). His mission is to reveal Christ. In proportion therefore as mind and heart are fixed on Christ we may count on the Spirit's presence and power. But if we make the Holy Ghost Himself the object of our aspirations and our worship, some false spirit may counterfeit the true, and take us for a prey.

Nor should we forget the exhortation, "Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom (Colossians 3:16)." Those who turn aside to the cult of the Holy Spirit use the Bible merely as a book of texts, and the temptation of our Lord might warn us of the subtilty of the evil one in handling texts. Charlotte Elizabeth tells how she escaped from Irvingism. She almost yielded to the overwhelming spiritual power of the movement, but she shut herself up and read the New Testament through, from cover to cover, and thus the spell was broken.

Does Scripture afford any warrant for the expectation of a second Pentecost? Are we not to learn from the record of God's ways in the past? The Mosaic dispensation, like our own, was ushered in and accredited by a great display of divine power in public miracles. But Israel was never to have a second Sinai, and even the manna and the cloudy pillar were withdrawn when the purpose for which they were given had been accomplished. So also we might expect that the evidential miracles of Pentecost would cease; proof of this is full and clear. The miracles were not given as a bait to attract the unbeliever but as a beacon to guide the seeker after truth. Their purpose was to prove "that Jesus was the Christ"; therefore they were intended especially for those who had the preceding revelation, for those who

had the Scriptures which foretold His coming. They were the sign for those who knew the countersign.

So long as the gospel was being proclaimed especially to the covenant people, miracles abounded. For it was primarily to the covenant people that Christ came.

"Salvation is of the Jews," the Lord declared (John 4:22).

"I am not sent, but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matthew 15:24)." "Christ was a minister of the circumcision, for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers" (Romans 15:8). That ministry, therefore, had special reference to the Scriptures which testified of Him and which it was His mission to fulfill.

When a woman who has been the object of a husband's love proves false and is driven forth an outcast, the tragedy is but a poor illustration of that stupendous crisis when the God of Abraham cast away the people of His choice. The destruction of Jerusalem was the public fact which proclaimed their rejection, but the hidden history of the crisis is revealed in the Acts of the Apostles.

The New Testament is not a chance collection of pamphlets as some suppose. To the spiritually intelligent its unity is apparent - not merely the unity of the whole but the purpose with which every part of it was written. And the purpose of the Acts is clear; it bridges the gulf which separates the records of Messiah's earthly ministry to the covenant people from the apostolic writings addressed to Gentile communities. That book is the history of the Pentecostal dispensation, and if it were missing the transition from the Gospels to the Epistles would be an insoluble mystery.

It is matter, not of opinion but of fact, that whereas Pentecostal gifts and evidential miracles hold a prominent place in the narrative of the Acts and in the teaching of Epistles written during the period historically covered by the Acts, the later Epistles are silent with respect to them. The natural inference is that the miracles and gifts had ceased, and the Epistles of the apostle Paul's last imprisonment give proof that this inference is right. "In nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles," he declared, when appealing to the "signs and wonders and mighty deeds" which were the outward credentials of his ministry (2 Corinthians 12:11-12). For "God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul," so that even handkerchiefs carried from his body brought healing to the sick (Acts 19:11-12). Why then was it that he could not heal Epaphroditus when he lay "sick nigh unto death" by his side at Rome? How was it that, at a still later date, he had to leave Trophimus lying sick at Miletum (Philippians 2:27; 2 Timothy 4:20). A miracle at the court of Nero might have shaken the world. Never was an evidential miracle more needed, if beliefs and theories about miracles be true. But no miracle occurred.

If with an open mind we peruse the Acts of the Apostles and then turn to 2 Timothy, we shall find proofs of a tremendous change. When the magistrates at Philippi thrust the apostle into the dungeon, a great earthquake shook the foundation of the prison, heaven came down to his deliverance, and his persecutors were brought as suppliants to his feet. But now the days of earthquakes and "mighty signs and wonders" were past, and as "a pattern to them that should afterward believe (1 Timothy 1:16)," the lonely and despised prisoner in

Rome was to learn the deeper mysteries of the life of faith beneath a silent heaven.

The closing verses of Mark are often quoted as though they decide the question here at issue. But even if the genuineness of these verses were certain, the spiritually intelligent would read them in the light of the Epistles. The use made of them in this controversy is wholly unwarranted.

What of the prophecy of Joel? It seems to be a canon of interpretation that Scripture never means what it says, and this perhaps explains how people can read the second chapter of Joel and fail to see that its fulfillment awaits the restoration of Israel. Its burden from first to last is the land and people of the covenant. "I will no more make you a reproach among the nations." "Ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel." "And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh." As it has been in the past, so will it be then: a new "dispensation" will be inaugurated by a public display of divine power upon earth.

None surely but the superstitious can imagine that the Lord will thus honour and accredit the professing church of Christendom at this stage of its deepening apostasy. "I am about to spew thee out of My mouth" (Revelation 3:16) is His prophetic warning for this present age. And His message of cheer is: "To him that overcometh will I give (Revelation 2:7,11,17,26; 3:5,12,21)." So has it ever been. In days of apostasy He turns to individual faithfulness. And while no one may limit what He will do in response to faith, a claim to corporate blessing is a denial of the failure, and this shuts out blessing altogether.

The question here, remember, relates to evidential miracles. A miracle is an event which gives proof of the operation of some supernatural agency. And Spiritualism and Christian Science can boast of real miracles. Hence the advance that these cults are making in our day. For what wins to them adherents among the devout is not the element of imposture which leavens them, but the spiritual power by which they are seemingly accredited. Owing to the ignorance and error with which our minds are saturated on these subjects from our very infancy, people assume as a matter of course that miracles must be divine.

The amazing satanic miracles of the temptation (Matthew 4:5,8) ought to kill that error once for all. If people will not accept the teaching of Scripture about Satan, the standard textbooks of Christian Science and the new theology might enlighten them. His temptations are fitted not to repel but to deceive the pure and upright. As Luther declares, "He setteth forth and decketh all his words and works with the colour of truth and with the name of God." "He fashions himself as an angel of light." And he will leave us everything of Christianity except only what he knows to be vital.

The ministry of demons is the counterpart of his own, Scripture will not warrant the suggestion that, having "the power of death (Hebrews 2:14)," the devil has also the power of life. But we need not doubt that if he has the power to inflict disease, he has the power to heal. And this may explain the fact that demoniacal miracles are generally beneficent. Hume admitted that the evidence for certain Jansenist miracles fully satisfied the tests which he had applied to the evidence for the Gospel miracles, yet he refused to accept them because,

he declared, miracles are impossible. Such is the stupidity of systematized unbelief. And this must account for the refusal of "superior" persons to recognize that miracles occur in our midst today. Miracles occur, and what concerns us is to guard against being deluded by them. For they may be the first droppings of the coming rainstorm of "all signs and wonders of falsehood."

I would emphatically repel the inference that present-day miracles are all of this sinister kind. But I maintain that what may be called evidential miracles have no place in this Christian dispensation. Anyone who considers even the simple problem of prayer must understand how and why the people of God, in the days before Christ came, craved such proofs of His presence and power. But in the ministry and death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, God has openly manifested not only His power but His goodness and love toward man. And to demand an evidential miracle now is to reopen questions which have been for ever settled.

"No one may limit what God will do in response to faith. But we may dogmatically assert that, in view of the revelation He has given of Himself in Christ, He will yield nothing to the petulant demands of unbelief" (taken from *The Silence of God* by Sir Robert Anderson).

And now the difficult and delicate task remains of forming a judgment upon the revival of speaking with tongues. In the light of the facts recorded in these pages, and of the truths to which appeal has been made, there are certain preliminary conclusions which we can

accept with confidence. As we have seen, neither the enjoyment of feelings which seem most blessed nor the possession of powers which are certainly supernatural can be taken as proof of the presence and work of the Holy Spirit.

Christian is not one who has certain feelings or experiences, nor even one who believes in the Holy Ghost; he is a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. And it is the Word of the truth of the gospel which brings us the knowledge of Christ. Men once saw Him with their eyes and their hands handled Him (1 John 1:1). But ours is the blessedness of those who have not seen and yet have believed (John 20:29). For He is now "within the veil." And if our anchor is "both sure and steadfast" it is because it "enters into that which is within the veil (Hebrews 6:19)." But God's written Word is our only cable. The craving to get "within the veil" by means of spiritual gifts and manifestations smacks of unbelief and not of faith, and may lead to disaster. Let us take earnest heed to the solemn warning spoken by the Lord: "Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy Name? and in Thy name have cast out devils? and in Thy Name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from Me, ye that work iniquity" (Matthew 7:22-23).

Let us again remind ourselves that the question is not what God can or may do in response to faith, but what Scripture warrants us to claim from Him. Are we warranted in claiming Pentecostal gifts today? The special gift which is the boast of this new "revival" is that of tongues. In the Irvingite movement tongues were not wanting, but they were thrown into the shade by the

higher gift of prophecy. The supernatural character of the utterances, the fullness and fervor with which testimony was borne to Christ, and the peace and joy experienced by those on whom the power fell, seemed clear proof that all was divine. And yet it was from beneath. This does not prove that similar manifestations today are counterfeits, but it is an overwhelming reason for vigilance and care in testing them. The more closely we study the movement in the light of Scripture, the more will our suspicions of it deepen.

Its physical phenomena are well fitted to excite distrust. To attribute to mere hysteria the bodily paroxysms which are common in the prayer meetings, is perhaps to take too kindly a view of them. The Holy Spirit, moreover, does not promote hysteria. And the silent sighings of the Spirit's intercession - what have they in common with the shouts and screams which disturb the neighbours? (Use of the word "sighings" is a more apt translation of Romans 8:26 than is the term "groaning which cannot be uttered," which is a contradiction in terms.) But this is only the fringe of the subject; the movement must be tested and judged in the light of 1 Corinthians 14.

The following points are definite and clear.

1. Spiritual gifts were "distributed," and the gift of tongues was bestowed only upon some of the saints, not upon all.
2. The gift of tongues was inferior to other gifts, both in dignity and in practical value. This at once refutes the theology of the movement, which represents the gift of tongues as the hallmark of the Holy Spirit's baptism, and

as raising those who possess it to a position of peculiar privilege and glory.

3. The exercise of divine spiritual gifts is entirely under control. It was not for personal gratification nor for mere display that these gifts were bestowed but for the edification of the church. The apostolic precepts to guide their use are as practical as the chairman of any public meeting could desire. Gifts are to be subordinated to the purpose for which they are bestowed, which is the edification of the saints; decency and order are to regulate the exercise of them (1 Corinthians 14:26,40).

In contrast with this, much that is witnessed in the gift of tongues revival today seems to appear like the demoniacal possession of heathen cults, which is the veiled reference of the second verse of the chapter. Some of the accounts which reach us remind us of Isaiah's words about "the wizards that chirp and that mutter" (Isaiah 8:19, RV). This view, moreover, is confirmed by the judgment of some who have been led by personal investigation to conclude that the "gifts" are an entirely sinister element in a movement which is of God. Such was undoubtedly the case in the Irvingite movement. Irving and his devoted band of fellow Christians were drawn away by the cult of the Spirit from the simplicity of faith in the living and the written Word of God. The Agapemone movement tells the same tale. And in lesser degree the story of the Irish revivals points to the same moral. The physical phenomena which marked the Ulster revival of 1859 were generally accepted at the time as divine. But some, doubted even then, and afterwards, among thoughtful Christians, a different view prevailed. And in the more general and

far deeper revival of the sixties this element disappeared altogether. That revival has had results more widespread and lasting than any similar movement of modern times, and the secret of its success and power was the prominence given to God's Word written. Christ and the Scriptures were everything. This was possibly a legacy from the movement of thirty years before. In that earlier revival the difference between the movement on that side of the channel, and on this, may be expressed by saying that while in Britain the Christians took to prayer and the Scriptures, in Ireland they took to the Scriptures and prayer. Such is the subtlety of the evil one that, in days of revival, if spiritual excitement is not controlled by sound doctrine, even prayer meetings may become a peril.

The theology of this gift of tongues movement displays ignorance and perversion of Scripture. As already noted, it subordinates the great facts and truths of the Christian revelation to the subjective experiences of the Christian life. More than this, in its teaching about the Holy Spirit it subordinates what was primary and essential in Pentecost to what was incidental and altogether secondary. The supreme fact was the fulfillment of "the promise of the Father" (Acts 1:4); this was abiding. The "rushing, mighty wind," the "cloven tongues," and the distributed "gifts," were but outward manifestations of His presence (Acts 2:2-3); these were transient.

The essential element was corporate blessing. The baptism of the Holy Spirit created the church - not a church within the church, an election within the election of grace. It was for all. So that even to the Corinthians, albeit their heresies and sins called for warning and

rebuke, the apostle wrote, "By one Spirit are we all baptized into one Body... and have been all made to drink into one Spirit" (1 Corinthians 12:13).

The coming of the Holy Spirit is now as definitely a matter of faith as is the coming of the Son of God. While to seek subjective proofs of His baptism as a condition of believing in it may be plausibly described as "seeking a second Pentecost," it is, in fact, sheer unbelief. It throws discredit upon that first and only true Pentecost, and calls in question the fulfillment of "the promise of the Father." (Acts 1:4)

by Sir Robert Anderson

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The Coming Prince - Chapter 1 - Introductory

To living men no time can be so solemn as "the living present," whatever its characteristics; and that solemnity is immensely deepened in an age of progress unparalleled in the history of the world. But the question arises whether these days of ours are momentous beyond comparison, by reason of their being in the strictest sense the last? Is the world's history about to close? The sands of its destiny, are they almost run out, and is the crash of all things near at hand?

Earnest thinkers will not allow the wild utterances of alarmists, or the vagaries of prophecy-mongers, to divert them from an inquiry at once so solemn and so reasonable. It is only the infidel who doubts that there is a destined limit to the course of "this present evil world." That God will one day put forth His power to ensure the triumph of the good, is in some sense a matter of course. The mystery of revelation is not that He will do this, but that He delays to do it. Judged by the public facts around us, He is an indifferent spectator of the unequal struggle between good and evil upon earth.

"I considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun; and, behold, the tears of the oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors there was power, but they had no comforter." (Ecclesiastes 4:1)

And how can such things be, if indeed the God who rules above is almighty and all-good? Vice and godlessness and violence and wrong are rampant upon every side,

and yet the heavens above keep silence. The infidel appeals to the fact in proof that the Christian's God is but a myth. [1]

The Christian finds in it a further proof that the God he worships is patient and longsuffering- "patient because He is eternal," longsuffering because He is almighty, for wrath is a last resource with power. But the day is coming when "our God shall come and shall not keep silence." (Psalm 1:3)

This is not a matter of opinion, but of faith. He who questions it has no claim whatever to the name of Christian, for it is as essentially a truth of Christianity as is the record of the life and death of the Son of God. The old Scriptures teem with it, and of all the writers of the New Testament there is not so much as one who does not expressly speak of it. It was the burden of the first prophetic utterance which Holy Writ records; (Jude 14) and the closing book of the sacred Canon, from the first chapter to the last, confirms and amplifies the testimony.

The only inquiry, therefore, which concerns us relates to the nature of the crisis and the time of its fulfillment. And the key to this inquiry is the Prophet Daniel's vision of the seventy weeks. Not that a right understanding of the prophecy will enable us to prophesy. That is not the purpose for which it was given. [2]

But it will prove a sufficient safeguard against error in the study. Notably it will save us from the follies into which false systems of prophetic chronology inevitably lead those who follow them. It is not in our time only that the end of the world has been predicted. It was looked for far more confidently at the beginning of the sixth century. All Europe rang with it in the days of Pope

Gregory the Great. And at the end of the tenth century the apprehension of it amounted to a general panic. "It was then frequently preached on, and by breathless crowds listened to; the subject of every one's thoughts, every one's conversation." "Under this impression, multitudes innumerable," says Mosheim, "having given their property to monasteries or churches, traveled to Palestine, where they expected Christ to descend to judgment. Others bound themselves by solemn oaths to be serfs to churches or to priests, in hopes of a milder sentence on them as being servants of Christ's servants. In many places buildings were let go to decay, as that of which there would be no need in future. And on occasions of eclipses of sun or moon, the people fled in multitudes for refuge to the caverns and the rocks." [3]

And so in recent years, one date after another has been confidently named for the supreme crisis; but still the world goes on. A.D. 581 was one of the first years fixed for the event, [4] 1881 is among the last. These pages are not designed to perpetuate the folly of such predictions, but to endeavor in a humble way to elucidate the meaning of a prophecy which ought to deliver us from all such errors and to rescue the study from the discredit they bring upon it.

No words ought to be necessary to enforce the importance of the subject, and yet the neglect of the prophetic Scriptures, by those even who profess to believe all Scripture to be inspired, is proverbial. Putting the matter on the lowest ground, it might be urged that if a knowledge of the past be important, a knowledge of the future must be of far higher value still, in enlarging the mind and raising it above the littlenesses produced by a narrow and unenlightened contemplation of the

present. If God has vouchsafed a revelation to men, the study of it is surely fitted to excite enthusiastic interest, and to command the exercise of every talent which can be brought to bear upon it.

And this suggests another ground on which, in our own day especially, prophetic study claims peculiar prominence; namely, the testimony it affords to the Divine character and origin of the Scriptures. Though infidelity was as open-mouthed in former times, it had its own banner and its own camp, and it shocked the mass of mankind, who, though ignorant of the spiritual power of religion, clung nevertheless with dull tenacity to its dogmas. But the special feature of the present age - well fitted to cause anxiety and alarm to all thoughtful men - is the growth of what may be termed religious skepticism, a Christianity which denies revelation - a form of godliness which denies that which is the power of godliness. (2 Timothy 3:5)

Faith is not the normal attitude of the human mind towards things Divine, the earnest doubter, therefore, is entitled to respect and sympathy. But what judgment shall be meted out to those who delight to proclaim themselves doubters, while claiming to be ministers of a religion of which FAITH is the essential characteristic?

There are not a few in our day whose belief in the Bible is all the more deep and unfaltering just because they have shared in the general revolt against priestcraft and superstition; and such men are scarcely prepared to take sides in the struggle between free thought and the thralldom of creeds and clerics. But in the conflict between faith and skepticism within the pale, their sympathies are less divided. On the one side there may

be narrowness, but at least there is honesty; and in such a case surely the moral element is to be considered before a claim to mental vigor and independence can be listened to. Moreover any claim of the kind needs looking into. The man who asserts his freedom to receive and teach what he deems truth, howsoever reached, and wheresoever found, is not to be lightly accused of vanity or self-will. His motives may be true, and right, and praiseworthy. But if he has subscribed to a creed, he ought to be careful in taking any such ground. It is not on the side of vagueness that the creeds of our British Churches are in fault, and men who boast of being freethinkers would deserve more respect if they showed their independence by refusing to subscribe, than by undermining the doctrines they are both pledged and subsidized to defend and teach.

But what concerns us here is the indisputable fact that rationalism in this its most subtle phase is leavening society. The universities are its chief seminaries. The pulpit is its platform. Some of the most popular religious leaders are amongst its apostles. No class is safe from its influence. And if even the present could be stereotyped, it were well; but we are entered on a downward path, and they must indeed be blind who cannot see where it is leading. If the authority of the Scriptures be unshaken, vital truths may be lost by one generation, and recovered by the next; but if that be touched, the foundation of all truth is undermined, and all power of recovery is gone. The Christianized skeptic of today will soon give place to the Christianized infidel, whose disciples and successors in their turn will be infidels without any gloss of Christianity about them. Some, doubtless, will escape; but as for the many, Rome

will be the only refuge for those who dread the goal to which society is hastening. Thus the forces are marshaling for the great predicted struggle of the future between the apostasy of a false religion and the apostasy of open infidelity. [5]

Is the Bible a revelation from God? This is now become the greatest and most pressing of all questions. We may at once dismiss the quibble that the Scriptures admittedly contain a revelation. Is the sacred volume no better than a lottery bag from which blanks and prizes are to be drawn at random, with no power of distinguishing between them till the day when the discovery must come too late! And in the present phase of the question it is no less a quibble to urge that passages, and even books, may have been added in error to the Canon. We refuse to surrender Holy Writ to the tender mercies of those who approach it with the ignorance of pagans and the animus of apostates. But for the purpose of the present controversy we might consent to strike out everything on which enlightened criticism has cast the shadow of a doubt. This, however, would only clear the way for the real question at issue, which is not as to the authenticity of one portion or another, but as to the character and value of what is admittedly authentic. We are now far beyond discussing rival theories of inspiration; what concerns us is to consider whether the holy writings are what they claim to be, "the oracles of God." [6]

In the midst of error and confusion and uncertainty, increasing on every side, can earnest and devout souls turn to an open Bible, and find there "words of eternal life"? "The rational attitude of a thinking mind towards the supernatural is that of skepticism." [7]

Reason may bow before the shibboleths and tricks of priestcraft- "the voice of the Church," as it is called; but this is sheer credulity. But if GOD speaks, then skepticism gives place to faith. Nor is this a mere begging of the question. The proof that the voice is really Divine must be absolute and conclusive. In such circumstances, skepticism betokens mental or moral degradation, and faith is not the abnegation of reason, but the highest act of reason. To maintain that such proof is impossible, is equivalent to asserting that the God who made us cannot so speak to us that the voice shall carry with it the conviction that it is from Him; and this is not skepticism at all, but disbelief and atheism. "It pleased God to reveal His Son in me," was St. Paul's account of his conversion. The grounds of his faith were subjective, and could not be produced. In proof to others of their reality he could only appeal to the facts of his life; though these were entirely the result, and in no sense or degree the basis, of his conviction. Nor was his case exceptional. St. Peter was one of the favored three who witnessed every miracle, including the transfiguration, and yet his faith was not the result of these, but sprang from a revelation to himself. In response to his confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God,"

the Lord declared,

"Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven." (Matthew 16:17)

Nor, again, was this a special grace accorded only to apostles.

"To them that have obtained like precious faith with us," (2 Peter 1:1)

was St. Peter's address to the faithful generally. He describes them as "born again by the Word of God." So also St. John speaks of such as "born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John 1:13)

"Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth" (James 1:18)

is the kindred statement of St. James.

Whatever be the meaning of such words, they must mean something more than arriving at a sound conclusion from sufficient premises, or accepting facts upon sufficient evidence. Nor will it avail to urge that this birth was merely the mental or moral change naturally caused by the truth thus attained by natural means. The language of the Scripture is unequivocal that the power of the testimony to produce this change depended on the presence and. operation of God. Pages might be filled with quotations to prove this, but two may surface. St. Peter declares they preached the Gospel "with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven;" (1 Peter 1:12)

and St. Paul's words are still more definite. "Our Gospel came not: unto you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Ghost." [8]

And if the new birth and the faith of Christianity were thus produced in the case of persons who received the Gospel immediately from the Apostles, nothing less will avail with us who are separated by eighteen centuries from the witnesses and their testimony. God is with His people still. And He speaks to men's hearts, now, as really as He did in early times; not indeed through inspired Apostles, and still less by dreams or visions, but

through the Holy Writings which He Himself inspired; [9] and as the result believers are "born of God," and obtain the knowledge of forgiveness of sins and of eternal life. The phenomenon is not a natural one, resulting from the study of the evidences; it is supernatural altogether. "Thinking minds," regarding it objectively, may, if they please, maintain towards it what they deem "a rational attitude;" but at least let them own the fact that there are thousands of credible people who can testify to the reality of the experience here spoken of, and further let them recognize that it is entirely in accordance with the teaching of the New Testament.

And such persons have transcendental proof of the truth of Christianity. Their faith rests, not on the phenomena of their own experience, but on the great objective truths of revelation. Yet their primary conviction that these are Divine truths does not depend on the "evidences" which skepticism delights to criticize, but on something which skepticism takes no account of. [10]

"No book can be written in behalf of the Bible like the Bible itself. Man's defenses are man's word; they may help to beat off attacks, they may draw out some portion of its meaning. The Bible is God's word, and through it God the Holy Ghost, who spake it, speaks to the soul which closes not itself against it." [11]

But more than this, the well-instructed believer will find within it inexhaustible stores of proof that it is from God. The Bible is far more than a textbook of theology and morals, or even than a guide to heaven. It is the record of the progressive revelation God has vouchsafed to man, and the Divine history of our race in connection

with that revelation. Ignorance may fail to see in it anything more than the religious literature of the Hebrew race, and of the Church in Apostolic times; but the intelligent student who can read between the lines will find there mapped out, sometimes in clear bold outline, sometimes dimly, but yet always discernible by the patient and devout inquirer, the great scheme of God's counsels and workings in and for this world of ours from eternity to eternity.

And the study of prophecy, rightly understood, has a range no narrower than this. Its chief value is not to bring us a knowledge of "things to come," regarded as isolated events, important though this may be; but to enable us to link the future with the past as part of God's great purpose and plan revealed in Holy Writ. The facts of the life and death of Christ were an overwhelming proof of the inspiration of the Old Testament. When, after His resurrection, He sought to confirm the disciples' faith, "beginning at Moses, and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." (Luke 24:27)

But many a promise had been given, and many a prophecy recorded, which seemed to be lost in the darkness of Israel's national extinction and Judah's apostasy. The fulfillment of them all depended on Messiah; but now Messiah was rejected, and His people were about to be cast away, that Gentiles might be taken up for blessing. Are we to conclude then that the past is wiped out for ever, and that God's great purposes for earth have collapsed through human sin? As men now judge of revelation, Christianity dwindles down to be nothing but a "plan of salvation" for individuals, and if St. John's Gospel and a few of the Epistles be left them

they are content. How different was the attitude of mind and heart displayed by St. Paul! In the Apostle's view the crisis which seemed the catastrophe of everything the old prophets had foretold of God's purposes for earth, opened up a wider and more glorious purpose still, which should include the fulfillment of them all; and rapt in the contemplation, he exclaimed, "Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!" (Romans 11:33)

True prophetic study is an inquiry into these unsearchable counsels, these deep riches of Divine wisdom and knowledge. Beneath the light it gives, the Scriptures are no longer a heterogeneous compilation of religious books, but one harmonious whole, from which no part could be omitted without destroying the completeness of the revelation. And yet the study is disparaged in the Churches as being of no practical importance. If the Churches are leavened with skepticism at this moment, their neglect of prophetic study in this its true and broader aspect has done more than all the rationalism of Germany to promote the evil. Skeptics may boast of learned Professors and Doctors of Divinity among their ranks, but we may challenge them to name a single one of the number who has given proof that he knows anything whatever of these deeper mysteries of revelation. The attempt to put back the rising tide of skepticism is hopeless. Indeed the movement is but one of many phases of the intense mental activity which marks the age. The reign of creeds is past. The days are gone for ever when men will believe what their fathers believed, without a question. Rome, in some phase of its development, has a strange

charm for minds of a certain caste, and rationalism is fascinating to not a few; but orthodoxy in the old sense is dead, and if any are to be delivered it must be by a deeper and more thorough knowledge of the Scriptures.

These pages are but a humble effort to this end; but if they avail in any measure to promote the study of Holy Writ their chief purpose will be fulfilled. The reader therefore may expect to find the accuracy of the Bible vindicated on points which may seem of trifling value. When David reached the throne of Israel and came to choose his generals, he named for the chief commands the men who had made themselves conspicuous by feats of prowess or of valor. Among the foremost three was one of whom the record states that he defended a tract of lentiles, and drove away a troop of the Philistines. (2 Samuel 23:11, 12)? To others it may have seemed little better than a patch of weeds, and not worth fighting for, but it was precious to the Israelite as a portion of the divinely-given inheritance, and moreover the enemy might have used it as a rallying ground from which to capture strongholds. So is it with the Bible. It is all of intrinsic value if indeed it be from God; and moreover, the statement which is assailed, and which may seem of no importance, may prove to be a link in the chain of truth on which we are depending for eternal life.

CHAPTER 1 FOOTNOTES

[1] According to Mill, the course of the world gives proof that both the power and the goodness of God are limited. His *Essays on Religion* clearly show that skepticism is an attitude of mind which it is practically impossible to maintain. Even with a reasoner so clear and able as Mill, it inevitably degenerates to a

degrading form of faith." The rational attitude of a thinking mind towards the supernatural" (he declares) "is that of skepticism, as distinguished from belief on the one hand, and from atheism on the other;" and yet he immediately proceeds to formulate a creed. It is not that there is a God, for that is only probable, but that if there be a God He is not almighty, and His goodness toward man is limited. (Essays, etc., pp. 242, 243.) He does not prove his creed, of course. Its truth is obvious to a "thinking mind." It is equally obvious that the sun moves round the earth. A man only needs to be as ignorant of astronomy as the infidel is of Christianity, and he will find the most indisputable proof of the fact every time he surveys the heavens!

[2] Prophecy is not given to enable us to prophesy, but as a witness to God when the time comes." - PUSEY, Daniel, p. 80.

[3] Elliott, Horae Apoc. (3rd Ed.), 1., 446: and see also ch. 3, pp. 362-376 [4] Elliott, 1., 373. Hippolytus predicted A. D. 500.

[5] I cannot refrain from giving the following extract from an article by Professor Goldwin Smith, in Macmillian's Magazine for February 1878:

"The denial of the existence of God and of the future state, in a word, is the dethronement of conscience; and society will pass, to say the least, through a dangerous interval before social science can fill the vacant throne... But in the meantime mankind, or some portions of it, may be in danger of an anarchy of self-interest, compressed, for the purpose of political order, by a despotism of force.

"That science and criticism, acting - thanks to the liberty of opinion won by political effort - with a freedom never known before, have delivered us from a mass of dark and degrading superstitions, we own with heartfelt thankfulness to the deliverers, and in the firm conviction that the removal of false beliefs, and of the authorities or institutions founded on them, cannot prove in the end anything but a blessing to mankind. But at the same time the foundations of general morality have inevitably been shaken, and a crisis has been brought on, the gravity of which nobody can fail to see, and nobody but a fanatic of materialism can see without the most serious misgiving.

"There has been nothing in the history of man like the present situation. The decadence of the ancient mythologies is very far from affording a parallel... The Reformation was a tremendous earthquake: it shook down the fabric of mediaeval religion, and as a consequence of the disturbance in the religious sphere, filled the world with revolutions and wars. But it left the authority of the Bible unshaken, and men might feel that the destructive process had its limit, and that adamant was still beneath their feet. But a world which is intellectual and keenly alive to the significance of these questions, reading all that is written about them with almost passionate avidity, finds itself brought to a crisis the character of which any one may realize by distinctly presenting to himself the idea of existence without a God."

[6] *ta logia tou theou* (Romans 3:2). The old Hebrew Scriptures were thus regarded by those who were the divinely-appointed custodians of them (ib.) Not only by the devout among the Jews, but, as Josephus testifies, by

all, they "were justly believed to be Divine," so that men were willing to endure tortures of all kinds rather than speak against them, and even "willingly to die for them" (Josephus, Apion, 1., 8). This fact is of immense importance in relation to the Lord's own teaching on the subject. Dealing with a people who believed in the sanctity and value of every word of Scripture, He never missed an opportunity to confirm them in that belief. The New Testament affords abundant proof how unreservedly He enforced it upon His disciples. (As regards the limits and date of closing of the Canon of Scripture, see Pusey, Daniel, p. 294, etc.)

[7] Mill, Essays on Religion.

[8] *alla kai en dunamei kai en pneumati agio* (1 Thessalonians 1:5.) "But also in power, even in the Holy Ghost." There is no contrast intended between God on the one hand, and power on the other, nor yet between different sorts of power. To object that this referred to miracles which accompanied the preaching is to betray ignorance of Scripture. Acts 17 represents the preaching to which the Apostle was alluding. That miraculous power existed in Gentile Churches is clear from 1 Corinthians 12 but the question is, did the gospel which produced those Churches appeal to miracles to confirm it? Can any one read the first four chapters of 1 Corinthians and retain a doubt as to the answer?

[9] God is omnipresent; but there is a real sense in which the Father and the Son are not on earth but in heaven, and in that same sense the Holy Spirit is not in heaven but on earth.

[10] Such faith is inseparably connected with salvation, and salvation is the gift of God (Ephesians 2:8). Hence

the solemn words of Christ, "I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes" (Matthew 11:25).

[11] Pusey, Daniel, Pref. p. 25

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The Lordship of Christ

LAST words should have special weight, and I feel the responsibility of being called upon to speak in this the last hour of our Conference. There is one word, entirely in the spirit of our meaning, which I would cite at the beginning — "That in all things He might have the pre-eminence." You remember the words in that passage in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Colossians, perhaps the most sublime in the entire Word of God, bringing before us the accumulated glories of our Lord Jesus Christ. And this should characterize not only our meeting tonight, but it should be the life aim of every Christian, "That in all things He should have the pre-eminence."

I turn back for a moment upon some of the words I spoke this afternoon with reference to the recognition of His Lordship, not only in our lives but with our lips; and I trust I may say without danger of offending or wounding anyone of my brethren present, that it seems to me we are greatly remiss and largely to blame on this subject. The characteristic testimony of the Church of the present dispensation is that Christ is Lord. Is there an unconverted sinner here who seeks to have life, here is the word that God gives you, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in thine heart that God raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved (Romans 10:9)." You remember the kindred word in the 3rd verse of the 12th chapter of 1st Corinthians — "No man can say Jesus is Lord but by the Holy Ghost." And it is my experience that while of course any lips can frame these words—a parrot in its cage can be taught to say

them — the man who is not a Christian is almost sure to betray himself by this; he may speak of Him with every sort of paraphrase, but he will say never "Lord Jesus." I never heard an unconverted man use the words spontaneously. I repeat, it is the characteristic testimony of our time. We have in the Epistle of Peter, "Sanctify Christ in your hearts as Lord" (1 Peter 3:15) - not as Saviour (our selfishness would lead us to do that); not as king, for that is a wider thought; we, in our dispensation, know nothing of Him as King, unless we first know Him as Lord - sanctify Him as Lord. Here again is a text that I would take for the Convention that is to be held here next week. You will find it in the 2nd chapter of the Epistle to the Colossians — "As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him." There is no Christianity beyond that. Keswick Conventions have nothing to teach you higher than that. The realisation of that is the life of Christ on earth; and there is no higher life for the Christian than thus living out the life of Christ." As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him."

We can not afford to be indifferent as to the recognition of our Lord Jesus Christ. Is it not a fact that the world around us knows nothing of His Lordship? Is it not a fact that irreverence is eating the very heart out of our Christianity? And even in Conferences and revival meetings you will find people who know nothing of His Lordship; and I make bold to say that as a consequence you will find some who have come to doubt even His resurrection from the dead. Let us be eager to own His Lordship.

But I want to deal with this on a wider ground tonight, and with reference to the great purposes of God, not

merely for the days we live in, but from the beginning down through the ages, and right on to the end. What has been the great struggle, the great controversy, between God and the fallen creation? Turn with me to a striking passage in the Gospel of John, 8th chapter and the 44th verse. How unlike the altruism that we are told is the very highest development of Christianity! "How shocking," the Altruist will exclaim, "to call these devout pious people, the leaders of the Jews, children of the Devil!" But here are the words, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will to do. He was a liar from the beginning. and abode not in the truth, because there was no truth in him." Now what is the meaning of "a murderer from the beginning?" Does it mean that he was a murderer from the time that he became a murderer? A more unmeaning statement there could not be. To say that he was a murderer from the beginning of his existence is blasphemy against God. He was made perfect, the noblest creature I believe that ever came from the Creator's hand. What then is the "beginning?" Look what follows. He abode not in the truth. What truth? Was it that he told lies? Respectable people do not tell lies; and why should a perfect creature do so? There is something more in it than this. "When he speaketh a lie" - or more literally, - "When he speaketh the lie, he speaketh of his own." For, mark the words, "He is a liar and the father of it." What meaning is there in that to us? The father of the lie. What lie? Now you get a glimpse at what this thought is, "From the beginning." God's great purpose, not only in redemption; but back behind redemption, in creation, and right on to the new creation - God's great purpose is the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. And when at "the beginning" - we know not when, but before ever Adam

lived on earth, before the human race appeared upon the scene - God shadowed forth His great revelation of the One who was to be the first-born in all creation, this it was that seems to have rankled in the heart of that peerless creature, and from the very "beginning" of the revelation of Christ he became a murderer. And "the lie" relates to Christ. The devil is the father of it, for "he abode not in the truth." What truth? "I am the truth (John 14:6)" - it is the great revelation of Christ. He apostatised there, and from that point it was, and not from the serpent's temptation in Eden, not from the death of our first parents, that began the great controversy between God and Satan, which culminated in the Cross of Calvary.

Satan's great purpose "from the beginning" has been to drag Him down. When He first appeared as a babe in Bethlehem, Satan prompted Herod to put all the infants to death in order that he might destroy Him. Through the course of His ministry on earth, not a hand was ever laid on that Blessed One, except in loving service or in reverent homage, until that awful hour when God withdrew, when God gave Him up - that hour of which He said, "This is your hour, and the power of darkness (Luke 22:53)." But Satan had tried by blandishments to lure Him from the path of dependent obedience. He had offered Him, not as a vulgar boast, but in the full recognition of what he was, the sovereignty of all this scene of earthly glory. Speaking of the kingdoms of the world, he said, "All these things and the glory of them are mine; and to whomsoever I will I give them (Luke 4:6-7)." Do homage to me and I will give you all this glory. Now, once again, He comes face to face with him in the garden, and by wicked hands - for Satan is behind

the scene - He is taken. He might have prayed to the Father and He would have sent legions of angels to deliver Him (Matthew 26:53); but that was not the purpose of God. Him of whom it was said, "by whom the words were made," who was the express image of the Divine Person, for whom are all things, who upholds all things by the word of His power (Colossians 1:15-18) - we find dragged down to die the death of a malefactor; spat upon, buffeted, mocked with every indignity, and treated with all the hate of hearts inspired of Satan, and then at last gibbeted upon the Cross. There was Satan's triumph; there was the crowning achievement of this "murderer from the beginning." And now we see Him carried to the grave. But, He breaks the bonds of death, and is called to the right hand of God. "He has made this same Jesus both Lord and Christ (Acts 2:36)." He has given Him these glories, and it is ours thus to confess Him. All down the ages this great purpose of God is being slowly unfolded - this great conflict still goes on. Satan's effort is to drag Him down, and God's purpose is to exalt Him, and to bring Him to that place where at last every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess that He is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Philippians 2:10-11).

In these days when He is gathering out the Church which is the body, it is ours to confess Him and rejoice in him as Lord. And when we speak of His coming, is it merely that we may escape what seems the natural, crisis of our life on earth, the deathbed and the grave, and pass into that scene, like Elijah, "with death untasted, and the grave unknown"? Is this the thought we have with regard to the Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, or is it an earnest longing to hasten the

fulfilment of this great purpose of God? Has this the place in your hearts that it ought to have? As you look at what is going on round about you in the world, do you realise that you have a part in the accomplishment of this, that you are working either for God's purpose, or against it, with regard to all these movements that characterize our times?

Do you imagine after the words that I have spoken tonight that I can question for a moment that there is to be a personal Anti-Christ? Sacerdotalism and a false Christianity? There is no person that hates them more than I do. Priestcraft in every development of it, I abhor. But this is only preparing the way for the great impersonation of evil which is coming. God became incarnate; He found a man to fulfil all His will, and He has given Him His throne and all His power and glory. Satan also shall become incarnate, and he too will find a man to do all his will. "And to him," we read, "the dragon gave his power and his throne and great authority (Revelation 13:2)." When that day comes there will be persecution indeed. There are dark places of the earth where God's saints know what it is to be persecuted; but fancy Christians in this 19th century in Christian England talking of persecution! Drawing-room persecution! Tea gown and slippers persecution! A little ridicule; a passing sneer! There are worldly people who suffer more in the meanness of their struggles to get into society than we do as Christians for the name of Christ. This is not persecution. But the day is coming when the worship of God will be put down with an iron hand; when to confess His name will mean once again to be dragged to prison, to judgment, and to death. Then the awful purpose of Satan in his blind hate against the

Lord will be displayed in a final effort, and the result will be persecution the like of which there never has been on earth, and, thank God, there never shall be in all the days that are to follow.

But the purpose shall triumph, evil shall be put down, and the Lord Jesus shall be exalted. Upon His head shall be the many diadems. Now, I repeat, it is for us in our little place, that seems as we look at it with the dim light of our own hopes and our unworthy appreciation of it, so poor, so mean, so little, to let in the light of God, and to realise that albeit we are but as puppets upon the stage, we are filling our part in the unfolding of this great purpose. It is for us to give Him this place in our heart and in our lives.

As to the testimony of our lips, it is hard to resist the conviction that Christians constantly speak of Him as "Jesus" out of sheer indolence, and because it is shorter and easier, and costs less breath than to say the Lord Jesus. When I hear people talk thus about Jesus, I am sometimes inclined to ask, what Jesus do you mean? Do you not think that in view of the great facts of the world around us, and of the great purpose that God is working out, it is fitting that we should give Him this title always, even in our secret prayers? Is not this in keeping with the exhortation to "sanctify Him as Lord in our hearts?" And not with our lips only but in our lives; and not merely when we come to these conferences, and on Sundays, but in our business, even in the busy hours of the busiest day, to remember that we are His, and that He is Lord. Do not let us have our Christianity separate from our life, but remember it is our life. If we are in a place where we cannot serve Him in our daily vocations, let us give up that place whatever it may be, although,

our doing so shall bring us to poverty. Leave that to Him, remembering that He is Lord. And in view of the coming Conference and the truth that characterizes it, remember that the recognition of His Lordship is the secret of all success, and of a true attainment in the Christian life. The blessing is to be gained, not by struggling to be something you are not, but by the realisation of what you are; it is simply by faith to enter into what God has given you, what God has made you in Christ. To Him be the glory for ever and ever, Amen. I close with the words I began with, "That in all things He might have the pre-eminence."

The Reasonableness and Certainty of the Hope

I GREATLY value the truth which we are here to consider, as affording a test of faith. Man is naturally a religious animal. I do not know how this will be accounted for by those who believe that he is developed from that mythical ancestor with a tail and pointed ears; for the evolutionist is face to face with the fact that it is as natural to man to have religion as it is for him to walk upon two feet. Well, one result of this is that everyone has a creed. This is not true only in a Christian country, it is true in every country. But we who have been born in a Christian country, and have grown up under Christian teaching, have of course a Christian creed. Now, I repeat, I value this truth of the Coming, because it enables us to test the reality of our faith in a simple and definite way. With a large number of people the Christian creed points back entirely to the past. But Christianity is not belief in a dead Christ, nor even in a living Christ, if we stop there; but in a Christ who died, and rose again, who is now at the right hand of God (Romans 8:34), and who is coming again. And let all of us, this evening, who profess to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, ask ourselves the question: Do we believe in His coming again?

You remember how, in the first epistle to the Thessalonians (iv. 13-18), the apostle speaks of the great truth of the coming again of our Lord Jesus Christ, not as something which they had not received, but as something which was in the very warp and woof of their Christianity, and which he needed to bring up only to

make it real and practical to them in circumstances of bereavement and sorrow. He reminds them that in that coming there will be a reunion of all those who have believed on Him. They had turned to God from idols, as we read in the first chapter, "to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven." Are we waiting for His Son from heaven? Pardon me for putting the question more directly. You profess to be a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, are you waiting for Him? Is this fact, that He is coming back, as real and as essentially a part of your creed as the fact that He died and rose again?

In the first epistle to the Corinthians, again, the apostle says (xv. 51), "I shew you a mystery" — 'I tell you a secret,' we might phrase it, because that is the meaning of mystery. It is not something that cannot be understood, but something which is only understood by the initiated, which we cannot know except it be given us. The word in its classical use pointed to those ancient systems into which people were initiated, just as we have secret societies in our day. It is not but that any clown can understand their secrets — that is not the element of mystery — but that no one can know them till he is initiated. Just so with this truth. It is a secret. Paul then goes on to say, "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump." It is commonly accepted as one of the most certain things that we shall all die; the secret that God tells us is that we shall not all die, but that we shall all be changed.

Now I want you to notice, first of all, that this is not an eccentricity — if I may so describe it — in our religion, but an essential part of our hope, to become part and

parcel of ourselves in regard to our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Perhaps it may be well, in passing, to notice that passage in the Epistle to the Hebrews (ix. 27), where he says, " It is appointed unto men once to die," 'Therefore,' you argue, 'this is a Divine ordinance, in the enforcing of which there can be no exception, and from which there can be no deliverance.' Yes, that is the way you argue when you take a statement altogether out of its connection. What it says is this: "As it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment; so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear a second time without sin unto salvation (Hebrews 9:27-28)."

As a parenthesis within a parenthesis I may explain this also; for people read it as though "appear the second time" meant "at His Second Appearing." But that is not what it says at all.

The truth of the passage is the high priesthood, not the Coming. And when mention was made of the high priest going into the holiest with the blood, the mind of the well-instructed Jew at once reached on to the fact of his being seen by the people to come out again, a pledge and proof that the blood-shedding had been accepted. And he goes on to explain that this is but a type of one of "the good things to come," (Hebrews 9:11; 10:1) that the Lord Jesus Christ, as surely as He has been seen by faith by every believer, as a sin-bearer, so surely will He be seen a second time by every believer apart from sin, "unto salvation." It is the word used for the appearances of the Lord Jesus to His disciples during the days when He still lingered upon earth, between His resurrection and His ascension. "He was seen of Cephas," " He was seen of five hundred brethren at once," and, as the

apostle says, " He was seen of me also." (1 Corinthians 15:5-8)

But now look at this again. As "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many," so by those that look for Him — characteristic of His people — "shall He be seen a second time, without sin unto salvation." Here are the two co-relatives of death and judgment. There is a judgment-seat of Christ before which His people shall stand, to receive the things done in the body (2 Corinthians 5:10); but here He is speaking not of that, but of the great ordinance imposed upon our race: first, death; secondly, judgment. For the believer these two find their realisation; the one in the death of Christ, and the other in His being seen again "without sin unto salvation." It is absolutely untrue that death has any claim upon any one of His people.

I wish Christians understood this more. We are so accustomed to the sick-bed and the grave, that we fail to realise what an outrage and an anomaly all this is to believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. I was reading this morning the ninth chapter of the Acts, where Peter called back Dorcas from death to life, and it struck me that there must have been an overwhelming sense of this in the infant Church, when death made its first inroad into their number. They realised what an outrage, what an anomaly it was; and there, in the power of faith, Peter called back the dead to life. It is not our part to imitate his act, but let us not lose the sense of the Divine power, and of the reality of our redemption in Christ, which led him to do it " We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed." It is the present state of things which is anomalous, our having to lie down in death, and then to wait for the resurrection. The normal condition

of things is that here described, when at the Lord's coming death shall be swallowed up of life, and, instead of being unclothed, "we shall be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven (2 Corinthians 5:2)."

The Certainty of the Hope

Now this is the hope which is to be ever kept before us. The certainty of that hope! Do not, I beg of you, ever allow it to be connected in your mind with any question of chronology. I feel that in these Advent Conferences there is a danger, lest we should try by startling words or by appeals to what is going on in the world, to make these things more real. God's word needs nothing of the kind to give it entrance into any heart that is true to Him. And while we cherish this as a present hope, let us be prepared if it so please God to live out our life on earth, and lie down to rest, passing on the hope to those who come after us, unprejudiced by the delay, whether it be of years, or of centuries, for "He is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness (2 Peter 3:9)." When I hear a word quoted against a truth, I often find it is the strongest passage that can be appealed to in its favour.

The third chapter of the second epistle of Peter is an instance of this. "There shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His Coming?" Now how could that scoff arise if His people were not speaking of the promise of His coming? And God Himself here takes it up and endorses it, that there is a promise of His coming, and that His people are right in cherishing that promise, and looking for it. Instead of telling us that we are wrong in this, He gives us an answer to meet the

scoffers with. What the scoffer says is, that "since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." In these things, as in other spheres of argument most people are apt to be silenced by a bold statement, the answer God puts into our lips is to challenge the Statement altogether. They wilfully forget this, He declares that great judgments came upon this earth in the past. And a great judgment is coming upon this earth in the future. In the same epistle we read (i. 16), "We have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of His majesty." "The power and the coming." It was not His first coming in the flesh that is here spoken of; it was that foretaste they had on the holy Mount of His coming in glory, when all His people shall see Him. They were "eye-witnesses of His majesty," - and they heard that voice from the excellent glory, that testimony from God Himself. Fellow Christians, you and I are heirs of these promises, and we are looking to see that which Peter and James and John saw upon the holy Mount. We shall know His "Power and Coming."

And let it be a hope to keep us from the evil in an evil world, and to prevent us from being blinded or deluded amidst the circumstances in which our daily life is spent.

The Reasonableness of the Hope

And surely all this applies to us with intense emphasis, on account of the special characteristics of the day in which we live. This brings me to speak of the Reasonableness of the Hope. You believe in the power of Almighty God, and in His boundless love, and His infinite wisdom. And as you look out upon the world, and see all

that is passing day by day around you, are you never filled with wonder that the heaven above is silent? What proof can you give to one who rejects and refuses the public proofs of God's presence, and even of His existence? Do not misunderstand me. People say there are no miracles nowadays. There are miracles, I make bold to say, wrought within these walls, greater than that recalling the dead to life. Greater and more wonderful than even when our blessed Lord called Lazarus from the grave, is the miracle of dead sinners being born again to God. Why, what is calling the dead from the grave compared with this, the calling of the dead in sin to life in the Lord Jesus Christ? And this miracle you and I have received proof of, and it is a reality to us. But when you go to the scoffer or the agnostic and speak to him about this miracle, he ignores it and refuses to accept it. When you point to the heavens and tell him they are God's handiwork, he sneers at you. You appeal to the proofs which Nature offers of Divine power, but he can account for them all on scientific grounds. How then are you going to prove that God exists? And presently he turns the tables on you, and, pointing to all the wrong-doing and misery in the world, from man in his high position right down to the brute creation, wallowing in a vast sea of suffering and cruelty inflicted one upon the other, he asks, "Where is your God of love, and wisdom, and power, and why does He not intervene?"

I said something like this lately at a meeting of this kind, and I had a letter about it the other day from a Christian minister. He says, "I am not well pleased with your remarks. You say if you should prove yourself as indifferent to wrong-doing in London as God appears to

be, you would soon get the right-about-face. Do you imply that God does not reign in His own world?" Well, what answer am I to make to that? I will answer it boldly, and say, Yes, I not only imply it, I assert it. There is a moral government of the world truly, for that God never can give up. But is God reigning in this world? Why then all this sorrow? Why then all this suffering? Why then all this tolerated sin? Ask yourself the question, If you had power to put things right, would you permit them to go on as they now do on every side? Then what is the solution of the mystery?

Turn with me to the book of the Revelation. We read, in the tenth chapter and the seventh verse, that the mighty angel sware by Jehovah that "in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, then is finished the mystery of God, as He hath declared to His servants the prophets." This is the mystery of God, a great secret, the explanation of which He gives us in His word. And now let us turn the page, and see what happened when the predicted event took place, when the seventh angel sounded. In the eleventh chapter and the fifteenth verse we read, "The seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying "— I give it as it is in the original — "the sovereignty of this world is become our Lord's, and His Christ's; and He shall reign for ever and ever." But, you say, has not God got all power? Yes, truly, but read what follows: "And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their thrones, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, saying, We give Thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because Thou hast taken to Thee Thy great power, and hast reigned." God truly has the power; the mystery of God is that He does

not take it, that He does not exercise it. But this is not to be for ever. There is a time coming when He will take and enforce His power, when, as the 18th verse declares, He will openly judge the evil and reward the good; in a word, when He will do that which men taunt Him with not doing now, and this it is which calls forth the praise of those wonderful beings enthroned around the throne of God.

Is there some Christian here who is conscious of still being filled with wonder and confusion of mind at the thought that God has all power, and yet that He does not put forth His power? The explanation of it is this: He has sent the Lord Jesus Christ into this world; but men have taken Him, and with wicked hands have crucified and slain Him. God has raised Him from the dead, and recalled Him to His throne (Acts 2:22-30). And now, what is His attitude? All power is His in heaven and on earth. And in the gospel of John (v. 22, 23) we learn that "the Father judgeth no one, but hath committed all judgment to the Son: that all should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father." If you get hold of this, you will understand the mystery. There is no one in the universe of God who can judge a sinner, save only the crucified of Calvary, and He is sitting upon the throne of the universe, and His presence there has made that throne a throne of grace (Hebrews 4:16).

And now the divine amnesty has been proclaimed. They were to go out, and beginning at Jerusalem, to preach to all nations repentance and forgiveness of sins (Acts 13:38). There was to be no limit, the wide world over, to this testimony. What then is God's attitude to be to the sinner? Is it to send out this gospel and beseech men to be reconciled, and at the same time, even while the

amnesty is being proclaimed, to deal with them in judgment for their sins? No; the two are wholly incompatible. "He is not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:19)." The appeal of the gospel is, "Be reconciled to God." Therefore it is we have a silent heaven, therefore it is the sinner is not now, as he once was, openly and publicly punished for his sins. The writer of this letter goes on to say, "I often say that if people committed such sins under Moses as they are guilty of now, they would be stoned to death." Exactly! It was the character of that dispensation. But people commit sins now, and instead of being stoned to death, repentance and forgiveness of sins are proclaimed to them in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. There is no stoning, no judgment.

But mark this, when God again breaks the silence it must be in judgment. I know how many there are in our day who teach that God has still sealed up some great message of peace, some divine store of grace, that He is going to unfold in the eternity to come. But there is no hidden store of grace, there is no reserve of love in God. He "so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish (John 3:16)." Grace is manifested in this, that Christ has died, and that forgiveness of sins has been proclaimed to all, even to the very men who were guilty of His murder. But if grace be unmixed now, judgment shall be unmixed then. The heaven is silent just because He who alone can judge the sinner is now a Saviour, and the fullest message of mercy and grace and love that God can give is being proclaimed. And when that silence is broken it will be in judgment. And the first act, if I may venture to

use such words, in this vast drama of the future will be the Lord's coming forth to call His own to be with Himself, before ever these vials of His wrath shall be poured out upon the world that has rejected Him. Thank God, though that is not my subject tonight, there is blessing as well as judgment still to come. The church is being stirred up now to send out this gospel of His grace to the millions of the heathen. But there is a coming dispensation in which, just as He will take the government of this world upon Himself, so He Himself will send forth the messengers of the gospel of the kingdom, and all the heathen nations of the world shall hear the glad tidings that God is reigning.

Now I have tried to put thus imperfectly before you these two leading thoughts which have been on my mind, "the certainty of the hope," for it is not a "cunningly devised fable," but part and parcel of our most holy faith, and, secondly, "the reasonableness of the hope." I have sought to give you the answer to doubts and difficulties that every thoughtful person is conscious of, the answer to the scoffer's scoff, and the infidel's objection to the divine system now obtaining in the world. Grace is reigning, judgment is tided back, and though all power is His He has not yet assumed the sovereignty of this world. The time for that anthem has yet to come, "Thou hast taken Thy great power, and hast reigned (Revelation 11:17)."

God bless whatever has been said in accordance with His mind, and forgive any word that has been unwisely or wrongly spoken.

The Resurrection

IN the religion of Christendom the Incarnation and Death of Christ are everything. The Virgin's Child, the heaven-sent Teacher, and the Jesus of Calvary, completely fill the spiritual vision of the faithful. But in the cluster of great truths which constitute the Divine revelation of Christianity, the Resurrection holds the central place. Apart from it the incarnation and the ministry would lose all their significance, the crucifixion would be but a martyrdom, and the cross a symbol of the victory of death over life. By the Resurrection it was that the Crucified One was "declared to be the Son of God with power," the great truth on which the Christian's faith is founded, and to which his hope is anchored. That Christ died for our sins is the Gospel of the Christian religion regarded as a human cult. The Gospel of Christianity goes on to declare "That He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures" (i Cor. xv. 4). And to show the immeasurable importance of the added words, the Holy Spirit testifies that if Christ be not raised, our faith is vain, we are yet in our sins.

If this were a mere human utterance it might well be deemed profane, as tending to make little of his death. But the teaching of Scripture is clear. He was "delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification" (Rom. iv. 25). And this Gospel brings peace and joy to the sinner who believes-peace and joy as his portion here and now- "peace with God," and joy "in hope of the glory of God." In contrast with this the gospel of the crucifix teaches its votaries to live in uncertainty, depending on the ministry of priests, and to

die in fear of purgatorial flames. This is what Roman theology has come to!

"The Christian religion" has yet another aspect. Alexandria was long the rival of Rome, and the Greek school of theology might have gained the ascendancy, had not baptismally-regenerated Pagan Emperors enforced the teaching of the West by penal laws. But neither school had the truth of the New Creation. According to both, the mission of Christ was intended to restore mankind- or, as Augustine taught, a small, favoured section of the race- to the position lost by Adam's sin. While the Cross was the characteristic Truth of the Western Church, the Incarnation loomed great in the teaching of Alexandria. The faults of the rival systems were due, not so much to positive error as to defective truth, and to failure to maintain the balance of truth as Scripture unfolds it. Alexandria was more Christian in spirit than Rome; and while "the historic Church" and "the gospel of the crucifix" are the baneful legacy of the West, from the East we have derived "the gospel of humanity," and "the fatherhood of God."

But in contrast with all this, Christianity not only reveals to us that Heaven is open to the sinner in virtue of the death of Christ, but it also teaches us that that death is the divine judgment upon Adam and his world.

Bethlehem and Calvary are not, as some would tell us, a splendid testimony to human worth, but a transcendent manifestation of Divine love to a race hopelessly ruined, depraved, and lost. "The gospel of humanity," like "the gospel of the crucifix," is but a half-truth; and half-truths are sometimes as dangerous as error. "The Gospel of the Grace of God," which is the Gospel of the Resurrection, stands out in contrast with both. "The fact of the

resurrection and ascension of our Lord is an evidence of the completion and acceptance of his work, and as a pledge of the resurrection of his people is mentioned in the Epistles alone more than fifty times." But even this will fail to produce an adequate appreciation of the place these doctrines hold in the teaching of the New Testament, if the typology of the Old Testament is ignored. Every human religion, and the religion of Christendom is no exception to the rule, is designed to propitiate the Deity, or in some way to gain his favour. But Judaism- the only divine religion the world has ever known, for Christianity is not in that sense a "religion," but a revelation and a faith- was the divinely-ordered service of a redeemed and happy people rejoicing in the blessings of redemption. Human religion is always full of gloom, but the sacred year of the Jews was a calendar of feasts. The divine religion had, indeed, its day of expiation, in which the devout were enjoined to afflict their souls. But even that was made the basis of a festival in which all were bidden to "rejoice before the Lord."

But what has all this to do with the truth of the Resurrection? It is in language borrowed from these types that the doctrines of the New Testament are given us. Every Jewish festival was connected with the harvest. And the harvest typified the New Creation, of which the Resurrection is both the expression and the earnest. Just as the Feast of Tabernacles followed, and was based upon, the great national sin-offering, so was it also with the feast of Passover and the Paschal Supper- itself a memorial of the redemption in Egypt. The sacred year began with Passover, which fell at the ripening of their earliest grain crop. The festival lasted

for a week, and one of its special features was the offering of the first-fruits. A single sheaf of the ripened grain was to be cut and carried to the Temple, and there to be waved before the Lord. It was the firstfruits of the harvest! When all the grain harvest had been garnered the feast of Pentecost was celebrated; and the Feast of The law enjoined that the first sheaf of the harvest should be cut and carried to the Temple "on the morrow after the Sabbath" in Passover week (see Lev. xxiii. 10-11, and also Deut. xvi. 10, which proves that the day was intended to be a working day). But in Ezra's revival the Jews, apparently misreading the law, took "the Sabbath" to mean the feast-day. And thus it came about that on the Sabbath Day, during which the Lord was lying in the grave, they were celebrating a rite which typified his resurrection from the dead. The true day of the firstfruits was always the first day of the week, the day of the New Creation.

I have dealt with this in "The Buddha of Christendom" (p. 182), and more fully in "The Coming Prince" (ch. ix.). The matter has entirely escaped the notice of theologians. Tabernacles were the great "harvest home" which crowned the year, when the trees of the field had yielded all the fruits which formed so large a portion of the national wealth. To follow the line of typical teaching which runs throughout all this would lead me far beyond the limits of space allotted to me. Here I can deal only with the sheaf of the Firstfruits.

Its acceptance by Jehovah was a pledge and proof, not only that redemption was accomplished, but that all the harvest was assured and divinely blest. And that sheaf represented Christ in resurrection as the First-begotten of the dead, the Head of the New Creation. For He must

have pre-eminence in all things. "Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming"—this is the divine order. Scripture clearly teaches that the words, "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten Thee," refer not to the Nativity, but to the Resurrection. The empty tomb, and not the manger of Bethlehem, is the earthly symbol of the great birth upon which Christianity is founded. Were it not for Bethlehem there could be no Calvary; but, apart from the Resurrection, Calvary were but a stupendous disaster, of which the Cross would be for all time the emblem. "If Christ be not raised," Scripture expressly declares, "your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins." And in view of the fact of the Resurrection, we boldly argue that our faith is not vain—we are not in our sins. To attain assurance of this is the goal towards which the great majority of those who profess and call themselves Christians are struggling. Immunity from punishment, deliverance from the penalties of sin - in a word, not going to hell - is the popular conception of salvation.

But the Christian has far higher thoughts of the work of Christ. Not even the doctrine of substitution will satisfy him, for this is but one aspect of a far greater truth. It is his joy to know that he is one with Him who died and rose again. And his acceptance is not in Adam restored in virtue of that death, but in Christ as Head of the New Creation. Old things are passed away; all things are become new. And, "therefore, if any man be in Christ he is a new creature." And the wave-sheaf was but the firstfruits of the harvest. Our oneness with Him begins with his death, but it does not end with his resurrection. The believer shall be like Him who died and rose again.

"We know that we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is."

But here let us pause, lest the recoil from the gospel of the crucifix should throw us off the line of truth. "As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." But let us not forget that the Resurrection lies between the two. "Sudden death, sudden glory," is an epigram which represents a system of doctrine that is always popular. But is it Scriptural? The reserve which Holy Writ maintains respecting the intermediate state forbids all dogmatism on a subject so full of mystery. But our Lord's words to the dying thief seem to me clearly to warrant the belief that that mysterious sleep is consistent with conscious enjoyment of his presence. And if the inspired apostle did not cherish that belief, his language to the Corinthians and Philippians seems scarcely intelligible. But further than this we may not go.

When we speak of glory, or of the activities of service, before the day of full redemption - the day of the coming of the Lord - we allow our thoughts to be swayed by sentiment in a sphere where Scripture should control them absolutely. The Christian can triumph over death. But it is a triumph of faith achieved in presence of stern facts to the reality of which both our reason and our senses bear signal testimony. In itself death is utterly horrible and hateful; and those who cannot see beyond it may well shrink back in terror, and seek to conceal its loathsomeness beneath bright trappings and wreaths of flowers. But the Christian, in the power of faith in his risen and glorified Lord, can dare to face the facts, and, with full realization of their repulsiveness and horror,

calmly to utter the redemption challenge, "O Death,
where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory?"

The Silence of God

When faith murmurs, and unbelief revolts, and men challenge the Supreme to break that silence and declare Himself, how little do they realize what the challenge means! It means the withdrawal of the amnesty; it means the end of the reign of grace; it means the closing of the day of mercy and the dawning of the day of wrath.

Among the statements which distressed the orthodox in the late Professor Tyndall's famous Birmingham address on "Science and Man" was his reference to the herald angels' song. "Look to the East at the present moment," he exclaimed, "as a comment on the promise of peace on earth and good will towards men. The promise is a dream ruined by the experience of eighteen centuries, and in that ruin is involved the claim of the 'heavenly host' to prophetic vision."

But the angels' song was not a promise; still less was it a prophecy. That anthem of praise was a divine proclamation. The time was not yet when God could enforce peace between man and man; but grace "came by Jesus Christ," and, with that advent, peace and good will became the attitude of God to men. And this "on earth," even in the midst of their sorrows and their sins. "He came and preached good tidings of peace" (Eph. 2:17, RV). "He that has ears to hear" can catch the echo of that voice as it still vibrates in our air.

If God is silent now, it is because heaven has come down to earth and the climax of divine revelation has been reached. He has spoken His last word of love and grace, and when next He breaks the silence it will be to let loose the judgments which shall yet engulf a world that

has rejected Christ. For "our God shall come and shall not keep silence" (Ps. 50:3).

A silent heaven is a part of the mystery of God; but Holy Writ declares that a day is fixed in the divine chronology when "the mystery of God shall be finished" (Rev. 10:7). When that day breaks, the heavenly host shall again be heard, proclaiming that "the sovereignty of the world is become our Lord's and His Christ's, and He shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. 11:15, RV). Then at last He will assume the power that now is His by right, openly rewarding the good and putting down the evil. In a word, He will do then what men think He ought to do now.

If He delays this, it is not that He is "slack concerning His promise." God's own "apology" for His inaction is that He is "longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish" (2 Pet. 3:9).

Through the ages until Christ came, the course of human history was an unanswered indictment by which every attribute of God was seemingly discredited. Divine power and wisdom and righteousness and love were all brought into question. But the advent of Christ was God's full and final revelation of Himself to man. There are mysteries, no doubt, which still remain unsolved, but they are mysteries which lie beyond the horizon of our world.

Of all the questions which immediately concern us there is not one which the Cross of Christ has left unanswered. Men point to the sad incidents of human life on earth, and they ask, "Where is the love of God?" God points to that Cross as the unreserved manifestation of love so inconceivably infinite as to

answer every challenge and silence all doubt. But, ignoring the stupendous fact that He "spared not His own Son," the test men give Him is whether He complies with some specific appeal urged in the petulance of present need.

To believe in Christ is to acknowledge His Lordship now. Hence the promise, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Rom. 10:9, RV). The sinner who thus believes in Christ anticipates now the realization of the supreme purpose of God, and is absolutely and forever saved.

It was in the power of these truths that the martyrs lived and died. Here was the secret of their triumph--not "the general sense of Scripture corrected in the light of reason and conscience"; not the insolent pretensions of priestcraft, degrading to everyone who tolerates them. With hearts awed by the fear of God, garrisoned by the peace of God, and exulting in the love of God, they stood for the truth against priests and princes combined. Daring to be called heretics, they were faithful to their Lord in life and death.

Heaven was as silent then as it is now. No sights were seen, no voices heard, to make their persecutors pause. But with their vision focussed on Christ, the unseen realities of heaven filled their hearts, as they passed from a world that was not worthy of them to the home that God has prepared for them.

With us, the degenerate sons of a degenerate age, faith falters beneath the strain of the petty trials of our life. While He is saying, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee," our murmurs drown His voice. Professing to be

"followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises," our petulance and unbelief push from us the infinite compassions of God. "They endured as seeing Him who is invisible": we can see nothing but our troubles, blinding our eyes to the glories of eternity.

The dispensation of law and covenant and promise--the distinctive privileges of the favored people--was marked by the public display of divine power on earth. But ours is the higher privilege, the greater blessedness of those "who have not seen and yet have believed" (Jn. 20:29). Walking by faith is the antithesis of walking by sight. If "signs and wonders" were given to us as at Pentecost, faith would sink to a lower level, and the whole character of the discipline of Christian life would be changed.

The sufferings of Paul denote a higher faith than "the mighty deeds" of his earlier ministry. Not until miracles had ceased, and he had entered on the path of faith as we now tread it, was it revealed to him that his life was to be "a pattern to them that should afterwards believe" (1 Tim. 1:16).

What a life it was! The amazing record is given in 2 Corinthians 11. And all this not only without a murmur, but with a heart exulting in God. Instead of grumbling at his infirmities, he boasted in them. Instead of repining, he learned to take pleasure in them "for Christ's sake." He describes them as "light affliction."

Thus, filled with glad thoughts of the home beyond and of the glory to which He is calling them, saints can rejoice in Him, even though in heaviness from manifold trials (1 Pet. 1:6-7).

Men appreciate the asceticisms of religion, penances and ordinances which are "after the precepts and doctrines of men" (Col. 2:22, RV). But these have nothing in common with the life of faith. They are paths by which men delude themselves in vain efforts to reach the Cross. But it is at the Cross itself that the life of faith begins. And the spiritual miracles of that life are more wonderful than any which merely controlled or suspended the operation of natural laws.

Greatest of all is the miracle of the new birth. And carrying the truth to others, we find it produces the same results which we ourselves have proved. And this not merely in isolated cases or in favoring circumstances. Christian missionaries have carried it to some of the most degraded races of the heathen world, with results that surpass all previous records, giving overwhelming proof of its divine character.

Thus there is a sense in which heaven is not silent. Those who escape from the influence of earth hear the sights and sounds of another world; and with united voice they testify that God is with His people and that His Word is true. And when our race shall have been run, we too shall pass from the arena to join the mighty throng, until at last, their ranks complete, the ever-swelling host shall stand, a countless multitude, before the throne of God.