

WRITINGS OF J W HANSON - VOLUME 1

by J.W. Hanson

A collection of theological writings, sermons, and essays by J.W. Hanson (Volume 1), compiled for study and devotional reading.

99 Chapters

Table of Contents

1. 01.0.1. Aión -- Aiónios
2. 01.0.2. Preface
3. 01.0.3. Introduction
4. 01.1.0. Etymology
5. 01.2.0. Lexicography
6. 01.3.0. Usage
7. 01.3.1. Greek Classics
8. 01.3.2. Old Testament
9. 01.3.3. Jewish Greek Usage
10. 01.3.4.1. New Testament - Part 1
11. 01.3.4.2. New Testament - Part 2
12. 01.3.5. Christian Fathers
13. 01.4.0. Conclusion
14. 01.5.0. Appendix - Aidios
15. 02.00.1. BIBLE PROOFS OF UNIVERSAL SALVATION
16. 02.00.2. Editor's Notes
17. 02.00.3. Preface
18. 02.01. The Silence of God
19. 02.02. Adam's Punishment
20. 02.03. Cain's Punishment
21. 02.04. The Antediluvians
22. 02.05. The Deluge
23. 02.06. Sodom and Gomorrah
24. 02.07. Various Instances
25. 02.08. The Testimony of Scholars
26. 02.083. The Last Days
27. 02.09. The Promise to Adam
28. 02.10. The Abrahamic Promise
29. 02.11. The Promises to the Obedient
30. 02.12. The Threats to the Wicked
31. 02.13. Gathered to Their Fathers
32. 02.14. The Spirit Returns to God
33. 02.15. The Fate of Amnon
34. 02.16. Knowledge of God Gives Peace
35. 02.17. God's Anger is Limited
36. 02.18. God's Mercy is Unlimited
37. 02.19. The Testimony of the Prophets
38. 02.20. Universal Obedience
39. 02.21. Man's Infirmary Doubts God's Goodness

40. 02.22. Universal Dominion
41. 02.23. The Prophet Isaiah
42. 02.24. God's Word Conquers
43. 02.25. Jeremiah
44. 02.26. Hosea
45. 02.27. Micah
46. 02.28. Daniel
47. 02.29. The "Wise Woman"
48. 02.30. A Refiner
49. 02.31. The Name Jesus
50. 02.32. The Word Gospel
51. 02.33. The First Christmas Anthem
52. 02.34. John the Baptist
53. 02.35. An Incident and its Lesson
54. 02.36. Be Like God
55. 02.37. The Lord's Prayer
56. 02.38. The Universal Fatherhood
57. 02.39. The Good Samaritan
58. 02.40. The Gospel Leaven
59. 02.41. The Jewish Leaven
60. 02.42. All the Lost are to be Saved
61. 02.43. Ninety and Nine (Poem)
62. 02.44. Christ Will Accomplish His Mission
63. 02.45. The Resurrection
64. 02.46. The Nature of Punishment
65. 02.47. The Prayer of Jesus for His Murderers
66. 02.48. God the Creator
67. 02.49. God's Holiness
68. 02.50. God's Mercy
69. 02.51. God's Justice
70. 02.52. God's Omniscience
71. 02.53. God's Omnipotence
72. 02.54. God's Love
73. 02.55. God's Attributes Unlimited
74. 02.56. God's Power Unlimited
75. 02.57. God's Wisdom Unlimited
76. 02.58. God's Love Unlimited
77. 02.59. God's Will, Pleasure, Purpose, Promise ...
78. 02.60. You Must Be Born Again
79. 02.61. A Conditional Promise Fulfilled
80. 02.62. Sin Burned, Sinners Saved
81. 02.63. Every Soul Worth Saving

- 82.** 02.64. Comfort for All
- 83.** 02.65. Heaven's Joys Certain
- 84.** 02.66. The Substance of Things Hoped For
- 85.** 02.67. The Wickedest Saved
- 86.** 02.68. The Image of God
- 87.** 02.69. Paul's Hope
- 88.** 02.70. The Glad Tidings of God
- 89.** 02.71. The Universe Shall Be Delivered from Sin
- 90.** 02.72. What God Will Not Do
- 91.** 02.73. What God Will Do
- 92.** 02.74. Sin, Satan, Death and Hell Destroyed
- 93.** 02.75. All Shall Be Righteous
- 94.** 02.76. All Destined to God
- 95.** 02.77. The People Were Astonished
- 96.** 02.78. Universal Pardon and Obedience
- 97.** 02.79. Christ Cancels Adam
- 98.** 02.80. A Healthful Doctrine
- 99.** 02.81. No More Sorrow

01.0.1. Aión -- Aiónios

The Greek Word Aión -- Aiónios,
Translated Everlasting -- Eternal in the
Holy Bible, Shown to Denote Limited Duration.

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01.0.2. Preface

PREFACE

The verbal pivot on which swings the question, "Does the Bible teach the doctrine of Endless Punishment?" is the word *Aión* and its derivatives and reduplications. The author of this treatise has endeavored to put within brief compass the essential facts pertaining to the history and use of the word, and he thinks he has conclusively shown that it affords no support whatever to the erroneous doctrine. It will generally be conceded that the tenet referred to is not contained in the Scriptures if the meaning of endless duration does not reside in the controverted word. The reader is implored to examine the evidence presented, as the author trusts it has been collected, with a sincere desire to learn the truth.

01.0.3. Introduction

Aión -- Aiónios

INTRODUCTION

It is a prevalent idea that the words "Eternal, Everlasting, Forever," etc., in the English Bible, signify endless duration. This essay aims to prove the popular impression erroneous. The inquiry will be pursued in a manner that shall be satisfactory to the scholar, and also enable the ordinary reader to apprehend the facts, so that both the learned and the unlearned may be able to see the subject in a light that shall relieve the Scriptures of seeming to teach a doctrine that blackens the character of God, and plunges a deadly sting into the believing heart.

The original Hebrew Bible was translated into Greek, by seventy scholars, and hence called "The Septuagint," B.C. 200-300, (Prideaux, Connection, Vol. III. Part ii. Book i.) and the Hebrew word Olam is, in almost all cases, translated Aión-Aiónios etc., (Aíwv, Aíwvios) so that the two words may be regarded as synonymous with each other. In the New Testament the same words Aión and its derivatives are the original Greek of the English words Eternal, Everlasting, Forever, etc, so that when we ascertain the real meaning of Aión, we have settled the sense of those English words in which the doctrine of Endless Punishment is erroneously taught. It is not going too far to say that if the Greek Aión - Aiónios does not denote endless duration, then endless punishment is not taught in the Bible. We proceed to show that the sense of interminable duration does not reside in the word.

Three avenues are open to us in which to pursue this important investigation. I. Etymology, II. Lexicography, III. Usage. Our first appeal will be to Etymology.

01.1.0. Etymology

I. ETYMOLOGY

We are aware that nothing is more unsafe and treacherous than the guidance of etymology. An ounce of usage is worth a pound of it. Etymology is theory, usage is fact. For instance, our common word prevent is compounded of *præ* and *venio*, to come or go before, and once it had that meaning, but it has long since lost it in common usage, in which it now means to hinder. Suppose two thousand years hence some one should endeavor to prove that in the year 1875 the word prevent meant to go before. He could establish his position by the etymology of the word, but he would be wholly wrong, as would appear by universal usage in our current literature. So that if we agree that the etymology of *Aión* indicates eternity to have been its original meaning, it by no means follows that it had that force in Greek literature. But its derivation does not point in that direction.

LENNEP ("Etymologicum Linguæ Græcæ")

Says that it comes from *Aó* (to breathe) which suggests the idea of indefinite duration. He says: It was transferred from breathing to collection, or multitude of times. From which proper signification again have been produced those by which the ancients have described either age (*ævum*), or eternity (*æternitatem*), or the age of man (*hominis ætatem*). Commenting on Lennep's derivation of the word, Rev. E. S. Goodwin, says ("Christian Examiner," Vol. X, p.42. He quotes the ancient Phavorinus as defining it thus: "The comprehension of many times or periods."): "It would signify a multitude of periods or times united to each other, duration indefinitely continued. Its proper force, in reference to duration, seems to be more that of uninterrupted duration than otherwise; a term of which the duration is continuous as long as it lasts, but which may be completed and finished, as age, dispensation, *sæculum*, in a general sense." Mr. Goodwin entertained the theory that the word is from the verb *aió*, its active participle converted into a substantive.

ARISTOTLE'S ETYMOLOGY

But this etymology is not the popular one. Aristotle, the great Greek Philosopher, explained the derivation as a combination of two Greek words (*aei ón*) which signify always existing (*De Cælo*, lib. i. cap. 9). As there is a great deal of controversy on this famous passage, we will give

THREE TRANSLATIONS OF ARISTOTLE

I. Dr. Pond (Christian Union): In describing the highest heaven, the residence of the gods, Aristotle says: "It is therefore evident that there is neither space, nor time, nor vacuum beyond. Wherefore the things there are not adapted by nature to exist in place; nor does time make them grow old; neither under the highest (heaven) is there any change of any one of these things, they being placed beyond it; but unchangeable, passionless - they continue through all *aióna* (eternity). For indeed, the word itself according to the ancients, divinely expressed this. For the period which comprehends the time of every one's life, beyond which, according to nature, nothing exists, is

called his *aión*, (eternity). And for the same reason, the period of the whole heaven, even the infinite time of all things, and the period comprehending that infinity is *aión*, eternity, deriving its name from *aei einai*, always being, immortal and divine."

II. Dr. J. R. Boise, (Chicago Tribune, quoted by Hon. C. H. Reed,) Professor of Greek in the University of Chicago: "Time is a notation of motion; and motion without a physical body is impossible. But, beyond the heaven, it has been shown that there is neither a body, nor can there be. It is plain, therefore, that there is neither space, nor void, nor time beyond. Therefore, the things there are not by nature in space, nor does time make them grow old, nor is there any change in any one of those things placed beyond the outermost sweep (or current); but, unchangeable and without passion, having the best and most sufficient life, they continue through all eternity (*aión*); for this name (i.e., *aión*) has been divinely uttered by the ancients. For the definite period (to *telos*), which embraces the time of the life of each individual, to whom, according to nature, there can be nothing beyond, has been called each one's eternity (*aión*). And, by parity of reasoning, the definite period also of the entire heaven, even the definite period embracing the infinite time of all things and infinity, is an eternity (*aión*), immortal and divine, having received the appellation (eternity, *aión*) from the fact that it exists always (*apo tou aei einai*).

III. Dr. Edward Beecher (Christian Union; a series of remarkable papers was published in the Christian Union in 1873-4, by Edward Beecher, D.D., on the "History of Future Retribution"): "The limit of the whole heaven, and the limit enclosing the universal system, is the divine and immortal existing (*aei ón*) (God) deriving his name *Aión* from his ever existing (*aei ón*)." Dr. B. adds: "From the time of Homer to Plato and Aristotle, about five centuries, the word *aión* is used by poets and historians alongside of various compounds of *aei*, for the compounds of *aei* retain the diphthong *ei*, but *aión* drops the *e*. There is a verb *aió* - to breathe, to live. The passage of Aristotle in which his etymology occurs, has been mistranslated, for it does not give the etymology of the abstract idea eternity, but of the concrete idea God, as an ever-existing person, from whom all other personal beings derived existence and life. What Aristotle has been supposed to assert of *aión*, in the sense of eternity, he asserts of *aión* in the sense of God, a living and divine person. That the word *aión* in the classic Greek sometimes denotes God is distinctly stated in Henry Stephens' great lexicon, (Paris edition,) and the passage referred to in Sophocles (*Herac. 900*), fully authorized his statement. In that passage Jupiter is called '*Aión*, (the living God) the Son of *Kronos*.' Moreover, the whole context of Aristotle proves that he is speaking of the great immovable first mover of the universe, the *Aión*, immortal and divine".

This passage from Aristotle is obscure, and if he were authority, it would not settle the question of the meaning of the word. If we adopt this theory, we may claim that *aión* had the primary meaning of continuous existence, such being the signification of *aei* and *ón*, but there is no warrant even in such an origin for ascribing to it duration without end. But Aristotle does not say or intimate that the word had the meaning of eternity in his day, nor does his statement of its derivation prove that it had that meaning then. On the contrary, Aristotle's use of the word, as we shall hereafter show, clearly proves that it had no such meaning in his mind, even if it is compounded of *aei* and *ón*.

AEI

The word *aei* from which *aión* is claimed to grow, is found eight times (perhaps more, though I have not found it oftener) in the New Testament, and in no one instance does it mean endless

(Mark 15:8; Acts 7:51; 2 Corinthians 4:11; 2 Corinthians 6:10; Titus 1:12; Hebrews 3:10; 1 Peter 3:15; 2 Peter 1:12). I give two instances. The multitude desired Pilate to release a prisoner "as he had ever done with them" (Mark 15:8). "They do always err in their heart" (Hebrews 3:10). An endless duration growing out of a word used thus, would be a curiosity. It is always, or always, or ever, in each text. Liddell and Scott give more than fifty compounds of aei.

Concerning Aristotle's use of the word in his famous sentence, "Life, an aión continuous and eternal," it is enough to say that if aión intrinsically meant endless, Aristotle never would have sought to strengthen the meaning by adding "continuous" and "eternal," any more than one would say, God has an eternity, continuous and endless. He has a life, an existence, an aión endless, just as man's aión on earth is limited; just as Idumea's smoke in the Old Testament is aiónios. Nor, had Aristotle considered aión to mean eternity, would he have said in this very passage: "the time of the life of each individual has been called his aión."

Cremer, Liddell and Scott, Donnegan, and Henry Stephens adopt the Aristotleian origin of the word. Grimm rejects it, and Robinson in his latest editions gives both etymologies without deciding between them. Stephens says: "Aristotle, and after him many other philosophers, as Plotinus and Proclus, introduced the etymology of aión from aei, and thus added the idea of eternity to the word."

But we have shown that the famous passage in Aristotle refers to God, (apo tou aei einai) and not to abstract duration. We have shown that aei is used eight times in the New Testament, and not in the sense of endless, once. We shall prove that Aristotle himself uniformly used the word in the sense of limited duration, and under the head of Classic Usage will hereafter prove that at the time the Old Testament was rendered into Greek, this was the only meaning the word had with any Greek writer. If aei is its origin, which is more than doubtful, it cannot mean more than continuous existence, the precise length to be determined by accompanying words. Adopt either derivation, and indefinite duration is the easy and natural meaning of the word, if we suffer ourselves to be guided by its etymology. Eternity can only be expressed by it when it is accompanied by other words, denoting endless duration, or by the name of Deity.

All will agree that words may change their meaning, and therefore that etymology is an uncertain guide. If etymology point in one direction, and usage in another, the former must yield; but if both utter one fact, each reinforces and strengthens the other. This we have illustrated by the etymology of 'prevent.' Hundreds of words teach the same truth. Words start out with a certain meaning, and change it in process of time. If aión really meant eternity when it was first pronounced, it would not follow that it has this meaning now. That it had not that meaning at first would not hinder it from being thus used subsequently. Etymology proves nothing one way or the other, its evidence is but prima facie; usage is the only decisive authority. But etymology gives no warrant for applying the idea of eternity to the word.

THE PLATONIC DERIVATIONS

We have proceeded on the ground that Aristotle's etymology is authoritative. But nothing is further from the truth. The scholarship of to-day, possessed by an average educated philologist, is far more competent to trace this or any Greek word to its real source, than Plato or Aristotle was able to do. In his analysis of Plato's Cratylus (Volume 2, pp. 500-550), Grote accurately observes of

Plato's etymologies: "Though sometimes reasonable enough, they are in a far greater number of instances forced, arbitrary, and fanciful. The transitions of meaning imagined, and the structural transformations of words, are alike strange and violent. Such is the light in which these Platonic etymologies appear to a modern critic. But such was not the light in which they appeared either to the ancient Platonists or critics earlier than the last century. The Platonists even thought them full of mysterious and recondite wisdom. So complete has been the revolution of opinion that the Platonic etymologies are now treated by most critics as too absurd to have been seriously intended by Plato, even as conjectures. It is called 'a valuable discovery of modern times' (so Schleiermacher terms it) that Plato meant most of them as mere parody and caricature."

The character of Aristotle as an etymologist is thus stated by Grote: "Nor are they more absurd than many of the etymologies proposed by Aristotle." A slender hook this, whereon to hang such a doctrine as that of the immortal woe of countless millions of souls.

CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions to which any judicial mind must arrive are these: 1, It is uncertain from what source the word *aión* sprang; 2, It is of no consequence how it originated; 3, Aristotle's opinion is not authority; and 4, It is probable that he was not defining the word, but was alluding to that being whose *aión*, or existence is continuous and eternal. That he did not understand that *aión* signified eternity, we shall demonstrate from his uniform use of the word, in the sense of limited duration. And we find no reason in its etymology for giving it the sense of endless duration. And if it did thus originate, it does not afford a particle of proof that it was subsequently used with that meaning.

01.2.0. Lexicography

II. LEXICOGRAPHY AND THE CRITICS

We next appeal to Lexicography. Now lexicography must always be consulted, especially on disputed words, cum grano salis. A theologian, in his definitions, is quite certain to shade technical words with his own belief, and lean one way or the other, according to his own predilections. Unconsciously and necessarily the lexicographer who has a bias in favor of any doctrine will tincture his definitions with his own idiosyncracies. Very few have sat judicially, and given meanings to words with reference to their exact usage; so that one must examine dictionaries concerning any word whose meaning is disputed, with the same care that should be used in reference to any subject on which men differ.

With this thought in mind let us consult such of the lexicons as have fallen under our notice, and also some of the Biblical critics who have explored the word.

AUTHORITIES

The oldest lexicographer, Hesychius, (A. D. 400-600) defines *aión* thus: "The life of man, the time of life." At this early date no theologian had yet imported into the word the meaning of endless duration. It retained only the sense it had in the classics, and in the Bible.

Theodoret (Theodoret, in Migne. Vol. IV, page 400) (A. D. 300-400): "*Aión* is not any existing thing, but an interval denoting time, sometimes infinite when spoken of God, sometimes proportioned to the duration of the creation, and sometimes to the life of man."

John of Damascus (A. D. 750) says, "1, The life of every man is called *aión* ... 3, The whole duration or life of this world is called *aión*. 4, The life after the resurrection is called 'the *aión* to come.'"

But in the sixteenth century Phavorinus was compelled to notice an addition, which subsequently to the time of the famous Council of 544 had been grafted on the word. He says: "*Aión*, time, also life, also habit, or way of life. *Aión* is also the eternal and endless AS IT SEEMS TO THE THEOLOGIAN." Theologians had succeeded in using the word in the sense of endless, and Phavorinus was forced to recognize their usage of it and his phraseology shows conclusively enough that he attributed to theologians the authorship of that use of the word. Alluding to this definition, Rev. Ezra S. Goodwin, one of the ripest scholars and profoundest critics, says, (Christian Examiner, Vol. X. page 47,) "Here I strongly suspect is the true secret brought to light of the origin of the sense of eternity in *aión*. The theologian first thought he perceived it, or else he placed it there. The theologian keeps it there, now. And the theologian will probably retain it there longer than any one else. Hence it is that those lexicographers who assign eternity as one of the meanings of *aión* uniformly appeal for proofs to either theological, Hebrew, or Rabbinical Greek, or some species of Greek subsequent to the age of the Seventy, if not subsequent to the age of the Apostles, so far as I can ascertain."

The second definition by Phavorinus is extracted literally from the "Etymologicon Magnum" of the ninth or tenth century. This gives us the usage from the fourth to the sixteenth century, and shows us that, if the word meant endless at the time of Christ, it must have changed from limited duration in the classics, to unlimited duration, and then back again, at the dates above specified!

From the sixteenth century onward, the word has been defined as used to denote all lengths of duration from brief to endless. We record here such definitions as we have found.

Rost: (German definitions) "Aión, duration, epoch, long time, eternity, memory of man, life-time, life, age of man. Aiónios, continual, always enduring, long continued, eternal."

Hedericus: "An age, eternity, an age as if always being; time of man's life in the memory of men, (wicked men, New Testament), the spinal marrow. Aiónios, eternal, everlasting, continual."

Schleusner: "Any space of time whether longer or shorter, past, present or future, to be determined by the persons or things spoken of, and the scope of the subjects; the life or age of man. Aiónios, a definite and long period of time, that is, a long enduring, but still definite period of time."

Passow: "Aiónios, long continued, eternal, everlasting, in the classics."

Grove: "Eternity; an age, life, duration, continuance of time; a revolution of ages, a dispensation of Providence, this world or life; the world or life to come. Aiónios, eternal, immortal, perpetual, former, past, ancient."

Donnegan: "Time; space of time; life time and life; the ordinary period of man's life; the age of man; man's estate; a long period of time; eternity; the spinal marrow. Aiónios, of long duration, lasting, eternal, permanent."

Ewing: "Duration, finite or infinite; a period of duration, past or future; an age; duration of the world; ages of the world; human life in this world, or the next; our manner of life in the world; and age of divine dispensation, the ages, generally reckoned three, that before law, that under the law, and that under the Messiah. Aiónios, (from preceding,) ages of the world, periods of the dispensations since the world began."

Schrevelius: "An age, a long period of time; indefinite duration, time, whether longer or shorter, past, present or future; also, in the New Testament, the wicked men of the age, life, the life of man. Aiónios, of long duration, lasting, sometimes everlasting, sometimes lasting through life as *æternus* in Latin."

Dr. Taylor, who wrote the Hebrew Bible three times with his own hand, says of Olam, (Greek Aión) it signifies a duration which is concealed, as being of an unknown or great length. "It signifies eternity, not from the proper force of the word, but when the sense of the place or the nature of the subject require it, as God and his attributes."

Pickering: Almost identical with Schrevelius in his definitions.

Hinks: "A period of time; an age, an after time, eternity. Aiónios, lasting, eternal, of old, since the beginning."

Lutz: "An age, time, eternity. Aiónios, durable, eternal."

Macknight: (Scotch Presbyterian) "These words being ambiguous, are always to be understood according to the nature and circumstances to which they are applied." He thinks the words sustain endless punishment, but adds: "At the same time I must be so candid as to acknowledge that the use of these terms, forever, eternal and everlasting, in other passages of Scripture, shows that they who understand these words in a limited sense, when applied to punishment, put no forced interpretation upon them."

Wright: "Time, age, life-time, period, revolution of ages, dispensation of Providence, present world, or life, world to come, eternity. Aiónios, eternal, ancient."

Robinson: "Life, also an age, that is an indefinite long period of time, perpetuity, ever, forever, eternity, forever, without end, to the remotest time, forever and ever, of old, from everlasting, the world, present or future, this world and the next, present world, men of this world, world itself, advent of Messiah. Aiónios, perpetual, everlasting, eternal, chiefly spoken of future time, ancient."

Jones: "An everlasting age, eternal, forever, a period of time, age, life, the present world, or life; the Jewish dispensation; a good demon, angel as supposed to exist forever . . . Aiónios, everlasting, ancient."

Schweighauser and Valpyv substantially agree.

Maclaine, in his Mosheim: Aión or æon among the ancients, was used to signify the age of man, or the duration of human life."

Cruden: "The words eternal, everlasting, forever, are sometimes taken for a long time, and are not always to be understood strictly, for example, 'Thou shalt be our guide from this time forth, even forever,' that is, during our whole life."

Alex. Campbell: "ITS RADICAL IDEA IS INDEFINITE DURATION."

Whitby: "Nothing is more common and familiar in Scripture than to render a thorough and irreparable vastation, whose effects and signs should be still remaining, by the word aiónios, which we render eternal." Hammond, Benson, and Gilpin, in notes on Jude 1:7, say the same. Liddell and Scott also give to aión, in the poets the sense of life and lifetime, as also an age or generation.

Pearce (in Matthew 12:32) says: "The Greek word aión, seems to signify age here, as it often does in the New Testament, and according to its most proper signification." Clarke, Wakefield, Boothroyd, Simpson, Lindsey, Mardon, Acton, agree. So do Locke, Hammond, Le Clerc, Beausobre, Lenfant, Dodridge, Paulus, Kenrick and Olshausen.

T. Southwood Smith: "Sometimes it signifies the term of human life; at other times an age, or dispensation of Providence. Its most common signification is that of age or dispensation."

Scarlett: "That aiónion does not mean endless or eternal, may appear from considering that no adjective can have a greater force than the noun from which it is derived. If aión means age (which none either will or can deny) then aiónion must mean age-lasting, or duration through the age or ages to which the thing spoken of relates."

Even Professor Stuart is obliged to say: "The most common and appropriate meaning of *aión* in the New Testament, and the one which corresponds with the Hebrew word *olam*, and which therefore deserves the first rank in regard to order, I put down first: an indefinite period of time; time without limitation; ever, forever, time without end, eternity, all in relation to future time. The different shades by which the word is rendered, depend on the object with which *aiónios* is associated, or to which it has relation, rather than to any difference in the real meaning of the word."

J. W. Haley ("An Examination of the Alleged Discrepancies of the Bible," p.216) says: "The Hebrew word '*olam*' rendered 'forever,' does not imply the metaphysical idea of absolute endlessness, but a period of indefinite length, as Rambach says, a very long time, the end of which is hidden from us." *Olam* or *olim* is the Hebrew equivalent of *aión*.

Dr. Edward Beecher (Christian Union) remarks, "It commonly means merely continuity of action . . . all attempts to set forth eternity as the original and primary sense of *aión* are at war with the facts of the Greek language for five centuries, in which it denoted life and its derivative senses, and the sense eternity was unknown." And he also says what is the undoubted fact, "that the original sense of *aión* is not eternity . . . It is conceded on all hands that this (life) was originally the general use of the word." In the Paris edition of Henry Stephens' Lexicon it is affirmed emphatically "that life, or the space of life, is the primitive sense of the word, and that it is always so used by Homer, Hesiod, and the old poets; also by Pindar and the tragic writers, as well as by Herodotus and Xenophon." "Pertaining to the world to come," is the sense given to "These shall go away into everlasting punishment," by Prof. Tayler Lewis, who adds, (Lange's Ecclesiastes,) "The preacher in contending with the Universalist and the Restorationist, would commit an error, and it may be suffer a failure in his argument, should he lay the whole stress of it on the etymological or historical significance of the words *aión*, *aiónios*, and attempt to prove that of themselves they necessarily carry the meaning of endless duration. 'These shall go away into the restraint, imprisonment of the world to come,' is all we can etymologically or exegetically make of the word in this passage."

THE TRUE IDEA

Undoubtedly the definition given by Schleusner is the accurate one, 'Duration determined by the subject to which it is applied.' Thus it only expresses the idea of endlessness when connected with what is endless, as God. The word *great* is an illustrative word. *Great* applied to a tree, or mountain, or man, denotes different degrees, all finite, but when referring to God, it has the sense of infinite. Infinity does not reside in the word *great* but it has that meaning when applied to God. It does not impart it to God, it derives it from him. So of *aiónion*; applied to Jonah's residence in the fish, it means seventy hours; to the priesthood of Aaron, it signifies several centuries; to the mountains, thousands of years; to the punishments of a merciful God, as long as is necessary to vindicate his law and reform his children; to God himself, eternity. What *great* is to size, *aiónios* is to duration. Human beings live from a few hours to a century; nations from a century to thousands of years; and worlds, for aught we know, from a few to many millions of years, and God is eternal. So that when we see the word applied to a human life it denotes somewhere from a few days to a hundred years; when it is applied to a nation, it denotes anywhere from a century to ten thousand years, more or less, and when to God it means endless. In other words it practically denotes indefinite duration, as we shall see when we meet the word in sacred and secular literature. Dr.

Beecher well observes (Christian Union):

"There are SIX AGES, or aggregates of ages, involving temporary systems, spoken of in the Old Testament. These ages are distinctly stated to be temporary, and yet to them all are applied olam and its reduplications, as fully and emphatically as they are to God. This is a positive demonstration that the word olam, as affirmed by Taylor and Fuerst in their Hebrew Concordances means an indefinite period or age, past or future, and not an absolute eternity. When applied to God, the IDEA OF ETERNITY IS DERIVED FROM HIM, AND NOT FROM THE WORD . . . This indefinite division of time is represented olam (Greek aión). Hence we find, since there are many ages, or periods, that the word is used in the plural. Moreover, since one great period or age can comprehend under it subordinate ages, we find such expressions as an age of ages, or an olam of olams, and other reduplications.

"In some cases, however, the reduplication of olam seems to be a rhetorical amplification of the idea, without any comprehension of ages by a greater age. This is especially true when olam is in the singular in both parts of the reduplication, as "To the age of the age."

"The use of the word in the plural is decisive evidence that the sense of the word is not eternity, in the absolute sense, for there can be but one such eternity. But as time past and future can be divided by ages, so there may be many ages, and an age of ages."

ETERNAL DURATION AND MODERN CONCEPTIONS

It does not seem to have been generally considered by students of this subject that the thought of endless duration is comparatively a modern conception. The ancients, at a time more recent than the dates of the Old Testament, had not yet cognized the idea of endless duration, so that passages containing the word applied to God do not mean that he is of eternal duration, but the idea was of indefinite and not unlimited duration. I introduce here a passage from Professor Knapp, or Knappius, the author of the best edition of the Greek Testament known, and one in use in many colleges and ranks as a scholar of rare erudition. He observes:

"The pure idea of eternity is too abstract to have been conceived in the early ages of the world, and accordingly is not found expressed by any word in the ancient languages. But as cultivation advanced and this idea became more distinctly developed, it became necessary in order to express it to invent new words in a new sense, as was done with the words eternitas, perennitas, etc. The Hebrews were destitute of any single word to express endless duration. To express a past eternity they said before the world was; a future, when the world shall be no more . . . The Hebrews and other ancient people have no one word for expressing the precise idea of eternity."

AN IMPRESSIVE REFLECTION

I pause here long enough to raise this question: Is it possible that our heavenly Father had created a world of endless torture, to which his children for thousands of years were crowding in myriads, and that he not only had not revealed the fact to them, but was so shortsighted that he had not given them a word to express the fact, or even a capacity sufficient to bring the idea of the eternal suffering to which they were liable, within the compass of the cognition? He created the horse for man's use, and created man capable of comprehending the horse; he surrounded him with multitudes of animate and inanimate objects, each of which he could name and comprehend, but

the most important subject of all - one which must be believed in, or eternal woe is the penalty, he not only had no name for, but was incapable of the faintest conception of the mere fact! Would, or could a good Father be guilty of such an omission?

Can anything be clearer than this, that the lexicographers and critics unite in saying that limited duration is not only allowable, but that it is the prevailing signification of the word? Do they not agree that eternal duration is not in the word, and can only be imparted to it by the subject associated with it? Thus Lexicography declares that Limited Duration is the force of the word, duration to be determined by the subject treated, if we allow Etymology and Lexicography to declare the verdict. And yet it is possible for these to be mistaken. Incredible, but still possible, that all students and critics of the word should have mistaken its character. But there is one tribunal that cannot mislead, and that is Usage.

01.3.0. Usage

III. USAGE

In tracing the usage of the word, our sources of information will be (1) The Greek Classics, (2) The Septuagint Old Testament, (3) Those Jewish Greeks nearly contemporary with Christ, (4) The New Testament, and (5) The Early Christian Church.

The Pentateuch was rendered into Greek at about the time of the return from the Babylonish Captivity, and the whole Old Testament, was combined into one collection about B.C. 200-300. At that time there was a large amount of Greek literature, now known as the Classics, and of course the Seventy gave to all Greek words their legitimate meaning, as found in the Classics. To ascertain just what the Greek Old Testament means by *Aión* or any other word, we need only learn its meaning in the Classics. They would as soon have rendered the Hebrew word for horse by a Greek word meaning fly, as they would have used *aión* for endless duration, if, as we shall show is the fact, antecedent Greek literature used it to denote limited duration.

01.3.1. Greek Classics

1.-- THE GREEK CLASSICS

It is a vital question How was the word used in the Greek literature with which the Seventy were familiar, that is, the Greek Classics?

Some years since Rev. Ezra S. Goodwin (Christian Examiner, Vols. x, xi, and xii. Boston: Gray & Bowen) patiently and candidly traced this word through the Classics, finding the noun frequently in nearly all the writers, but not meeting the adjective until Plato, its inventor, used it. He states, as the result of his protracted and exhaustive examination from the beginning down to Plato, "We have the whole evidence of seven Greek writers, extending through about six centuries, down to the age of Plato, who make use of Aión, in common with other words; and no one of them EVER employs it in the sense of eternity."

When the Old Testament was translated from Hebrew into Greek by the Seventy, the word aión had been in common use for many centuries. It is preposterous to say that the Seventy would render the Hebrew olam by the Greek aión and give to the latter (1) a different meaning from that of the former, or (2) a different meaning from aión in the current Greek literature. It is self-evident, then, that Aión in the Old Testament means exactly what Olam means, and also what Aión means in the Greek classics. Indefinite duration is the sense of olam, and it is equally clear that aión has a similar signification.

In the Iliad and Odyssey Aión occurs thirteen times, as a noun, besides its occurrence as a participle in the sense of hearing, perceiving, understanding. Homer never uses it as signifying eternal duration. Priam to Hector says (I. xxii, 58), "Thyself shall be deprived of pleasant aiónos" (life.) Andromache over dead Hector (I. xxiv, 725), "Husband thou hast perished from aiónos" (life or time).

Dr. Beecher writes (Christian Union), "But there is a case that excludes all possibility of doubt or evasion, in the Homeric Hymn of Mercury, vs. 42 and 119. Here aión is used to denote the marrow as the life of an animal, as Moses calls the blood the life. This is recognized by Cousins in his Homeric Lexicon. In this case to pierce the life (aión) of a turtle means to pierce the spinal cord. The idea of life is here exclusive of time or eternity." These are fair illustrations of Homer's use of the word.

Hesiod employs it twice: "To him (the married man) during aiónos (life) evil is constantly striving, (Theog 609) etc. Æschulus has the word nineteen times, after this manner: "This life (aión) seems long, (Persæ 263) etc. "Jupiter, king of the never-ceasing world" (aiónos apaustau) (Supp.572, cited by Prof. Tayler Lewis).

Pindar gives thirteen instances, such as "A long life produces the four virtues" (Ela de kai tessaras aretas ho makros aión) (Nem. iii, 130).

Sophocles nine times. "Endeavor to remain the same in mind as long as you live" (Askei toiaute noun di aiónos menein) (Electra 1030). He also employs makraion five times, as long-enduring. The word long increases the force of aión, which would be impossible if it had the idea of eternity.

Aristotle uses aión twelve times. He speaks of the existence or duration (aión) of the earth (De Mundo Cap. 5); of an unlimited aiónos (In Metaph Lib. xiv); and elsewhere, he says: aión sunekes kai aidios, "an eternal aión" (or being) "pertaining to God." The fact that Aristotle found it necessary to add aidios to aión to ascribe eternity to God demonstrates that he found no sense of eternity in the word aión, and utterly discards the idea that he held the word to mean endless duration, even admitting that he derived it, or supposed the ancients did, from aei ón according to the opinion of some lexicographers.

A similar use of the word appears in de Cælo (Lib. ii). "The entire heaven is one and eternal (aidios) having neither beginning nor end of an entire aión." In the same work (Lib. i, Cap. 9) occurs the famous passage where Aristotle has been said to describe the derivation of the word, which we have quoted on page 7, Aión estin, apo tou aei einai.

Mr. Goodwin well observes that the word had existed a thousand years before Aristotle's day, and that he had no knowledge of its origin, and poorer facilities for tracing it than many a scholar of the present, possesses. "While, therefore, we would regard an opinion of Aristotle on the derivation of an ancient word, with the respect due to extensive learning and venerable age, still we must bear in mind that his opinion is not indisputable authority." Mr. Goodwin proceeds to affirm that Aristotle does not apply aei ón to duration, but to God, and that (as we have shown) a human existence is an Aión. Completeness, whether brief or protracted, is his idea; and as Aristotle employed it "Aión did not contain the meaning of eternity."

Hippocrates, "A human aión is a seven days matter."

Empedocles, "An earthly body deprived of happy life, (aiónos).

Euripides uses the word thirty-two times. We quote three instances: "Marriage to those mortals who are well situated is a happy aión" (Orestes, 596). "Every aión of mortals is unstable" (Ibid 971). "A long aión has many things to say" (Med. 428), etc.

Philoctetes. "He breathed out the aióna." Mr. Goodwin thus concludes his conscientious investigation of such of the Greek classics as he examined line by line, AION IN THESE WRITERS NEVER EXPRESSES POSITIVE ETERNITY."

In his Physic (Lib. viii cap 1), Aristotle quotes a passage from Empedocles, saying that in certain cases "aión is not permanent."

AIONIOS

Aiónios is found in none of the ancient classics above quoted. Finding it in Plato, Mr. Goodwin thinks that Plato coined it, and it had not come into general use, for even Socrates, the teacher of Plato, does not use it. Aidios is the classic word for endless duration.

Plato uses aión eight times, aiónios five, diaiónios once, and makraión twice. Of course if he regarded aión as meaning eternity he would not prefix the word meaning long, to add duration to it.

In all the above authors extending more than six hundred years, the word is never found. Of course it must mean the same as the noun that is its source. It having clearly appeared that the noun is uniformly used to denote limited duration, and never to signify eternity, it is equally apparent that the adjective must mean the same. The noun sweetness gives its flavor to its adjective, sweet. The adjective long means precisely the same as the noun length. When sweet stands for acidity, and long represents brevity, aiónios can properly mean eternal, derived from aión, which represents limited duration. To say that Plato, the inventor of the word, has used the adjective to mean eternal, when neither he nor any of his predecessors ever used the noun to denote eternity, would be to charge one of the wisest of men with etymological stupidity. Has he been guilty of such folly? How does he use the word?

PLATO'S USAGE

1. He employs the noun as his predecessors did. I give an illustration (De Legib. Lib. iii) - "Leading a life (aióna) involved in troubles."

The Adjective. Referring to certain souls in Hades, he describes them as in aiónion intoxication (De Repub. Lib. ii). But that he does not use the word in the sense of endless is evident from the Phædon, where he says, "It is a very ancient opinion that souls quitting this world, repair to the infernal regions, and return after that, to live in this world." After the aiónion intoxication is over, they return to earth, which demonstrates that the word was not used by him as meaning endless. Again, he speaks of that which is indestructible, (anolethron) and not aiónion (De Leg., Lib. x). He places the two words in contrast, whereas, had he intended to use aiónion as meaning endless, he would have said indestructible and aiónion.

Once more (Timæus), Plato quotes four instances of aión, and three of aiónios, and one of diaiónios in a single passage, in contrast with aidios (eternal) . The gods he calls eternal, (aidios) but the soul and the corporeal nature, he says, are aiónios, belonging to time, and "all these," he says, "are part of time." And he calls Time [Kronos] an aiónios image of Aiónos. Exactly what so obscure an author may mean here is not apparent, but one thing is perfectly clear, he cannot mean eternity and eternal by aiónios and aiónion, for nothing is wider from the fact than that fluctuating, changing Time, beginning and ending, and full of mutations, is an image of Eternity. It is in every possible particular its exact opposite.

In De Mundo, Aristotle says: "Which of these things separately can be compared with the order of the heaven, and the relation of the stars, sun, and also the moon moving in most perfect measures from one aión to another aión," - ex aiónos eis eteron aióna (Cap. 5, p. 609 C). Now even if Aristotle had said that the word was at first derived from two words that signify always being, his own use of it demonstrates that it had not that meaning then [B.C. 350]. Again, he says of the earth, "All these things seem to be done for her good, in order to maintain safety during her aiónos," duration, or life (Cap. 5, p. 610 A) . And still more to the purpose is this quotation concerning God's existence: "Life and an aión CONTINUOUS AND ETERNAL, "zoe kai aión, sunekes kai aidios, etc" (Metaph., Lib. xiv, cap. 7). Here the word aidios, [eternal] is employed to qualify aión and impart to it what it had not of itself, the sense of eternal. Aristotle could be guilty of no such language as "an eternal eternity." Had the word aión contained the idea of eternity in his time, or in his mind, he would not have added aidios. "For the limit enclosing the time of the life of every man, . . . is called his continuous existence, aión. On the same principle, the limit of the

whole heaven, and the limit enclosing the universal system, is the divine and immortal ever-existing *aión*, deriving the name *aión* from ever-existing [*aei ón*] (*De Cælo.*, i, 9). In eleven out of twelve instances in the works of Aristotle, *aión* is used either doubtfully, or in a manner similar to the instance above cited, [from one *aión* to another, that is, from one age to another], but in this last instance it is perfectly clear that an *aión* is only without end when it is described by an adjective like *aidios*, whose meaning is endless. Nobody cares how the word originated, after hearing from Aristotle himself that created objects exist from one *aión* to another, and that the existence of the eternal God is not described by a word so feeble, but by the addition of another that expresses endless duration. Here *aión* only obtains the force of eternal duration by being reinforced by the word immortal. If it meant eternity, the addition of immortal is like adding gilding to refined gold, and daubing paint on the petal of the lily.

In most of these the word is enlarged by descriptive adjectives. *Æschylus* calls Jupiter "king of the never-ceasing *aión*," and Aristotle expressly states in one case that the *aión* of heaven "has neither beginning nor end," and in another instance he calls man's life his *aión*, and the *aión* of heaven "immortal." If *aión* denotes eternity, why add "neither beginning nor end," or "immortal," to describe its meaning? These quotations unanswerable show that *aión* in the Classics, never means eternity unless a qualifying word or subject connected with it add to its intrinsic value.

Says Dr. Beecher: In Rome there were certain periodical games known as the secular games, from the Latin *seculum*, a period, or age. The historian, *Herodian*, writing in Greek, calls these *aiónian* games, that is, periodical, occurring at the end of a *seculum*. It would be singular, indeed, to call them eternal or everlasting games. *Cremer*, in his masterly *Lexicon of New Testament Greek*, states the general meaning of the word to be "Belonging to the *aión*." *Herodotus*, *Isocrates*, *Xenophon*, *Sophocles*, *Diodorus Siculus* use the word in precisely the same way. *Diodorus Siculus* says *ton apéiron aióna*, "indefinite time."

THE CLASSICS NEVER USE AION TO DENOTE ETERNITY

It appears, then, that the classic Greek writers, for more than six centuries before the Septuagint was written, used the word *aión* and its adjective, but never once in the sense of endless duration.

When, therefore, the Seventy translated the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek, what meaning must they have intended to give to these words? It is not possible, it is absolutely insupposable that they used them with any other meaning than that which they had held in the antecedent Greek literature. As the Hebrew word meaning horse, was rendered by a Greek word meaning horse, as each Hebrew word was exchanged for a Greek word denoting precisely the same thing, so the terms expressive of duration in Hebrew became Greek terms expressing a similar duration. The translators consistently render *olam* by *aión*, both denoting indefinite duration.

We have shown, p. 18, that the idea of eternity had not entered the Hebrew mind when the Old Testament was written. How then could it employ terms expressive of endless duration? We have now shown that the Greek literature uniformly understands the word in the sense of limited duration. This teaches us exactly how the word was taken at the time the Septuagint was prepared, and shows us how to read understandingly the Old Testament.

When at length the idea of eternity was cognized by the human mind, probably first by the Greeks, what word did they employ to represent the idea? Did they regard *aión*-*aiónion* as adequate? Not

at all, but Plato and Aristotle and others employ aidios, and distinctly use it in contrast with our mooted word. We have instanced Aristotle, "The entire heaven is one and eternal [aidios] having neither beginning nor end of a complete aión, [life, or duration]" (De Cælo, Lib. ii, cap. i). In the same chapter aidiotēs is used to mean eternity.

Plato (Quoting from Timæus Locrus) calls the gods aidion, and their essence aidion, in contrast with temporal matters, which are aiónios. Aidios then, is the favorite word descriptive of endless duration in the Greek writers contemporary with the Septuagint. Aión is never thus used.

When, therefore, the Seventy translated the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek they must have used this word with the meaning it had whenever they had found it in the Greek classics. To accuse them of using it otherwise is to charge them with an intention to mislead and deceive.

Mr. Goodwin well observes: "Those lexicographers who assign eternity as one of the meanings of aión, uniformly appeal for proofs to either theological, Hebrew or Rabbinnical Greek, or some species of Greek subsequent to the age of the Seventy, if not subsequent to the age of the apostles, so far as I can ascertain. I do not know of an instance in which any lexicographer has produced the usage of ancient classical Greek, in evidence that aión means eternity. ANCIENT CLASSICAL GREEK REJECTS IT ALTOGETHER . . . ". By ancient he means the Greek existing in ages anterior to the days of the Seventy.

Thus it appears that when the Seventy began their work of giving the world a Greek version of the Old Testament that should convey the exact sense of the Hebrew Bible, they must have used aión in the sense in which it then was used. Endless duration is not the meaning the word had in Greek literature at that time. Therefore the word cannot have that meaning in the Old Testament Greek. Nothing can be plainer than that Greek Literature at the time the Hebrew Old Testament was rendered into the Greek Septuagint did not give to Aión the meaning of endless duration. Let us then consider the Old Testament Usage.

01.3.2. Old Testament

2.-- THE OLD TESTAMENT USAGE

We have concluded, a priori, that the Old Testament must employ the word *Aión* in the sense of indefinite duration, because that was the uniform meaning of the word in all antecedent and contemporaneous Greek literature. Otherwise the Old Testament would mislead its readers. We now proceed to show that such is the actual usage of the word in the Old Testament.

And let us pause a moment on the brink of our investigation to speak of the utter absurdity of the idea that God has hung the great topic of the immortal welfare of millions of souls on the meaning of a single equivocal word. Had he intended to teach endless punishment by one word, that word would have been so explicit and uniform and frequent that no mortal could mistake its meaning. It would have stood unique and peculiar among words. It would no more be found conveying a limited meaning than is the sacred name of Jehovah applied to any finite being. Instead of denoting every degree of duration, as it does, it never would have meant less than eternity. The thought that God has suspended the question of man's final destiny on such a word would seem too preposterous to be entertained by any reflecting mind, did we not know that such an idea is held by Christians.

Endless duration is never expressed or implied in the Old Testament by *Aión* or any of its derivatives, except in instances where it acquires that meaning from the subject connected with it.

How is it used? Let us adduce a few illustrative examples.

EXAMPLES

"There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, (*aiónos*), men of renown" (Genesis 6:4). God's covenant with Noah was "for perpetual (*aiónious*) generations" (Genesis 9:12). The rainbow is the token of "the everlasting (*aiónion*) covenant" between God and "all flesh that is upon the earth" (Genesis 9:16). God gave the land to Abram and his seed "forever," (*aiónos*) (Genesis 13:15). Dr. T. Clowes says of this passage that it signifies the duration of human life, and he adds, "Let no one be surprised that we use the word *Olam* (*Aión*) in this limited sense. This is one of the most usual significations of the Hebrew *Olam* and the Greek *Aión*."

In Isaiah 58:12 it is rendered "old" and "foundations," (*aiónioi* and *aióniai*). "And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places; thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach." In Jeremiah 18:15-16, ancient and perpetual, (*aiónious* and *aiónion*). "Because my people hath forgotten me, they have burned incense to vanity, and they have caused them to stumble in their ways from the ancient paths, to walk in paths, in a way not cast up; to make their land desolate, and a perpetual hissing; every one that passeth thereby shall be astonished, and wag his head."

Such instances may be cited to an indefinite extent. Exodus 15:18 : "forever and ever and further" (ton aióna, kai ep aióna, kai eti). Exodus 12:17 : "And ye shall observe the feast of unleavened bread; for in this selfsame day have I brought your armies out of the land of Egypt, therefore shall ye observe this day in your generations by an ordinance forever" (aiónion). Numbers 10:8 : "And the sons of Aaron the priests, shall blow with the trumpets; and they shall be to you for an ordinance forever (aiónion) THROUGHOUT YOUR GENERATIONS." "Your generations," is here idiomatically given as the precise equivalent of "forever."

Canaan was given as an "everlasting (aiónion) possession" (Genesis 17:8; Genesis 48:4), the hills are everlasting (aiónioi) (Habakkuk 3:6), the priesthood of Aaron was to exist forever, and continue through everlasting duration (Exodus 40:15; Numbers 25:13; Leviticus 16:34), Solomon's temple was to last forever (1 Chronicles 17:12) though it has long since ceased to be, slaves were to remain in bondage forever (Leviticus 25:46), though every fiftieth year all Hebrew servants were to be set at liberty (Leviticus 25:10), Jonah suffered an imprisonment behind the everlasting bars of earth (Jonah 2:6), the smoke of Idumea was to ascend forever (Isaiah 34:10), though it no longer rises, to the Jews God says "and I will bring an everlasting reproach upon you, and a perpetual shame, which shall not be forgotten" (Jeremiah 23:40) and yet, after the fullness of the Gentiles shall come in, Israel will be restored (Romans 11:25-26).

Not only in all these and multitudes of other cases does the word mean limited duration, but it is also used in the plural, thus debarring it from the sense of endless, as there can be but one eternity. In Daniel 12:3 the literal reading, if we allow the word to mean eternity, is "to eternities and farther" (eis tous aiónas kai eti). Micah 4:5 : "We will walk in the name of the Lord our God to eternity and beyond" (eis ton aióna kai epekeina). Psalms 119:43-44 : "And take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth; for I have hoped in thy judgments. So shall I keep thy law continually forever and ever." This is the strongest combination of the aionian phraseology (eis ton aióna kai eis ton aióna tou aiónos), and yet it is David's promise of fidelity as long as he lives among them that "reproach" him, in "the house of his pilgrimage." Psalms 148:4-6 : "Praise him, ye heaven of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens. Let them praise the name of the LORD: for he commanded and they were created. He hath also established them for ever and ever: he hath made a decree which shall not pass." The sun and moon, the stars of light, and even the waters above the heavens are established forever (eis ton aióna tou aiónos), and yet the firmament is one day to become as a folded garment, and the orbs of heaven are to be no more. Endless duration is out of the question in these and many similar instances.

In Lamentations 5:19 "forever and ever" is used as the equivalent of "from generation to generation." Joel 2:26-27 : "And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the LORD your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you: and my people shall never be ashamed. And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the Lord your God and none else: and my people shall never be ashamed." This is spoken of the Jewish nation. Isaiah 60:15 : "Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal (aiónion) excellency, a joy of many generations." Here many generations and eternal are exact equivalents. 1 Samuel 1:22 : "But Hannah went not up: for she said unto her husband, I will not go up until the child be weaned, and then I will bring him, that he may appear before the LORD, and there abide forever." The remaining of Samuel in the temple was to be "forever" (aiónos). 2 Kings 5:27 : "The leprosy therefore of Naaman shall cleave unto thee, and unto thy

seed forever" (ton aióna). Undoubtedly the seed of Gehazi is still on earth: but whether so or not the leprosy has departed. Daniel 2:4 : "Then spake the Chaldeans to the king in Syriac, O king, live forever" (eis tous aióna). The Chaldean's live forever meant precisely what the French Vive and the English Long live the King mean. Eternal duration never entered the thought. Jeremiah 17:25 : "Then shall there enter into the gates of this city kings and princes sitting upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, they, and their city shall remain forever" (eis ton aióna). Eternity was not promised here. Long duration is the extent of the promise. Joshua 4:7 : "Then ye shall answer them, That the waters of Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD: when it passed over Jordan, the waters of Jordan were cut off; and these stones shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel forever" (tou aiónos). These stones are no longer a memorial. This forever has ended.

Forever and ever is applied to the hosts of heaven, or the sun, moon, and stars, to a writing contained in a book, to the smoke that went up from the burning land of Idumea, and to the time the Jews were to dwell in Judea (Psalms 148:5-6; Isaiah 30:8; Isaiah 34:10; Jeremiah 7:7; Jeremiah 25:5). The word never is applied to the time the sword was to remain in the house of David and to the time the Jews should experience shame (2 Samuel 12:10; Joel 2:26-27).

Everlasting (Univ. Book of Reference, pp. 106-7) is applied to God's covenant with the Jews, to the priesthood of Aaron, to the statutes of Moses, to the time the Jews were to possess the land of Canaan, to the mountains and hills, and to the doors of the Jewish temple (Genesis 17:7-8; Genesis 17:13; Genesis 48:4; Genesis 49:26; Exodus 40:15; Leviticus 16:34; Numbers 25:13; Psalms 24:7; Habakkuk 3:6). The word forever is applied to the duration of man's earthly existence, to the time a child was to abide in the temple, to the continuance of Gehazi's leprosy, to the duration of the life of David, to the duration of a king's life, to the duration of the earth, to the time the Jews were to possess the land of Canaan, to the time they were to dwell in Jerusalem, to the time a servant was to abide with his master, to the time Jerusalem was to remain a city, to the duration of the Jewish temple, to the laws and ordinances of Moses, to the time David was to be king over Israel, to the throne of Solomon, to the stones that were set up at Jordan, to the time the righteous were to inhabit the earth, and to the time Jonah was in the fish's belly (Genesis 13:15; Exodus 14:13; Exodus 32:13; Leviticus 25:46; Numbers 10:8; Numbers 18:23; Deuteronomy 15:17; Joshua 4:7; Joshua 14:9; 1 Samuel 1:22; 1 Samuel 27:12; 1 Kings 1:31; 1 Kings 8:13; 1 Kings 9:5; 2 Kings 5:27; 1 Chronicles 23:25; 1 Chronicles 28:4; Nehemiah 2:3; Job 41:4; Psalms 37:29; Psalms 48:8; Psalms 78:69; Psalms 104:5; Ecclesiastes 1:4; Jeremiah 17:25; Jeremiah 31:40; Ezekiel 37:25; Daniel 2:4; Jonah 2:6).

And yet, the land of Canaan, the Jews' "everlasting possession," has passed from their hand; the covenant of circumcision, an "everlasting covenant," was abolished almost two thousand years ago; the Jewish atonement (Lev 16), an everlasting statute, is abrogated by the atonement of Christ; David was never to want a man to sit on Israel's throne. This aionian line of succession was long ago broken.

We have found the noun Aión three hundred and ninety-four times in the Old Testament, and the adjective Aiónion one hundred and ten times, and in all but four times it is the translation of Olam.

THE NOUN

Waiving the passages where it is applied to God, and where by accommodation it may be allowed to imply endlessness, just as great applied to God means infinity, let us consult the general usage: Ecclesiastes 1:10 : "Is there anything whereof it may be said, See, this is new! It hath been already of old time, which was before us." Psalms 25:6 : "Remember, O LORD, thy tender mercies and thy loving kindnesses; for they have been ever of old" (aiónos). Psalms 119:52 : "I remembered thy judgements of old, O LORD; and have comforted myself." Isaiah 46:9 : "Remember the former things of old." Isaiah 64:4 : "Since the beginning of the world" (aiónos). Jeremiah 28:8 : "The prophets that have been before me and before thee of old prophesied both against many countries, and against great kingdoms, of war, and of evil, and of pestilence." Jeremiah 2:20 : "For of old time I have broken thy yoke, and burst thy bands." Proverbs 8:23 : "I (wisdom) was set up from everlasting (aiónos) from the beginning, or ever the earth was." Here aiónos and "before the world was" are in apposition. Psalms 73:12 : "Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world" (time, aiónos). Deuteronomy 32:7 : "Remember the days of old." Ezekiel 26:20 : "The people of old time." Psalms 143:3 : "Those who have been long dead." --Same in Lamentations 3:6. Amos 9:11 : "Days of old." Isaiah 51:9 : "Generations of old." Micah 7:14 : "Days of old." Same in Malachi 3:4. Psalms 48:14 : "For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death." This plural form denotes "even unto death."

Christ's kingdom is prophesied as destined to endure "forever," "without end," etc (Daniel 2:44; Isaiah 9:7; Isaiah 59:21; Psalms 89:29; Psalms 110:4). Now if anything is taught in the Bible, it is that Christ's kingdom shall end. In 1 Corinthians 15:25; 1 Corinthians 15:28 it is expressly and explicitly declared that Jesus shall surrender the kingdom to God the Father, that his reign shall entirely cease. Hence, when we read in such passages as Daniel 2:44 that Christ's kingdom shall stand forever, we must understand that the forever denotes the reign of Messiah, bounded by "the end," when God shall be "all in all."

Servants were declared to be bound forever, when all servants were emancipated every fifty years. Thus in Deuteronomy 15:16-17 we read, "And it shall be, if he say unto thee, I will not go away from thee; because he loveth thee and thine house, because he is well with thee, then thou shalt take an awl, and thrust it through his ear unto the door, and he shall be thy servant forever." And yet we are told (Leviticus 25:10; Leviticus 25:39; Leviticus 25:41): "And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family. And if thy brother that dwelleth with thee be waxen poor, and be sold unto thee; thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bond servant, but as a hired servant, and as a sojourner, he shall be with thee, and shall serve thee unto the year of jubilee: and then shall he depart from thee, both he and his children with him, and shall return unto his own family, and unto the possession of his father shall he return." This forever at the utmost could only be forty-nine years and three hundred and sixty-four days and some odd hours.

And certainly no one will ascribe endless duration to aión in the following passages: Genesis 13:15, Exodus 12:24; Exodus 19:9; Exodus 32:13; Exodus 40:15, Leviticus 3:17, Joshua 4:7; Joshua 14:9, Judges 2:1, 1 Samuel 13:13, 2 Samuel 7:13; 2 Samuel 7:16; 2 Samuel 7:24-26; 2 Samuel 7:29; 2 Samuel 22:51, 1 Kings 2:33; 1 Kings 2:45; 1 Kings 9:3; 1 Kings 9:5; 1 Kings 10:9, 2 Kings 21:7, 1 Chronicles 15:2; 1 Chronicles 17:12; 1 Chronicles 17:14; 1 Chronicles 17:22-23; 1 Chronicles 17:27, 1 Chronicles 22:10; 1 Chronicles 23:13; 1 Chronicles 23:25, 1 Chronicles 28:4;

1 Chronicles 28:7-8, 2 Chronicles 2:4; 2 Chronicles 7:3; 2 Chronicles 7:16; 2 Chronicles 13:5, 2 Chronicles 9:8; 2 Chronicles 20:7; 2 Chronicles 30:8; 2 Chronicles 33:4, Psalms 18:50; Psalms 48:8; Psalms 89:4; Psalms 89:36-37, Psalms 105:8; Psalms 132:12, Isaiah 13:20; Isaiah 33:20; Isaiah 34:10, Jeremiah 7:7; Jeremiah 17:25; Jeremiah 31:40, Ezekiel 37:25-26; Ezekiel 37:28; Ezekiel 43:7, Joel 3:20, Amos 1:11.

Many passages allude to the earth as enduring forever, to the grave as man's "long home", to God's existence as "Forever, etc." Often the language is equivalent to "to the ages," or "from age to age," and sometimes eternal duration is predicated, never because the word compels it, but because the theme treated requires it.

THE ADJECTIVE

is applied to God, Zion, and things intrinsically endless, and thus acquires from the connected subjects a meaning not inherent in the word, as in the following passages: Genesis 21:33; Exodus 3:15, Isaiah 40:28; Isaiah 51:11; Isaiah 54:8, Isaiah 55:3; Isaiah 55:13, Isaiah 56:5; Isaiah 60:15; Isaiah 60:19, Isaiah 61:7-8; Isaiah 63:12, Ezekiel 37:26, Daniel 7:27; Daniel 9:24; Daniel 12:2, Habakkuk 3:6, Psalms 112:6;.

THE ADJECTIVE LIMITED

But it is found with limited meaning in these and other passages: Genesis 9:12-16, Genesis 17:8; Genesis 17:13; Genesis 17:19, Exodus 12:14; Exodus 12:17; Exodus 27:21; Exodus 28:43, Exodus 29:28; Exodus 30:21; Exodus 31:16-17, Leviticus 6:18; Leviticus 6:22; Leviticus 7:34; Leviticus 7:36, Leviticus 10:15; Leviticus 16:29; Leviticus 16:31; Leviticus 16:34, Leviticus 17:7; Leviticus 23:14; Leviticus 23:31; Leviticus 23:41, Leviticus 24:3; Leviticus 24:8-9, Numbers 10:8; Numbers 15:15, Numbers 18:8; Numbers 18:11; Numbers 18:19; Numbers 18:23, Numbers 19:10; Numbers 19:21; Numbers 25:13, 2 Samuel 23:5, 1 Chronicles 16:17, Job 22:15, Psalms 77:5, Proverbs 22:28; Proverbs 23:10, Isaiah 24:5; Isaiah 58:12; Isaiah 61:4; Isaiah 63:11; Isaiah 64:4, Jeremiah 5:22; Jeremiah 6:16; Jeremiah 18:15-16, Jeremiah 20:17; Jeremiah 23:40; Jeremiah 25:9; Jeremiah 25:12; Jeremiah 51:39, Ezekiel 16:60; Ezekiel 26:20; Ezekiel 35:5; Ezekiel 35:9; Ezekiel 36:2 Micah 2:9.

Let us quote some of the foregoing texts: "And ye shall observe the feast of unleavened bread; for in this selfsame day have I brought your armies out of the land of Egypt: therefore shall ye observe this day in your generations by an ordinance for ever." "And thou shalt command the children of Israel, that they bring thee pure olive beaten for the light, to cause the lamp to burn always." "In the tabernacle of the congregation without the veil, which is before the testimony, Aaron and his sons shall order it from evening to morning before the Lord: it shall be a statute for ever UNTO THEIR GENERATIONS on behalf of the children of Israel." "And they shall be upon Aaron and upon his sons, when they come in unto the tabernacle of the congregation, or when they come near unto the altar to minister in the holy place; that they bear not iniquity and die: it shall be a statute for ever unto him and his seed after him." "Hast thou not marked the old way which wicked men have trodden?" "Fear ye not me: saith the Lord: will ye not tremble at my presence, which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it: and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not pass over it?"

To render the word eternal will show how absurd that definition is, in the following passages (Genesis 17:8; Exodus 21:6; Exodus 40:15; Jonah 2:5-6):

"I will give unto thee, and thy seed after thee, the land wherin thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an eternal possession." "And thou shalt anoint them as thou didst their father, that they surely be a priesthood through the eternity." "Then his master shall bring him to the door, or unto the door-posts, and his master shall bore his ear through with an awl, and he shall serve him through the eternity."

"The water compassed me about -- even to the soul; The weeds were wrapped about my head, I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; The earth with her eternal bars was about me."

Still further do the subjoined texts demonstrate the impropriety of the popular rendering, which would compel us to read (Exodus 15:18; Daniel 12:3; Micah 4:5): "The Lord shall reign to the eternity, and during the eternity, and LONGER." "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars through the eternities and longer." "And we will walk in the name of Jehovah our God through the eternity and longer." But substitute ages and the sense is perfect. Exodus 15:18 : "The Lord shall reign from age to age, and beyond all the ages". Daniel 12:3 : "Through the ages and beyond them all". Micah 4:5 : "Through the age and beyond it."

No one can read the Old Testament carefully and unbiassed, and fail to see that the word has a great range of meaning, bearing some such relation to duration as the word great does to size. We say God is infinite when we call him the Great God, not because great means infinite, but because God is infinite. The aiónion God is of eternal duration, but the aiónion smoke of Idumea has expired, and the aiónion hills will one day crumble, and all merely aionian things will cease to be.

While it is a rule of language that adjectives qualify and describe nouns, it is no less true that nouns modify adjectives. A tall flower, a tall dog, a tall man, and a tall tree are of different degrees of length, though the different nouns are described by the same adjective. The adjective is in each instance modified by its noun, just as the aionian bars that held Jonah three days, and the aionian priesthood of Aaron already ended, and the aionian hills yet to be destroyed, and aionian punishment, always proportioned to human guilt, are of different degrees of length. The adjective is modified and its length is determined by the noun with which it is connected.

THE SUBJECT DETERMINES THE DURATION DESCRIBED BY THE ADJECTIVE

Prof. Tayler Lewis says, "One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh; but the earth abideth forever.' This certainly indicates, not an endless eternity in the strictest sense of the word, but only a future of unlimited length. Exodus 31:16 : 'Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant.' Olam here would seem to be taken as a hyperbolical term for indefinite or unmeasured duration." Where the context demands it, as "I live forever," spoken of God, he says it means endless duration, for "it is the subject to which it is applied that forces to this, and NOT any etymological necessity in the word itself." He adds that Olam and aion, in the plural, ages, and ages of ages, demonstrate that neither of the words, of itself, denotes eternity. He admits that they are used to give an idea of eternity, but that applied to God and his kingdom, the ages are finite (Note on Eccl. i:4, Lange's Com. pp. 45-50). Prof. L. is eminently learned and as eminently orthodox.

THE END OF AIONIAN THINGS

Now the Jews have lost their eternal excellency; Aaron and his sons have ceased from their priesthood; the Mosaic system is superseded by Christianity; the Jews no longer possess Canaan; David and his house have lost the throne of Israel; the Jewish temple is destroyed, and Jerusalem is wiped out as the holy city; the servants who were to be bondmen forever are all free from their masters; Gehazi is cured of his leprosy; the stones are removed from Jordan, and the smoke of Idumea no longer rises; the righteous do not possess the land promised them forever; some of the hills and mountains have fallen, and the tooth of Time will one day gnaw the last of them into dust; the fire has expired from the Jewish altar; Jonah has escaped from his imprisonment; all these and numerous other eternal, everlasting things -- things that were to last forever, and to which the various aionian words are applied -- have now ended, and if these hundreds of instances must denote limited duration why should the few times in which punishments are spoken of have any other meaning? Even if endless duration were the intrinsic meaning of the word, all intelligent readers of the Bible would perceive that the word must be employed to denote limited duration in the passages above cited. And surely in the very few times in which it is connected with punishment it must have a similar meaning. For who administers this punishment? Not a monster, not an infinite devil, but a God of love and mercy, and the same common sense that would forbid us to give the word the meaning of endless duration, were that its literal meaning, when we see it applied to what we know has ended, would forbid us to give it that meaning when applied to the dealings of an Infinite Father with an erring and beloved child. But when we interpret it in the light of its lexicography, and general usage out of the Old Testament, and perceive that it only has the sense of endless when the subject compels it [emphasized by editor], as when referring to God, we see that it is a species of blasphemy to allow that it denotes endless duration when describing God's punishments.

APPLIED TO PUNISHMENT

A few prominent instances illustrate the usage of the word connected with punishment. "Thou hast destroyed the wicked" (Psalms 9:5). How? The explanation follows: "Thou hast put out their name forever and ever" (ton aiona, kai eis ton aióna tou aionos). His is not endless torment, but oblivion. Solomon elsewhere observes: "The name of the wicked shall rot" (Proverbs 10:7), while David says, "The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance" (Psalms 112:6). "He put them (his enemies) to a perpetual reproach" (Psalms 78:66).

"Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" (Isaiah 33:14-15) The prophet is here speaking of God's temporal judgments, represented by fire. "The earth mourneth; Lebanon is ashamed; the people shall be as the burnings of lime" (Isaiah 33:9-12). Who will dwell in safety amid these fiery judgments? These aionian burnings? "He that walks uprightly." Earthly judgements among which the upright are to dwell in safety are here described, and not endless fire hereafter.

"Ye have kindled a fire in mine anger which shall burn forever" (Jeremiah 17:4). Where was this to be? The same verse informs us. "I will cause thee to serve thine enemies in a land which thou knowest not."

"I will bring an everlasting reproach upon you; and a perpetual shame which shall not be forgotten" (Jeremiah 23:40). The connection is fully explained by verse 39, "I will utterly forget you, and I will forsake you, and the city that I gave you and your fathers" (Jeremiah 23:39). (See also Jeremiah 20:11).

"The people against whom the Lord hath indignation forever" (Malachi 1:4). This is an announcement of God's judgements on Edom. "They shall build but I will throw down" and they shall call them the border of wickedness, and the people against whom the Lord hath indignation forever."

EVERLASTING SHAME AND CONTEMPT

"And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt (Daniel 12:2). When was this to take place? "At that time". What time? Daniel 11:31 speaks of the coming of the "abomination that maketh desolate". Jesus says "When ye therefore (the disciples) shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet stand in the holy place, then let them which be in Judea flee to the mountains. And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto" (Matthew 24:15-16; Luke 21:20-21). Daniel says this was to be "When he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people" (Daniel 12:7). Jesus says, "For then shall be great tribulations, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time; no, nor ever shall be". And when that was Jesus tells us: "this generation shall not pass away, till all these things be fulfilled". The events discussed in Daniel are the same as those in Matthew 24:1-51, and came in this world in the generation that crucified Jesus.

DUST OF THE EARTH

The phrase sleeping in the dust of the earth, is of course employed figuratively, to indicate sloth, spiritual lethargy, as in "For our soul is bowed down to the dust" (Psalms 44:25), "And the fortress of the high fort of thy walls shall He bring down, lay low, and bring to the ground, even to the dust" (Isaiah 25:12), "For He bringeth down them that dwell on high; the lofty city, He layeth it low; He layeth it low, even to the ground; he bringeth it even to the dust" (Isaiah 26:5), "But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth" (1 Timothy 5:6), "I know thy works; that thou hast a name, and that thou livest and art dead" (Revelation 3:1).

It was a prophecy of the moral awakening that came at the time of the advent of Jesus, and was then fulfilled. When we come to Matthew 24:1-51 and Matthew 25:1-46 we shall see the exact nature of this judgment. Walter Balfour describes it, (Second Inquiry) "They" (those who obeyed the call of Jesus) "heard the voice of the Son of God, and lived" (See John 5:21; John 5:25; John 5:28-29; Ephesians 5:14). The rest kept on till the wrath of God came on them to the uttermost. They all, at last, awoke; but it was to shame and everlasting contempt, in being dispersed among all nations, and they have become a by-word and an hissing even unto this day. Jeremiah predicted this very punishment and calls it an "everlasting reproach and a perpetual shame" (Jeremiah 23:39-40).

These few passages, not one of which conveys a hint of endless punishment, are all that connect our word denoting duration with punishment in the Old Testament.

Out of more than five hundred occurrences of our disputed word in the Old Testament, more than four hundred denote limited duration, so that the great preponderance of Old Testament usage fully agrees with the Greek classics. The remaining instances follow the rule given by the best lexicographers, that it only means endless when it derives its meaning or endlessness from the nature of the subject with which it is connected.

Dr. Beecher (Christian Union) remarks that the sense of endless given to the aionian phraseology "fills the Old Testament with contradictions, for it would make it declare the absolute eternity of systems which it often and emphatically declares to be temporary. Nor can it be said that aiónios denotes lasting as long as the nature of things permits. The Mosaic ordinances might have lasted at least to the end of the world, but did not. Moreover, on this principle the exceptions to the true sense of the word exceed its proper use; for in the majority of cases in the Old Testament aiónios is applied to that which is limited and temporary."

Now if endless punishment awaits millions of the human race, and if it is denoted by this word, is it possible that only David, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, and Malachi use the word to define punishment, in all less than a dozen times, while Job, Moses, Joshua, Ruth, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Solomon, Ezekiel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habbakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, and Zachariah never employ it thus? Such silence is criminal, on the popular hypothesis. These holy men should and would have made every sentence bristle with the word, and thus have borne the awful message to the soul with an emphasis that could be neither resisted nor disputed. The fact that the word is so seldom, and by so few applied to punishment, and never in the Old Testament to punishment beyond death, demonstrates that it cannot mean endless.

TESTIMONY OF SCHOLARS

The best critics concede that the doctrine of endless punishment is not taught in the Old Testament. But the word in dispute is found in connection with punishment in the Old Testament. This is a concession that the word has no such meaning in the Old Testament. Milman: "The lawgiver (Moses) maintains a profound silence on that fundamental article, if not of political, at least of religious legislation -- rewards and punishments in another life." Paley, Jahn, Whately are to the same purport, and H. W. Beecher says, "If we had only the Old Testament we could not tell if there were any future punishment." (Hist. Jews vol. i: p. 117; Div. Leg. vol iii: pp. 1, 2 vol. v: Sermons xiii: Archæology p. 398; Essays, p.44.)

We should then conclude that the word means one thing in the Old Testament and another in the New, did we not find that the same meaning continues in the New that we have found to prevail uniformly in the Old Testament, and in antecedent and contemporaneous Greek literature.

THREE QUESTIONS

here press the mind with irresistible force, and they can only receive one answer. 1st, Had God intended endless punishment, would the Old Testament have failed to reveal it? 2d, If God does not announce it in the Old Testament, is it supposable that he has revealed it elsewhere. 3d,

Would he for thousands of years conceal so awful a destiny from millions whom he had created and exposed to it? No child of God ought to be willing to impeach his Heavenly Father by withholding an indignant negative to these questions.

01.3.3. Jewish Greek Usage

3.-- JEWISH GREEK USAGE

Those Jews who were contemporary with Christ, but who wrote in Greek, will teach us how they understood the word. Of course when Jesus used it, he employed it as they understood it.

Josephus (Antiq. -- Wars) applies the word to the imprisonment to which John the tyrant was condemned by the Romans; to the reputation of Herod; to the everlasting memorial erected in re-building the temple, already destroyed, when he wrote; to the everlasting worship in the temple which, in the same sentence he says was destroyed; and he styles the time between the promulgation of the law and his writing a long *aión*. To accuse him of attaching any other meaning than that of indefinite duration to the word, is to accuse him of stultifying himself. But when he writes to describe endless duration he employs other, and less equivocal terms. Alluding to the Pharisees, he says:

"They believe that the wicked are detained in an everlasting prison [*eirgmon aidion*] subject to eternal punishment" [*aidios timoria*]; and the Essenes [another Jewish sect] "allotted to bad souls a dark, tempestuous place, full of never-ceasing punishment [*timoria adialeipton*], where they suffer a deathless punishment, [*athanaton timorian*]".

It is true he sometimes applies *aiónion* to punishment, but this is not his usual custom, and he seems to have done this as one might use the word great to denote eternal duration, that is an indefinite term to describe infinity. But *aidion* and *athanaton* are his favorite terms. These are unequivocal. Were only *aiónion* used to define the Jewish idea of the duration of future punishment, we should have no proof that it was supposed to be endless.

Philo, who was contemporary with Christ, generally used *aidion* to denote endless, and always used *aiónion* to describe temporary duration. Dr. Mangey, in his edition of Philo, says he never used *aiónion* to interminable duration. He uses the exact phraseology of Matthew 25:46 precisely as Christ used it. "It is better not to promise than not to give prompt assistance, for no blame follows in the former case, but in the latter there is dissatisfaction from the weaker class, and a deep hatred and everlasting punishment [*kolasis aiónios*] from such as are more powerful." Here we have the exact terms employed by our Lord, to show that *aiónion* did not mean endless but did mean limited duration in the time of Christ.

Philo always uses *athanaton*, *ateleuteton* or *aidion* to denote endless, and *aiónion* for temporary duration.

Stephens, in his Thesaurus, quotes from a Jewish work, [Solom. Parab.] "These they called *aiónios*, hearing that they had performed the sacred rites for three entire generations." This shows conclusively that the expression "three generations" was then one full equivalent of *aiónion*. Now these eminent scholars were Jews who wrote in Greek, and who certainly knew the meaning of the words they employed, and they give to the aionian words the meaning that we are contending

for, indefinite duration, to be determined by the subject.

Thus the Jews of our Savior's time avoided using the word *aiónion* to denote endless duration, for applied all through the Bible to temporary affairs, it would not teach it. If Jesus intended to teach the doctrine held by the Jews, would he not have used the terms they used? Assuredly; but he did not. He threatened age-lasting, or long-enduring discipline to the believers in endless punishment. *Aiónion* was his word while theirs was *aidion*, *adialeipton*, or *athanaton*, -- thus rejecting their doctrines by not only not employing their phraseology, but by using always and only those words connected with punishment, that denote limited suffering.

And, still further to show that he had no sympathy with those cruel men who procured his death, Jesus said to his disciples: "Take heed and beware of the leaven [doctrine] of the Pharisees and the Sadducees" [believers in endless misery and believers in destruction].

Had *aiónion* been the strongest word, especially had it denoted endless duration, who does not see that it would have been in general use as applied to punishment, by the Jewish Greeks of nineteen centuries ago?

We thus have an unbroken chain of Lexicography, and Classic, Old Testament, and Contemporaneous Usage, all allowing to the word the meaning we claim for it. Indefinite duration is the meaning generally given from the beginning down to the New Testament.

01.3.4.1. New Testament - Part 1

4.-- THE NEW TESTAMENT USAGE

AION THE SAME IN BOTH TESTAMENTS

Speaking to those who understood the Old Testament, Jesus and his Apostles employed such words as are used in that book, in the same sense in which they are there used. Not to do so would be to mislead their hearers unless they explained a change of meaning. There is certainly no proof that the word changed its meaning between the Old and New Testaments, accordingly we are under obligation to give it precisely the meaning in the New it had in the Old Testament. This we have seen to be indefinite duration. An examination of the New Testament will show that the meaning is the same, as it should be, in both Testaments.

NUMBER OF TIMES FOUND AND HOW TRANSLATED

The different forms of the word occur in the New Testament one hundred and ninety-nine times, if I am not mistaken, the noun one hundred and twenty-eight, and the adjective seventy-one times.

Bruder's Concordance, latest edition, gives *aion* one hundred and twenty-six times, and *aionios* seventy-two times in the New Testament, instead of the former ninety-four, and the latter sixty-six times, as Professor Stuart, following Knapp's Greek text, declares.

In our common translation the noun is rendered seventy-two times ever, twice eternal, thirty-six times world, seven times never, three times evermore, twice worlds, twice ages, once course, once world without end, and twice it is passed over without any word affixed as a translation of it. The adjective is rendered once ever, forty-two times eternal, three times world, twenty-five times everlasting, and once former ages.

1 -- THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST

Ten times it is applied to the Kingdom of Christ. Luke 1:33 : "And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." See also Luke 1:55; Hebrews 6:20; Hebrews 7:17; Hebrews 7:21; 1 Peter 4:11; 2 Peter 1:11; 2 Peter 3:18; Revelation 1:6; Revelation 11:15. But the Kingdom of Christ is to end, and he is to surrender all dominion to the Father, therefore endless duration is not taught in these passages (See 1 Corinthians 15:24-25; 1 Corinthians 15:28).

2 -- THE JEWISH AGE

It is applied to the Jewish age more than thirty times. 1 Corinthians 10:11 : "Now all these things happened unto them for examples; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come". Consult also Matthew 12:32; Matthew 13:22; Matthew 13:39-40; Matthew 13:49; Matthew 24:3; Matthew 28:20; Mark 4:19; Luke 1:70; Luke 16:8; Luke 20:34; John 9:32; Acts 3:21; Acts 15:18; Romans 12:2; 1 Corinthians 2:6-8; 1 Corinthians 3:18; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Galatians 1:4; Ephesians 1:21; Ephesians 2:2; Ephesians 3:9; 1 Timothy 6:17; 2 Timothy 4:10;

Titus 2:12; Hebrews 9:26. But the Jewish age ended with the setting up of the Kingdom of Christ. Therefore the word does not denote endless duration here.

3 -- THE PLURAL FORM

It is used in the plural in Ephesians 3:21 : "the age of the ages" (tou aionos ton aionon). Hebrews 1:2; Hebrews 11:3 : "By whom he made the worlds." "The worlds were framed by the word of God." There can be but one eternity. To say "By whom he made the eternities" would be to talk nonsense. Endless duration is not inculcated in these texts.

4 -- THE SENSE OF FINITE DURATION

The word clearly teaches finite duration in such passages as Romans 16:25; 2 Corinthians 4:17; 2 Timothy 1:9; Philemon 1:15; Titus 1:2. Read Romans 16:25 : "Since the world (eternity?) began". 2 Corinthians 4:17 : "A far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory". Here "and" is a word supplied by the translators, and the literal is "an excessively exceeding aionian weight". But endless cannot be exceeded. Therefore aiónion does not here mean eternal.

5 -- EQUIVALENT TO NOT

The word is used as equivalent to not in Matthew 21:19; Mark 11:14; John 13:8; 1 Corinthians 8:13. "Peter said unto him 'thou shalt never wash my feet'" is a specimen of this use of the word. It only denotes eternal by accommodation.

6 -- APPLIED TO GOD, ETC

It is applied to God, Christ, the Gospel, the good, the Resurrection world, etc., in which the sense of endless is allowable because imputed to the word by the subject treated, as declared by Taylor and Fuerst, on page 17 of this book, in John 8:35; John 12:34; John 14:16; Romans 1:25; Romans 9:5; Romans 11:36; Romans 16:26-27; 2 Corinthians 4:18; 2 Corinthians 5:1; 2 Corinthians 9:9; 2 Corinthians 11:31; Galatians 1:5; Ephesians 3:11; Php 4:20; 1 Timothy 1:17; 2 Timothy 2:10; 2 Timothy 4:18; Hebrews 6:2; Hebrews 7:24; Hebrews 7:28; Hebrews 9:12; Hebrews 9:14-15; Hebrews 13:8; Hebrews 13:20-21; 1 Peter 1:25; 1 Peter 5:10-11; 2 Peter 3:18; 1 John 2:17; 2 John 1:2; Jude 1:25; Revelation 1:18; Revelation 4:9-10; Revelation 5:13; Revelation 7:12; Revelation 10:6; Revelation 15:7; Revelation 22:5;

7 -- LIFE ETERNAL

It is applied to life, "Everlasting and Eternal Life." But this phrase does not so much denote the duration, as the quality of the Blessed Life. It seems to have the sense of durable in these passages: Matthew 19:16; Matthew 19:29; Matthew 25:46; Mark 10:17; Mark 10:30; Luke 10:25; Luke 16:9; Luke 18:18; Luke 18:30; John 3:15-16; John 3:36; John 4:14; John 4:36; John 5:24; John 5:39; John 6:27; John 6:40; John 6:47; John 6:51; John 6:54; John 6:58; John 6:68; John 8:51-52; John 10:28; John 11:26; John 12:25; John 12:50; John 17:2-3; Romans 2:7; Romans 5:21; Romans 6:22-23; Galatians 6:8; 2 Thessalonians 2:16; 1 Timothy 1:16; 1 Timothy 6:12; Titus 1:2; Titus 3:7; Hebrews 5:9; 1 John 1:2; 1 John 2:25; 1 John 3:15; 1 John 5:11; 1 John 5:13; 1 John 5:20; Jude 1:21; See this subject treated further on.

PASSAGES DENOTING LIMITED DURATION

Let us state more definitely several passages in which all will agree that the word cannot have the sense of endless.

Matthew 13:22 : "The care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word" (the cares of that age or "time").

Matthew 13:39-40; Matthew 13:49 : "The harvest is the end of the world" (i.e. age, Jewish age, the same taught in Matthew 24:1-51, which some who heard Jesus speak were to live to see, and did see).

Luke 1:33 : "And he (Jesus) shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end." The meaning is, he shall reign to the ages (eis tous aionas). That long, indefinite duration is meant here, but limited, is evident from 1 Corinthians 15:28, "And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." His reign is for ever, i.e., to the ages, but it is to cease.

Luke 1:55 : "As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever, (to an age, aiónos).

Luke 1:70 : "As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began," or "from an age," (ap aiónos). "Of old," would be the plain construction.

Luke 16:8 : "For the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light." That is, the people of that time were more prudent in the management of their affairs than were the Christians of that day in their plans.

John 9:32 : "Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind." From the age, (ek tou aiónos) that is from the beginning of our knowledge and history.

Romans 16:25 : "Since the world began," clearly shows a duration less than eternity, inasmuch as the mystery that had been secret since the world began, was then revealed. The mystery was aiónion but did not last eternally. It was "now made manifest to all nations."

Php 4:20 : "Now unto our God and Father be glory for ever and ever," for the ages of the ages (eis tous aiónas ton aiónon), (Galatians 1:5 same). "For the eternities of the eternities," is an absurd expression. But ages of ages is a proper sentence. Eternity may be meant here, but if the word aión expressed the idea, such a reduplication would be weak and improper.

1 Timothy 6:17 : "Charge them that are rich in this world" (age or time).

1 Timothy 1:17 : "Now to the King eternal (of the ages) be glory for the ages of the ages." What is this but an ascription of the ages to the God of the ages? Eternity can only be meant here as ages piled on ages imply long, and possibly endless duration. "All the ages are God's; him let the ages glorify," is the full import of the words. Translate the words eternity, and what nonsense. "Now to the God of the eternities (!) Be glory for the eternities of the eternities (!!)"

Hebrews 1:8 : "The age of the age."

Ephesians 2:7 : "That in the ages (aións) to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace." Here at least two aións, eternities are to come. Certainly one of them must end before the other begins.

Ephesians 3:21 : "The generations of the age of the ages." 2 Timothy 4:18 : "The age of the ages." The same form of expression is in Hebrews 13:21; 1 Peter 4:11; Revelation 1:6; Revelation 4:9; Revelation 5:13; Revelation 7:12; Revelation 14:11; Revelation 15:7; Revelation 20:10.

When we read that the smoke of their torment ascends eis aiónas aiónon, for ages of ages, we get the idea of long, indefinite, but limited duration, for as an age is limited, any number however great, must be limited. The moment we say the smoke of their torment goes up for eternities of eternities, we transform the sacred rhetoric in jargon. There is but one eternity, therefore as we read of more than one aión, it follows that aión cannot mean eternity.

Again, 1 Corinthians 10:11 : "Our admonition, on whom the ENDS of the aións (ages, ta tele ton aiónon) have come." That is, the close of the Mosaic and the beginning of the gospel age. How absurd to translate "ends of the eternities!" Here the apostle had passed more than one, and entered, consequently, upon at least a third aión. Hebrews 9:26 : "Now at an end of the ages." Matthew 13:39-40; Matthew 24:3, "The conclusion of the age." Eternity has no end. And to say ends of eternities is to talk nonsense.

2 Timothy 1:9 : "Before the world began," i.e., before the aiónion times began. There was no beginning to eternity, therefore the adjective aiónion here has no such meaning as eternal. The fact that aión is said to end and begin, is a demonstration that it does not mean eternity.

ABSURDITY OF POPULAR VIEWS

Translate the word eternity, and how absurd the Bible phraseology becomes! It represents the Bible as saying, "To whom be the glory during the ETERNITIES, even TO THE ETERNITIES" (Galatians 1:5). "Now all these things happened unto them, for ensamples, and they are written for our admonition upon whom the ends OF THE ETERNITIES are come" (1 Corinthians 10:11). "That in the ETERNITIES coming he might show the exceeding riches of his grace" (Ephesians 2:7). "The mystery which hath been hid from the ETERNITIES and from the generations" (Colossians 1:26). "But now once in the end of the eternities, hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (Hebrews 9:26). "The harvest is the end of the eternity" (Matthew 13:39). "So shall it be in the end of this eternity" (Matthew 13:40). "Tell us when shall these things be, and what the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the eternity" (Matthew 24:3). But substitute "age" or "ages," and the sense of the Record is preserved.

IT ACQUIRES VARIOUS MEANINGS

This is seen in many passages. Luke 20:34-35 : "The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage; but they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, are equal unto the angels," etc. Here "that world" (tou aiónos ekeinou) denotes the eternal world, not because the word aión intrinsically means that, but because the resurrection state is the topic of discourse. The words literally mean that age or epoch, but in this instance the immortal world is the subject that defines the word and gives it a unique meaning. So when the word refers to God, it denotes a different duration than when it applies to the Jewish dispensation. That in some of the places referred to the mooted word has the sense of endless, we do not question, but in all such cases it derives that meaning from the subject connected with it. (Dr. Edward Beecher. See p. 17.)

Let us indicate its varied use. Matthew 6:13 is probably spurious (See Griesbach, Knapp, and Wetstein): "Thine is the glory forever," that is through the ages. Here eternity may be implied, but the phrase "forever" literally means "for the ages."

Mark 4:19; Matthew 13:22 : "And the cares of this world", the Jewish age.

Mark 10:30 : "But he shall receive a hundred fold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life." Literally, in the age to come, the life of that age, i.e., gospel, spiritual, Christian life. We have shown that the world to come denotes the Christian dispensation.

Mark 11:14 : "No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever," that is "in the age," meaning the period of the tree's existence.

John 12:34 : "The people answered him, We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever;" (to the age). The Jews believed that their dispensation was to continue, and Messiah would remain as long as it would last. This language means that Christ was to remain through the Mosaic epoch. So the Jews thought.

John 13:8 : "Thou shalt never wash my feet" is equivalent to "Thou shalt not wash my feet"

John 14:16 : "And I will pray the Father and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever", eis ton aióna, "unto the age", that is, accompany them into the coming or Christian era.

John 6:51; John 6:58 : "If any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever;" eis ton aióna, into the age, that is, enjoy the life of the world that is to come, the Christian life. Its duration is not described here at all.

John 8:35 : "And the servant abideth not in the house for ever; (to the age), but the Son abideth ever." The Jews are here told that their religion is to be superseded by the Christ only. They are to leave the house because slaves to sin, while the Son will remain to the age - permanently.

John 8:51-52. "'Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying he shall never see death'. Then said the Jews unto him, 'Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying he shall never taste of death'". Moral, spiritual death is impossible to a man as long as he keeps the saying of Christ, is the full meaning of the words.

OCCURRENCE OF THE ADJECTIVE

The adjective aiónios is (incorrectly) said by Professor Stuart (Ex. Essays p. 46) to occur sixty-six times in the New Testament, be we make it seventy-two times. Of these fifty-seven are used in relation to the happiness of the righteous; three in relation to God or his glory; four are of a miscellaneous nature; and seven relate to the subject of punishment. Now these fifty-seven denote indefinite duration, "everlasting life" being a life that may or may not -- certainly does not always -- endure forever.

Thus the great preponderance of usage in the New Testament is indefinite duration. But if the preponderance were against this usage, we ought, in order to vindicate God's character, to

understand it in the sense of limited when describing a Father's punishment of his children.

APPLIED TO PUNISHMENT

How many times does the word in all its forms describe punishment? Only fourteen times in thirteen passages in the entire New Testament, and these were uttered on ten occasions only. The Noun, Matthew 12:32, Mark 3:29, 2 Peter 2:17, Jude 1:13, Revelation 14:11; Revelation 19:3; Revelation 20:10. The Adjective, Matthew 18:8; Matthew 25:41; Matthew 25:46, Mark 3:29, 2 Thessalonians 1:9, Jude 1:7, Hebrews 6:2.

Now if God's punishments are limited, we can understand how this word should be used only fourteen times to define them. But if they are endless how can we explain the employment of this equivocal word only fourteen times in the entire New Testament? A doctrine that, if true, ought to crowd every sentence, frown in every line, only stated fourteen times, and that, too, by a word whose uniform meaning everywhere else is limited duration! The idea is preposterous. Such reticence is incredible. If the word denotes limited duration, the punishments threatened in the New Testament are like those that experience teaches follow transgression. But if it means endless, how can we account for the fact that neither Luke nor John records one instance of its use by the Savior, and Matthew but four, and Mark but two, and Paul employs it but twice in his ministry, while John and James in their epistles never allude to it? Such silence is an unanswerable refutation of all attempts to foist the meaning of endless into the word. "Everlasting fire" occurs only three times, "everlasting punishment" only once, and "eternal damnation" once only. Shall any one dare suppose that the New Testament reveals endless torment, and that out of one hundred and ninety-nine occurrences of the word *aion* it is applied to punishment so seldom, and that so many of those who wrote the New Testament never use the word at all? No. The New Testament usage agrees with the meaning in the Greek classics, and in the Old Testament.

Does it not strike the candid mind as impossible that God should have concealed this doctrine for thousands of years, and that for forty centuries of revelation he continually employed to teach limited duration the identical word that he at length stretched into the signification of endless duration? The word means limited duration all through the Old Testament; it never had the meaning of endless duration among those who spoke the language, (as we have demonstrated,) but Jesus announced the doctrine of endless punishment, and selected as the Greek word to convey his meaning the very word that in the Classics and the Septuagint never contained any such thought, when there were several words in the copious Greek tongue that unequivocally conveyed the idea of interminable duration! Even if Matthew wrote in Hebrew or in Syro-Chaldaic, he gave a Greek version of his gospel, and in that rejected every word that carries the meaning of endlessness, and appropriated the one which taught nothing of the kind. If this were the blunder of an incompetent translator, or the imperfect record of a reckless scribe, we could understand it, but to say that the inspired pen of the evangelist has deliberately or carelessly jeopardized the immortal welfare of countless millions by employing a word to teach the doctrine of ceaseless woe that up to that very hour taught only limited duration, is to make a declaration that carries its own refutation.

We come now to the sheet-anchor of the great heresy of the partialist church. THE PRINCIPAL PROOF-TEXT

of an error hoary with antiquity, and not yet wholly abandoned. Matthew 25:46 is the great proof-text of the doctrine of endless punishment: "These shall go away into everlasting punishment, and the righteous into life eternal." We shall endeavor to establish the following points against the erroneous view of this Scripture. 1. The punishment is not for unbelief, but for not benefitting the needy. 2. The general antecedent usage of the word denoting duration here, in the Classics and in the Old Testament, proves that the duration is limited. 3. One object of punishment being to improve the punished, the punishment here must be limited; 4. The events here described took place in this world, and must therefore be of limited duration. 5. The Greek word kolasin, rendered punishment, should be rendered chastisement, as reformation is implied in its meaning.

1. THE AIONIAN PUNISHMENT IS FOR EVIL WORKS

Practical benevolence is the virtue whose reward is here announced, and unkindness is the vice whose punishment is here threatened, and not faith and unbelief, on which heaven and hell are popularly predicated (Matthew 25:34-45). "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was a hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee a hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Then shall he say unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was a hungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee a hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me."

If cruelty to the poor -- neglect of them even, -- constitutes rejection of Christ -- as is plainly taught here -- and all who are guilty are to suffer endless torment "who then can be saved?" the single consideration that works, and not faith are here made the test of discipleship, cuts away the foundation of the popular view of this text.

2. THE WORD AIONION DENOTES LIMITED DURATION

This appears in Classic and Old Testament usage. It is impossible that Jesus should have used the word rendered everlasting in a different sense than we have shown to have been its meaning in antecedent literature.

3. GOD'S PUNISHMENTS ARE REMEDIAL

All God's punishments are those of a Father, and must therefore be adapted to the improvement of his children. Hebrews 12:5-11 : "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons: for what son is he

whom the father chasteneth not? ... Furthermore, we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence. Shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." Proverbs 3:11-12 : "My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord; neither be weary of his correction: For whom the Lord loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth." Lamentations 3:31-33 : "For the Lord will not cast off forever: But though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies. For he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men." See also Job 5:17-18; Lev 26; Psalms 119:67; Psalms 119:71; Psalms 119:75; Jeremiah 2:19.

4. THESE EVENTS HAVE OCCURRED

The events here described took place in this world within thirty years of the time when Jesus spoke. They are now past. In Matthew 24:3, the disciples asked our Lord when the then existing age would end. The word (aión) is unfortunately translated world. Had he meant world he would have employed kosmos, which means world, as aión does not. After describing the particulars he announced that they would all be fulfilled, and the aión end in that generation, before some of his auditors should die. If he was correct the end came then. And this is demonstrated by a careful study of the entire discourse, running through Matthew 24:1-51 and Matthew 25:1-46. The disciples asked Jesus how they should know his coming and the end of the age. They did not inquire concerning the end of the actual world, as it is incorrectly translated, but age. This question Jesus answered by describing the signs so that they, his questioners, the disciples themselves, might perceive the approach of the end of the Jewish dispensation (aión). He speaks fifteen times in the discourse of his speedy coming, (Matthew 24:3; Matthew 24:27; Matthew 24:30; Matthew 24:37; Matthew 24:39; Matthew 24:42; Matthew 24:46; Matthew 24:48; Matthew 24:50; Matthew 25:6; Matthew 25:10; Matthew 25:13; Matthew 25:19; Matthew 25:27; Matthew 25:31). He addresses those who shall be alive at his coming: "Ye shall hear of wars, etc" (Matthew 24:6); "Pray that your flight be not in the winter" (Matthew 24:20); "So likewise when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled" (Matthew 24:33-34).

Campbell, Clarke, Wakefield, and Newton (Com. in loc.) translate the phrase, end of the world (sunteleia tou aiónos) "conclusion of the age," "end of this dispensation." The question was, then, what shall indicate thy second coming and the end of the Mosaic economy (aión)? "When shall all these things be fulfilled?" (Mark 13:4). He spoke of the temple (Luke 21:5; Luke 21:7) saying one stone should not be left on another, and the question of his disciples was, how shall we know when this is to take place? The answer is, "Ye shall hear of wars" (Matthew 24:6). "Ye shall see the abomination of desolation" (Matthew 24:15). "Pray that your flight be not in winter" (Matthew 24:20). The adverbs "Then" and "When" connect all the events related in the two chapters in one unbroken series. And what infallible token did he give that these events would occur "then"? Matthew 24:34 : "Verily I say unto you this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled." What things? The "son of man coming in his glory in the clouds" and the end of the existing aión, or age. Mark phrases it: "This generation shall not pass till all these things be done" (Mark 13:30). (See also Luke 21:32). This whole account is a parable describing the end of the Jewish aión, age,

or economy, signalized by the destruction of Jerusalem, and the establishment of the new aión, world, or age to come, that is the Christian dispensation.

Now on the authority of Jesus himself the aión then existing ended within a generation, namely, about A.D. 70. Hence those who were sent away into aiónion punishment, or the punishment of that aión, were sent into a condition corresponding in duration to the meaning of the word aión, i.e., age-lasting. A punishment cannot be endless, when defined by an adjective derived from a noun describing an event, the end of which is distinctly stated to have come.

5. THE WORD TRANSLATED PUNISHMENT MEANS IMPROVEMENT

The word is Kolasin. It is thus authoritatively defined: Greenfield, "Chastisement, punishment." Hedericus, "The trimming of the luxuriant branches of a tree or vine to improve it and make it fruitful." Donnegan, "The act of clipping or pruning -- restriction, restraint, reproof, check, chastisement." Grotius, "The kind of punishment which tends to the improvement of the criminal, is what the Greek philosophers called kolasis or chastisement." Liddell, "Pruning, checking, punishment, chastisement, correction." Max Muller, "Do we want to know what was uppermost in the minds of those who formed the word for punishment, the Latin pœna or punio, to punish, the root pu in Sanscrit, which means to cleanse, to purify, tells us that the Latin derivation was originally formed, not to express mere striking or torture, but cleansing, correcting, delivering from the stain of sin."

That it had this meaning in Greek usage we cite Plato (Protag. Sec. 38, vol. 1, p. 252): "For the natural or accidental evils of others, no one gets angry, or admonishes, or teaches or punishes (kolazei) them, but we pity those afflicted with such misfortunes. For if, O Socrates, you will consider what is the design of punishing (kolazein) the wicked, this of itself will show you that men think virtue something that may be acquired; for no one punishes (kolazei) the wicked, looking to the past only, simply for the wrong he has done, -- that is, no one does this thing who does not act LIKE A WILD BEAST, desiring only revenge, without thought -- hence he who seeks to punish (kolazein) with reason, does not punish for the sake of the past wrong deed, but for the sake of the future, that neither the man himself who is punished, may do wrong again, nor any other who has seen him chastised. And he who entertains this thought, must believe that virtue may be taught, and he punishes (kolazei) for the purpose of deterring from wickedness."

Like many other words this is not always used in its exact and full sense. The apocrypha employs it as the synonym of suffering, regardless of reformation (see Wis 3:11; Wis 16:1; 1Ma 7:7). See also Josephus (War. 3, 5, 8. Ant. 2, 4, 5, etc.). It is found but four times in the New Testament: In Acts 4:21, the Jews let John and Peter go, "finding nothing further how they might punish them" (kolazo). Did they not aim to reform them? Was not their punishment to cause them to return to the Jewish fold? From their standpoint the word was certainly used to convey the idea of reformation. 1 John 4:18 : "Fear hath torment." Here the word "torment" should be restraint. It is thus translated in the Emphatic Diaglot. The idea is, if we have perfect love we do not fear God, but if we fear we are restrained from loving him. "Fear hath restraint." The word is used here with but one of its meanings. In 2 Peter 2:9, the apostle uses the word as our Lord did: the unjust are reserved unto the day of judgement to be punished (kolazomenous). This accords exactly with the lexicography of the word, and the general usage in the Bible and in Greek literature agrees with the meaning given by the lexicographers.

Now, though the word rendered punishment is sometimes used to signify suffering alone, by Josephus and others, surely Divine inspiration will use it in its exact sense. We must therefore be certain that in the New Testament, when used by Jesus to designate divine punishment, it is generally used with its full meaning. The lexicographers and Plato, above, show us what that is, suffering, restraint, followed by correction, improvement.

From this meaning of the word, torment is by no means excluded. God does indeed torment his children when they go astray. He is a "consuming fire," and burns with terrible severity towards us when we sin, but it is not because he hates but because he loves us. He is a refiner's fire tormenting the immortal gold of humanity in the crucible of punishment, until the dross of sin is purged away. Malachi 3:2-3 : "But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire and like fuller's soap. And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold or silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness." Therefore kolasis is just the word to describe his punishments. They do for the soul what pruning does for the tree, what the crucible of the refiner does for the silver ore.

Even if aiónion and kolasis were both of doubtful signification, and were we only uncertain as to their meaning we ought to give God the benefit of the doubt and understand the word in a way to honor him, that is, in a limited sense, but when all but universal usage ascribes to aiónion limited duration, and the word kolasin is declared by all authorities to mean pruning, discipline, it is astonishing that a Christian teacher should be found to imagine that when both words are together, they can mean anything else than temporary punishment ending in reformation, especially in a discourse in which it is expressly declared that the complete fulfillment was in this life, and within a generation of the time when the prediction was uttered.

Therefore, (1) the fulfillment of the language in this life, (2) the meaning of aiónion, (3) and the meaning of kolasis, demonstrate that the penalty threatened in Matthew 25:46, is a limited one. It is a threefold cord that human skill cannot break. Prof. Tayler Lewis thus translates Matthew 25:46. "These shall go away into the punishment (the restraint, imprisonment,) of the world to come, and those into the life of the world to come." And he says "that is all that we can etymologically or exegetically make of the word in this passage."

Hence, also, the zoen aiónion (life eternal) is not endless, but is a condition resulting from a good character. The intent of the phrase is not to teach immortal happiness, nor does kolasin aiónion indicate endless punishment. Both phrases, regardless of duration refer to the limited results wronging or blessing others, extending possibly through Messiah's reign until "the end" (1 Corinthians 15:1-58). Both describe consequences of conduct to befall those consequences antedate the immortal state.

01.3.4.2. New Testament - Part 2

Aion-Aionios - Usage - New Testament - Part 2 A COMMON OBJECTION NOTICED

"Then eternal life is not endless, for the same Greek adjective qualifies life and punishment." This does not follow, for the word is used in Greek in different senses in the same sentence, as Habakkuk 3:6 : "And the everlasting mountains were scattered -- his ways are everlasting". Suppose we apply the popular argument here. The mountains and God must be of equal duration, for the same word is applied to both. Both are temporal or both are endless. But the mountains are expressly stated to be temporal -- they "were scattered," -- therefore God is not eternal. Or God is eternal and therefore the mountains must be. But they cannot be, for they were scattered. The argument does not hold water. The *aiónion* mountains are all to be destroyed. Hence the word may denote both limited and unlimited duration in the same passage, the different meanings to be determined by the subject treated.

But it may be said that this phrase "everlasting" or "eternal life" does not usually denote endless existence, but the life of the gospel, spiritual life, the Christian life, regardless of its duration. In more than fifty of the seventy-two times that the adjective occurs in the New Testament, it describes life. What is eternal life? Let the Scriptures answer. John 3:36 : "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." John 5:24 : "He that believeth on him that sent me hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but IS PASSED from death unto life." John 6:47; John 6:54 : "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life." John 17:3 : "THIS IS LIFE ETERNAL, to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." Eternal life is the life of the gospel. Its duration depends on the possessor's fidelity. It is no less the *aiónion* life, if one abandon it in a month after acquiring it. It consists in knowing, loving and serving God. It is the Christian life, regardless of its duration. How often the good fall from grace. Believing, they have the *aiónion* life, but they lose it by apostasy. Notoriously it is not, in thousands of cases, endless. The life is of an indefinite length, so that the usage of the adjective in the New Testament is altogether in favor of giving the word the sense of limited duration. Hence Jesus does not say "he that believeth shall enjoy endless happiness," but "he hath everlasting life," and "is passed from death unto life."

It scarcely need here be proved that the *aiónion* life can be acquired and lost. Hebrews 6:4-6 : "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance: seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." A life that can thus be lost is not intrinsically endless.

That the adjective is thus consistently used to denote indefinite duration will appear from several illustrations, some of which we have already given. 2 Corinthians 4:17 : "A far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," or, as the original reads, "exceeding an *aiónion* weight of glory excessively." Now eternal, endless cannot be exceeded, but *aiónion* can be, therefore *aiónion* is

not eternal. Again, Revelation 14:6 : "The everlasting gospel." The gospel is good news. When all shall have learned its truths it will no longer be news. There will be no such thing as gospel extant. Faith will be fruition, hope lost in sight, and the aiónion gospel, like the aiónion covenant of the elder dispensation, will be abrogated, not destroyed, but fulfilled and passed away. Again, 2 Peter 1:11 : "The everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." This kingdom is to be dissolved. Jesus is to surrender his dominion. 1 Corinthians 15:24 : "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God even the Father," etc. The everlasting kingdom of Christ will end.

The word may mean endless when applied to life, and not when applied to punishment, even in the same sentence, though we think duration is not considered so much as the intensity of joy or the sorrow in either case.

WORDS TEACHING ENDLESS DURATION

But the Blessed Life has not been left dependent on so equivocal a word. The soul's immortal and happy existence is taught in the New Testament, by words that in the Bible are never applied to anything that is of limited duration. They are applied to God and the soul's happy existence only. These words are akataluton, imperishable; amarantos and amarantinos, unfading; aphtharto, immortal, incorruptible; and athanasian, immortality. Let us quote some of the passages in which these words occur:

Hebrews 7:15-16 : "And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchizedek there ariseth another priest, who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless (akatalutos, imperishable) life."

1 Peter 1:3-4 : "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, (aphtharton,) and undefiled, and that fadeth not (amaranton) away."

1 Peter 5:4 : "And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not (amarantinos) away."

1 Timothy 1:17 : "Now unto the King eternal, immortal, (aphtharto,) invisible, the only wise god, be honor and glory forever and ever, Amen."

Romans 1:23 "And changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man."

1 Corinthians 9:25 : "Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible."

1 Corinthians 15:51-54 : "Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, (aphthartoi,) and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, (aphtharsian,) and this mortal must put on immortality (athanasian). So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, (aphtharsian,) and this mortal shall have put on immortality, (athanasian,) then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."

Romans 2:7 : "To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, (aphtharsia,) eternal life."

1 Corinthians 15:42 : "So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption (aphtharsia)." See also 1 Corinthians 15:50.

2 Timothy 1:10 : "Who brought life and immortality (aphtharsian) to light, through the gospel."

1 Timothy 6:16 : "Who only hath immortality (athanasian)."

Now these words are applied to God and the soul's happiness. They are words that in the Bible are never applied to punishment, or to anything perishable. They would have been affixed to punishment had the Bible intended to teach endless punishment. And certainly they show the error of those who declare that the indefinite word *aiónion* is all the word, or the strongest word in the Bible declarative of the endlessness of the life beyond the grave. A little more study of the subject would prevent such reckless statements and would show that the happy, endless life does not depend at all on the pet word of the partialist critics.

THOMAS DE QUINCEY'S VIEWS

It will be of interest to give here the views of Thomas De Quincey, one of the most accurate students of language, and profoundest reasoners and thinkers among English scholars. He states the facts of the case with almost perfect accuracy: "I used to be annoyed and irritated by the false interpretation given to the Greek word *aión*, and given necessarily, therefore, to the Greek adjective *aiónios* as its immediate derivative. It was not so much the falsehood of this interpretation, as the narrowness of that falsehood that disturbed me. ... That reason which gives to this word *aiónion* what I do not scruple to call a dreadful importance, is the same reason, and no other, which prompted the dishonesty concerned in the ordinary interpretation of this word. The word happened to connect itself -- but that was no practical concern of mine, -- me it had not biased in the one direction, nor should it have biased any just critic in the counter direction -- happened, I say, to connect itself with the ancient dispute upon the duration of future punishment. What was meant by the *aiónion* punishments of the next world? Was the proper sense of the word eternal, or was it not? ... That argument runs thus -- that the ordinary construction of the word *aiónion*, as equivalent to everlasting, could not possibly be given up, when associated with penal misery, because in that case, and by the very same act, the idea of eternity must be abandoned as applicable to the counter bliss of paradise. Torment and blessedness, it was argued, punishment and beatification stood upon the same level; the same word it was, the word *aiónion*, which qualified the duration of either; and if eternity, in the most rigorous acceptation, fell away from the one idea, it must equally fall away from the other. Well, be it so. But that would not settle the question. It might be very painful to renounce a long cherished anticipation, but the necessity of doing so could not be received as a sufficient reason for adhering to the old unconditional use of the word *aiónion*. The argument is -- that we must retain the old sense of eternal, because else we lose upon one scale what we had gained upon the other. But what then would be the reasonable man's retort? We are not to accept or to reject a new construction (if otherwise the more colorable), of the word *aiónion*, simply because the consequences might seem such, as, upon the whole, to displease us. We may gain nothing; for by the new interpretation our loss may balance our gain, and we may prefer the old arrangement. But how monstrous is all this! We are not

summoned as to a choice of two different arrangements that may suit different tastes, but to a grave question as to what is the sense and operation of the word *aiónion*. ... Meantime all this speculation, first and last, is pure nonsense. *Aiónian* does not mean eternal, neither does it mean of limited duration. Nor would the unsettling of *aiónian* in its old use, as applied to punishment, to torment, to misery, etc., carry with it any necessary unsettling of the idea in its application to the beatitudes of Paradise.

What is an *aión*? The duration or cycle of existence which belongs to any object, not individually of itself, but universally, in right of its genius. ... Man has a certain *aiónian* life; possibly ranging somewhere about the period of seventy years assigned in the Psalms. ... The period would in that case represent the "*aión*" of the individual Tellurian; but the "*aión*" of the Tellurian race would probably amount to many millions of our earthly years, and it would remain an unfathomable mystery, deriving no light at all from the septuagenarian "*aión*" of the individual; though between the two *aións* I have no doubt that some secret link of connection does and must subsist, however undiscoverable by human sagacity. ...

This only is discoverable, as a general tendency, that the *aión*, or generic period of evil is constantly towards a fugitive duration. The *aión*, it is alleged, must always express the same idea, whatever that may be; if it is less than eternity for the evil cases, then it must be less for the good ones. Doubtless the idea of an *aión* is in one sense always uniform, always the same, -- viz., as a tenth or a twelfth is always the same. Arithmetic could not exist if any caprice or variation affected their ideas -- a tenth is always more than an eleventh, always less than a ninth. But this uniformity of ratio and proportion does not hinder but that a tenth may now represent a guinea, and the next moment represent a thousand guineas. The exact amount of the duration expressed by an *aión* depends altogether upon the particular subject which yields the *aión*. It is, as I have said, a radix, and like an algebraic square-root or cube-root, though governed by the most rigorous laws of limitation, it must vary in obedience to the nature of the particular subject whose radix it forms."

De Quincey's conclusions are:

A. "That man who allows himself to infer the eternity of evil from the counter eternity of good, builds upon the mistake of assigning a stationary and mechanic value to the idea of an *aión*, whereas the very purpose of Scripture in using the word was to evade such a value. The word is always varying for the very purpose of keeping if faithful to a spiritual identity. The period or duration of every object would be an essentially variable quantity, were it not mysteriously commensurate to the inner nature of that object as laid open to the eyes of God. And thus it happens, that everything in the world possibly without a solitary exception, has its own separate *aión*; how many entities, so many *aións*."

B. "But if it be an excess of blindness which can overlook the *aiónian* differences amongst even neutral entities, much deeper is that blindness which overlooks the separate tendencies of things evil and things good. Naturally, all evil is fugitive and allied to death."

C. "I, separately, speaking for myself only, profoundly believe that the Scriptures ascribe absolute and metaphysical eternity to one sole being -- viz., God; and derivatively to all others according to the interest which they can plead in God's favor. Having anchorage in God, innumerable entities may possibly be admitted to a participation in divine *aión*. But what interest in the favor of God can

belong to falsehood, to malignity, to impurity? To invest them with aiónian privileges, is, in effect, and by its results, to distrust and to insult the Deity. Evil would not be evil, if it had that power of self-subsistence which is imparted to it in supposing its aiónian life to be co-eternal with that which crowns and glorifies the good." (Theological Essays, Vol.1, pp. 143-162.)

REV. E. H. SEARS

Says Edmund H. Sears: "The passage has often been regarded as if the chief thing to be considered was the duration of the punishment of the unrighteous, over against the duration of the life of the righteous, and that since both are described by the same word, they are of like duration. That would undoubtedly be so if mere duration or extension by time were expressed at all, or any way involved in the contrast. But that, as I should interpret, is not the meaning of the original word. The element of time, as we measure things, does not enter into it at all. Not duration, but quality [editor's emphasis], is the chief thing involved in this word rendered 'eternal.' ... The word aión and its derivatives, rendered 'eternal' and 'everlasting,' describe an economy complete in itself, and the duration must depend on the nature of the economy. ... The New Testament, if it reveals anything, reveals the aión -- the dispensation that lies next to this, and gathers into it the momentous results of our probation in time. But what lies beyond that in the cycles of a coming eternity, I do not believe has been revealed to the highest angel. Think of that endless Beyond! If every atom of the globe were counted off, and every atom stood for a million years, still we have not approached a conception of endless duration. And yet sinful and fallible men affirm that their fellow sinners are to be given over to indescribable agonies through those millions of years thus repeated, and even then the clocks of eternity have only struck the morning hour! that the hells of pent-up anguish are to streak eternity with blood in lines parallel forever with the being of God! If Gabriel should come and tell us that, we should have a right to believe that the history of the infinite future infolded in the bosom of God, had not been given to Gabriel!" (Sermons pp. 99-102.)

DID JESUS EMPLOY THE POPULAR PHRASEOLOGY?

It is often remarked that as, according to Josephus, the Jews in our Savior's times believed in endless punishment, Jesus must have taught the same doctrine, as "he employed the terms the Jews used." But this is not true, as we have shown. Christ and his apostles did not employ the phraseology that the Jews used to describe this doctrine. As we have shown, Philo used *athanaton* and *ateleuteton* meaning immortal, and interminable. He says, *zoe apothneskonta aeikai tropon tina thanaton athanaton upomeinon kai ateleuteton*, "to live always dying, and to undergo an immortal and interminable death" (Univ. Expositor, vol. 3, p. 446). He also employs *aidion*, but not *aiónion* (Univ. Expositor. vol. 3, p. 437). Josephus says: "They, the Pharisees, believe the souls of the bad are allotted *aidios eirgmos*, to an eternal prison, and punished with *adialeiptos timoria*, eternal retribution." In describing the doctrine of the Essenes, Josephus says they believe "the souls of the bad are sent to a dark and tempestuous cavern, full of *adialeiptos timoria*, incessant punishment." But the phraseology of Jesus and the apostles is *olethros aiónios* or *aióniou kriseos* "eternal chastisement," or "eternal condemnation." The Jews contemporary with Jesus call retribution *aidios*, or *adialeiptos timoria*, while the Savior calls it *aiónios krisis*, or *kolasis aiónios*, and the apostles *olethros aiónios*, everlasting destruction; and *puros aiónios*, eternal fire. Had Jesus and his apostles used the terms employed by the Jews to whom they spake, we should be compelled to admit that they taught the popular doctrine. See this point further elucidated at the

end of this volume on the word Aidios.

"To live always dying and undergo an endless death," is the language of "orthodox" pulpits, and of the Greek Jews, but our Savior and his apostles carefully avoided such horrible blasphemy as to charge God with being the author of so diabolical a cruelty.

Says a learned scholar: "Aiónios is a word of sparing occurrence among ancient classical Greek writers; nor is it by any means the common term employed by them to signify eternal. On the contrary, they much more frequently make use of aidios, aei ón, or some similar mode of speech, for this purpose. ... To me it appears that the Seventy, by choosing aiónios to represent olam, testify that they did not understand the Hebrew word to signify eternal. Had they so understood it, they would certainly have translated it by some more decisive word; some term, which, like aidios is more commonly employed in Greek, to signify that which has neither beginning nor end." (Christian Examiner. Sept. 1830, pp. 25, 26.)

Let us now allude to the other texts in the New Testament in which the word is applied to punishment.

"NEVER FORGIVENESS -- ETERNAL DAMNATION"

Matthew 12:32 : "Whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." Parallel passages, Mark 3:29 : "But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never (aióna) forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal (aiónion) damnation"; Luke 12:10 : "And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven." Literally, "neither in this age nor the coming," that is, neither in the Mosaic, nor the Christian age or dispensation. but then, these ages will both end, and in the dispensation of the fullness of times, or ages, all are to be redeemed (Ephesians 1:10). Mark 3:29 is the same as Matthew 12:32. The Greek differs slightly, and is rendered literally, "has not forgiveness to the age, but is liable to age-lasting judgment." The thought of the Savior is, that those who should attribute his good deeds to an evil spirit would be so hardened that his religion would have difficulty in affecting them. Endless damnation is not thought of, and cannot be extorted from the language.

In the New Testament the "end of the age," and "ages" is a common expression, referring to what has now passed (see Colossians 1:26; Hebrews 9:26; Matthew 13:39-40; Matthew 13:49; Matthew 24:3). Says Locke: "The nation of the Jews were the kingdom and people of God whilst the law stood. And this kingdom of God, under the Mosaic constitution was called aión outos, this age, or as it is commonly translated, this world. But the kingdom of God was to be under the Messiah, wherein the economy and constitution of the Jewish church, and the nation itself, that in opposition to Christ adhered to it, was to be laid aside, is in the New Testament called aión mellon, the world or age to come." (Notes on Gal. i.)

Another writer adds: "Why the times under the law, were called kronoi aiónioi, we may find reason in their jubilees, which were aiónes, "secula," or "ages," by which all the time under the law, was measured; and so kronoi aiónioi is used (2 Timothy 1:9; Titus 1:2). And so aiónes are put for the times of the law, or the jubilees (Luke 1:70; Acts 3:21; 1 Corinthians 2:7; 1 Corinthians 10:11; Ephesians 3:9; Colossians 1:26; Hebrews 9:26). And so God is called the rock of aiónon, of ages

(Isaiah 26:4), in the same sense that he is called the rock of Israel (Isaiah 30:29), i.e. the strength and support of the Jewish state; -- for it is of the Jews the prophet here speaks. So Exodus 21:6 : eis ton aióna signifies not as we translate it, "forever," but "to the jubilee;" which will appear if we compare Leviticus 25:39-41 and Exodus 21:2." (Burthog's "Christianity, a Revealed Mystery," pp. 17, 18. Note on Romans 16:25.)

Pearce in his commentary, says "Rather, neither in this age, nor in the age to come: i.e., neither in this age when the law of Moses subsists, nor in that also, when the kingdom of heaven, which is at hand, shall succeed to it. The Greek aión, seems to signify age here, as it often does in the New Testament, (see Matthew 13:40; Matthew 24:3; Colossians 1:26; Ephesians 3:9; Ephesians 3:21) and according to its most proper signification. If this be so, then this age means the Jewish one, the age while their law subsisted and was in force; and the age to come (see Hebrews 6:5; Ephesians 2:7) means that under the Christian dispensation." (Notes on Matthew 12:31-32.

Wakefield observes: "Age, aióni; i.e., the Jewish dispensation which was then in being, or the Christian, which was going to be." (Com. on loco.)

Clarke: "Though I follow the common translation (Matthew 12:31-32), yet I am fully satisfied the meaning of the words is, neither in this dispensation, viz., the Jewish, nor in that which is to come, the Christian. Olam ha-bo, the world to come, is a constant phrase for the times of the Messiah, in the Jewish writers." (Idem.) See also Hammond, Rosenmuller, etc., (Paiges's Selections). Take Hebrews 9:26, as an example: "For then must he (Christ) often have suffered since the foundation of the world (kosmos, literal world) but now once in the end of the world (aiónon, age) hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." What world was at its end when Christ appeared? Indubitably the Jewish age. The world or age to come (aión) must be the Christian dispensation, as in 1 Corinthians 10:11, where Paul says that upon him and his contemporaries "the ends of the world are come."

These passages state in strong language the heinous nature of the sin referred to. The age or world to come is not beyond the grave, but it is the Christian dispensation. It had a beginning eighteen centuries ago, and it will end when Jesus delivers the kingdom to God, the Father (1 Corinthians 15:1-58).

EVERLASTING FIRE

Matthew 18:8 : "Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands, or two feet, to be cast into everlasting fire." Matthew 25:41 uses the same phraseology: "The everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his angels." Also Jude 1:7 : "Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire."

It is better to enter into the Christian life maimed, that is deprived of some social advantage comparable to an eye, foot, or hand, than to keep all worldly advantages, and suffer the penalty of rejecting Christ, typified by fire, is the meaning of Matthew 18:8; and Jude 1:7 teaches that Sodom and Gomorrah are an example of eternal fire. But that fire has expired. That the fire referred to is not endless is shown by the use of the term in the Bible. "God is a consuming fire" (Hebrews 12:29), but it is a "Refiner's fire" (Malachi 3:2-3). It consumes the evil and refines away the dross of

error and sin. This corroborates the meaning we have shown to belong to the word expressive of the fire's duration. But whatever may be the purpose of the fire, it is not endless, it is aiónian. Benson well says: "The fire which consumed Sodom, etc., might be called eternal, as it burned till it had utterly consumed them, beyond the possibility of their being inhabited or rebuilt. But the word will have a yet more emphatical meaning, if (as several authors affirm) that fire continued to burn a long while." (Paige Com. Vol. vi: p. 398.) EVERLASTING DESTRUCTION

2 Thessalonians 1:9 : "Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."

Everlasting destruction, olethron aiónion, does not signify remediless ruin, but long banishment from God's presence. This is what sin does for the soul. Olethros is not annihilation, but desolation. It is found but four times in the New Testament (1 Thessalonians 5:3; 1 Corinthians 5:5; 1 Timothy 6:9). The passage in First Corinthians shows us how it is used: "deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." The destruction here is not final -- it is conditional to the saving of the spirit. Everlasting destruction is equivalent to prolonged desolation. THE BLACKNESS OF DARKNESS FOREVER

2 Peter 2:17 : "These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved forever." Jude 1:13 : "Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever." "To whom is always reserved the blackness of darkness," would be a correct paraphrase of this language. Those referred to are trees that bear no fruit, clouds that yield no water, foaming waves, stars that give no light. Endless duration was not thought of by either Peter or Jude. Indefinite duration, ages, is the utmost meaning of eis aióna, which is spurious in 2 Peter 2:17, but genuine in Jude 1:13. The literal meaning is for an age. Eternity cannot be extorted from the phrase.

FOREVER AND EVER

Hebrews 6:2 : "The doctrine of the aionian (aiónion) judgment." We make no special explanation of this passage. Whether the judgment of that age or the age to come, the Christian, is meant, matters not. "The judgement of the age" is the full force of the phrase aionion judgment.

Revelation 14:11 : "And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name." Revelation 19:3 : "And her smoke rose up forever and ever." Revelation 20:10 : "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever."

Attempts have been made to show that these [are - editor] reduplications, if no other forms of the word convey the idea of eternity. But the literal meaning of aiónas aiónon, in the first text above, is ages of ages, and of tous aiónas ton aiónon, in the other two, is the ages of the ages. It is thus rendered in the Emphatic Diaglot. It is perfectly manifest to the commonest mind that if one age is limited, no number can be unlimited. Ages of ages is an intense expression of long duration, and if the word aión should be eternity, "eternities of eternities" ought to be the translation, an expression too absurd to require comment. If aión means eternity, any number of reduplications would weaken it. But while ages of ages is proper enough, eternity of eternities would be ridiculous. On this phraseology Sir Isaac Newton says: "The ascending of the smoke of any burning thing forever

and ever, is put for the continuation of a conquered people under the misery of perpetual subjection and slavery." (Daniel and Rev. London Ed. 1733, p. 18.) The thought of eternal duration was not in the mind of Jesus or his apostles in any of these texts, but long duration, to be determined by the subject.

THE SPIRITS IN PRISON

An illuminating side-light is thrown on this subject by commentators on 1 Peter 3:18-20, in which Christ is said to have "preached unto the spirits in prison." Alford says our Lord "did preach salvation in fact, to the disembodied spirits, etc." Tayler Lewis (Lange on Eccl., 130) -- "There was a work of Christ in Hades, he makes proclamation 'ekeruxen' in Hades to those who are there in ward. This interpretation, which was almost universally adopted by the early Christian church, etc." Professor Huidekoper (Mission to the Underworld, pp. 51, 52) -- "In the second and third centuries every branch and division of Christians believed that Christ preached to the departed." Dietelmair (Historia Dogmatis de Descensu Christi ad Inferos, chs. iv and vi) says this doctrine "in omni coetu Christiano creditum." Why preach salvation to souls whose doom was fixed for eternity? And how could Christians believe in that doctrine and at the same time give the aionian words the meaning of eternal duration?

AION MEANS AN EON, ÆON or AGE

It is a pity that the noun (aión) has not always been rendered by the English word eon, or æon, and the adjective by eonian or aionian; then all confusion would have been avoided. Webster's Unabridged, defines it as meaning a space or period of time, an era, epoch, dispensation, or cycle, etc. He also gives it the sense of eternity, but no one could have misunderstood, had it been thus rendered. Suppose our translation read "What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the æon?" "The smoke of their torment shall ascend for æons of æons." "These shall go away into aionian chastisement, etc." The idea of eternity would not be found in the noun, nor of endless duration in the adjective, and the New Testament would be read as its authors intended.

Let the reader now recall the usage as we have presented it, and then reflect that all forms of the word are applied to punishment only fourteen times in the entire New Testament, and ask himself the question, Is it possible that so momentous a doctrine as this is only stated so small a number of times in divine revelation? If it has the sense of limited duration, this is consistent enough, for then it will be classed with the other terms that describe the Divine judgments. The fact that so many of those who speak or write never employ it at all, and that all of them together use it but fourteen times is a demonstration that He who has made known his will, and who would of all things have revealed so appalling a fate as endless woe, if he had it in preparation, has no such doom in store for immortal souls.

We now pass to corroborate these positions by consulting the views of those in the first centuries of the Christian Church, who obtained their opinions directly or indirectly from the apostles themselves.

01.3.5. Christian Fathers

5.--THE CHRISTIAN FATHERS

Nothing can cast a backward illumination on the New Testament, and teach us the full meaning of our controverted words, as Jesus and the apostles used them, so well as the language of the Christian fathers and the early church. We will therefore consult those who were perfectly familiar with the Greek tongue, and who passed the word along down the ages, from the apostles to their successors, for more than five hundred years.

TAYLER LEWIS

Prof. Tayler Lewis (Lange's Genesis, pp. 135, 144, and Ecclesiastes pp. 44, 51) in the course of learned disquisitions on the meaning of the Olamic and Aionian words of the Bible, refers to the oldest version of the New Testament, the Syriac, or the Peshito, and tells us how these words are rendered in this first form of the New Testament: "So is it ever in the old Syriac version where the one rendering is still more unmistakably clear. These shall go into the pain of the Olam (aión) (the world to come), and these to the life of the Olam (aión) (the world to come)." He refers to Matthew 19:16; Mark 10:17; Luke 18:18; John 3:15; Acts 13:46; 1 Timothy 6:12, in which aiónios is rendered belonging to the olam, or world to come. Eternal life, in our version, the words in Matthew 25:46, are rendered in the Peshito "the life of the world to come."

We quote this not to endorse, but to show that one of the best of modern critics testifies that the earliest New Testament version did not employ endless as the meaning of the word. Of Prof. Lewis Dr. Beecher writes, "We are not to suppose that so eminent an Orthodox divine says these things in support of Universalism, a system which he decidedly and earnestly rejects." (Christian Union.)

THE APOSTLES CREED

The Apostles' Creed is the earliest Christian formula. The idea of endless torment is not hinted. "I believe in God, the Father Almighty; and in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary by the Holy Ghost, was crucified under Pontius Pilate, buried, rose from the dead on the third day, ascended to the heavens, and sits on the right hand of the Father; whence he will come, to judge the living and the dead: and in the Holy Spirit; the holy church; the remission of sins; and the resurrection of the body." (Murdoch's Mosheim, vol. 1, p. 96.)

IGNATIUS

Our first reference to the patristic writers shall be to Ignatius (A.D. 115) who says the reward of piety "is incorruptibility and eternal life," "love incorruptible and perpetual life." Here the aionian life is strengthened by incorruptible," showing that the word aiónion alone was in his mind unequal to the task of expressing endless duration. He says, also, that Jesus "was manifested to the ages" (tois aiósin). Of course he intended to use no such ridiculous expression as "to the eternities."

SIBYLLINE ORACLES

The Sibylline Oracles -- dated variously by different writers from 500 B.C. to 150 A.D., teach aionian suffering, and universal salvation beyond, showing how the word was then understood. The prophetess who professes to write the Oracles describes the saints as petitioning God for the salvation of the damned. Thus entreated she says "God will deliver them from the devouring fire and eternal gnashing of teeth."

JUSTIN MARTYR

Justin Martyr, A.D. 140, 162, taught everlasting suffering, and annihilation afterwards. The wicked "are tormented as long as God wills that they should exist and be tormented. ... Souls both suffer punishment and die" (Dialog. cum Tryphone pp. 222-3). He uses the expression *aperanton aiona*. "The wicked will be punished with everlasting punishment, and not for a thousand years as Plato asserted" (Apol. Prim cxxvii). Here punishment is announced as limited. This is evident from the fact that Justin Martyr taught the annihilation of the wicked; they are to be "tormented world without end," and then annihilated.

IRENÆUS

Irenæus says, "the unjust shall be sent into inextinguishable and eternal fire" (Adv. Her. p. v. cap. 27), and yet he taught that the wicked are to be annihilated: "When it is necessary that the soul should no longer exist, the vital spirit leaves it, and the soul is no more, but returns thither whence it was taken" (Ibid). Dr. Beecher pertinently observes (Christian Union): "What then are the facts as to Irenæus? Since he has been canonized as a saint, and since he stood in such close connection with Polycarp and with John the apostle, there has been a very great reluctance to admit the real facts of the case. Massuetus has employed much sophistry in endeavoring to hide them. Nevertheless, as we shall clearly show hereafter, they are incontrovertibly these: that he taught a final restitution of all things to unity and order by the annihilation of all the finally impenitent. Express statements of his in this creed, and in a fragment referred to by Prof. Schaff, on universal restoration (Christian Union), and in other parts of his great work against the Gnostics, prove this beyond all possibility of refutation. The inference from this is plain. He did not understand *aiónios* in the sense of eternal; but in the sense claimed by Prof. Lewis, that is, pertaining to the world to come." These are his words: "Christ will do away with all evil, and make an end of all impurities." He further says (Schaff, vol. ii, pp. 504, 73) that certain persons "shall not receive from him (the Creator) length of days forever and ever." Thus the word denoted limited duration in his time, A.D. 170, 200.

HERMOGENES

So Hermogenes (A.D. 200) who believed that all sinful beings will finally cease to be, must have understood Christ as applying *aiónion* to punishment in the sense of limited duration, or he would not have believed in annihilation, and have been a Christian.

ORIGEN AND THEODORE OF MOPSUESTIA

Origen used the expressions "everlasting fire" and "everlasting punishment" to express his idea of the duration of punishment. Yet he believed that in all cases sin and suffering would cease and be followed by salvation. He was the most learned man of his time, and his example proves that

aiónion did not mean endless at the time he wrote, A.D. 200 - 253. Dr. Beecher says (Christian Union), "As an introduction to his system of theology, he states certain great facts as a creed believed by all the church. In these he states the doctrine of future retribution as aiónion life, and aiónion punishment, using the words of Christ. Now, if Origen understood aiónion as meaning strictly eternal, then to pursue such a course would involve him in gross and palpable self-contraction. But no one can hide the facts of the case. After setting forth the creed of the church as already stated, including aiónion punishment, he forthwith proceeds, with elaborate reasoning, again and again to prove the doctrine of universal restoration. The conclusion from these facts is obvious: Origen did not understand aiónios as meaning eternal, but rather as meaning pertaining to the world to come. ... Two great facts stand out on the page of ecclesiastical history. One that the first system of Christian theology was composed and issued by Origen in the year 230 after Christ, of which a fundamental and essential element was the doctrine of the universal restoration of all fallen beings to their original holiness and union to God. The second is that after the lapse of a little more than three centuries, in the year 544, this doctrine was for the first time condemned and anathematized as heretical. This was done, not in the general council, but in a local council called by the Patriarch Menno at Constantinople, by the order of Justinian. During all this long interval, the opinions of Origen and his various writings were an element of power in the whole Christian world. For a long time he stood high as the greatest luminary of the Christian world. He gave an impulse to the leading spirits of subsequent ages and was honored by them as their greatest benefactor. At last, after all his scholars were dead, in the remote age of Justinian, he was anathematized as a heretic of the worst kind. The same also was done with respect to Theodore of Mopsuestia, of the Antiochian school, who held the doctrine of universal restitution on a different basis. This, too, was done long after he was dead, in the year 553. From and after this point the doctrine of future eternal punishment reigned with undisputed sway during the middle ages that preceded the Reformation. What, then, was the state of facts as to the leading theological schools of the Christian world in the age of Origen and some centuries after? It was, in brief, this: There were at least six theological schools in the church at large. Of these six schools, one, and only one, was decidedly and earnestly in favor of the doctrine of future eternal punishment. One was in favor of the annihilation of the wicked. Two were in favor of the doctrine of universal restoration on the principles of Origen, and two in favor of universal restoration on the principles of Theodore of Mopsuestia.

"It is also true that the prominent defenders of the doctrine of universal restoration were decided believers in the divinity of Christ, in the trinity, in the incarnation and atonement, and in the great Christian doctrine of regeneration; and were, in piety, devotion, Christian activity and missionary enterprise, as well as in learning and intellectual power and attainments, inferior to none in the best ages of the church, and were greatly superior to those by whom, in after ages, they were condemned and anathematized.

"It is also true that the arguments by which they defended their views were never fairly stated and answered. Indeed, they were never stated at all. They may admit of a thorough answer and refutation, but even if so, they were not condemned and anathematized on any such grounds, but simply in obedience to the arbitrary mandates of Justinian, whose final arguments were deposition and banishment for those who refused to do his will.

"Consider, now, who Theodore of Mospuestia was, not as viewed by a slavish packed council, met to execute the will of a Byzantine despot, but by one of the most eminent evangelical scholars of Germany, Dorner. Of him he says: "Theodore of Mopsuestia was the crown and climax of the school of Antioch. The compass of his learning, his acuteness, and, as we must suppose, also, the force of his personal character, conjoined with his labors through many years, as a teacher both of churches and of young and talented disciples, and as a prolific writer, gained for him the title of Magister Orientis. He labored on uninterruptedly till his death in the year 427, and was regarded with an appreciation the more widely extended as he was the first Oriental theologian of this time." (Doctrine of Person of Christ, Div. 2, vol. i, p. 50, Eninburgh.)

Mosheim says of Origen: "Origen possessed every excellence that can adorn the Christian character; uncommon piety from his very childhood; astonishing devotedness to that most holy religion which he professed; unequaled perseverance in labors and toils for the advancement of Christianity; and elevation of soul which placed him above all ordinary desires or fears; a most permanent contempt of wealth, honor, pleasures, and of death itself; the purest trust in the Lord Jesus, for whose sake, when he was old and oppressed with ills of every kind, he patiently and perseveringly endured the severest sufferings. It is not strange, therefore, that he was held in so high estimation, both while he lived and after death. Certainly if any man deserves to stand first in the catalogue of saints and martyrs, and to be annually held up as an example to Christians, this is the man, for, except the apostles of Jesus Christ and their companions, I know of no one, among all those enrolled and honored as saints, who excelled him in virtue and holiness." (Hist. Com. on Chris. before Constantine, vol. ii, p. 149.)

How could universal salvation have been the prevailing doctrine in that age of the church unless the word applied to punishment in Matthew 25:46 was understood by Christians to mean limited duration?

The fact that Origen and others taught an aionian punishment after death, and salvation beyond it, DEMONSTRATES that in Origen's time the word had not the meaning of endless, but did mean at that date, indefinite or limited duration.

Readers curious to look up this point of the state of opinion during the centuries following the age of Origen, can refer to the authorities cited below. (Assemanni Bib. Orient. vol. iii, part i, pp. 223-4, 324.-Doderlein, Inst. Theol. Christ. vol. ii, pp. 200-1. - Jacobi, Bohn's Edition. - Neander's Hist. Christian Dogmas. - Guericke, Shedd's Translation. pp. 308, 349. - Neander Torrey's Translation, vol. ii. p. 251-2. - Dorner's Hist. Person of Christ, 2 vol. pp. 28, 30, 50. - Dr. Schaff Hist. Christ Ch. vol. ii. pp. 731, 504. - Giesler, vol. i. p. 370. - Kurz, 1. Text Book Christ. Hist. p. 137-2:2. - Hagenbach, quoting from Augustine Civitate Dei, liber. xxi. chap. vi.)

(NOTE - Doderlein says (Inst. Theol. Chris. vol. ii. p. 199): The most learned in the early church, cherished and defended with most zeal the hope of a final cessation of torments. These are his words: Quanto quis altius eruditione in antiquitate Christianna eminuit, tanto magis spem finiendorum olim cruciatuum aluit atque defendit.)

EUSEBIUS

Eusebius (A.D. 300-25) describes the darkness preceding creation thus (History vol. i. p. 173): "These for a long time had no limit," they continued "for a long eternity" (dia polun aióna). To say

that darkness that ended with the creation endured for a long eternity, would be absurd.

GREGORY NYSSSEN

Gregory Nyssen (A.D. 370-3) proves that the word had the meaning of limited duration in his day. He says (De Infantibus, p. 173), "Whoever considers the divine power will plainly perceive that it is able at length to restore by means of the everlasting purgation and expiatory sufferings, those who have gone even to this extremity of wickedness." Thus everlasting punishment and salvation beyond was taught in the fourth century.

AUGUSTINE

Augustine (A.D. 400-430) was the first known to argue that aiónios signified endless. He at first maintained that it always meant thus, but at length abandoned that ground, and only claimed that it had that meaning sometimes. He "was very imperfectly acquainted with the Greek language." (Ancient Hist. Univ.)

AVITUS

Avitus (A.D. 410) brought to Spain, from Jerome, in Palestine, a translation of Origen, and taught that punishments are not endless; for "though they are called everlasting, yet that word in the original Greek does not, according to its etymology and frequent use, signify endless, but answers only to the duration of an age." (Hieronymi Epist.)

GENERAL USAGE OF THE FATHERS

In fact, every Universalist and every Annihilationist among the fathers of the early church is a standing witness testifying that the word was understood as we claim, in their day. Believers in the Bible, accepting its utterances implicitly as truth, how could they be Universalists or Annihilationists with the Greek Bible before them, and aiónion punishment taught there, unless they gave to the word thus used the meaning of limited duration? Accordingly, besides those alluded to above, we appeal to those ancient Universalists, the Basilidians (A.D. 130), the Carpocratians (A.D. 140), Clemens Alexandrinus (A.D. 190), Gregory Thaumaturgus (A.D. 220-50), Ambrose (A.D. 250), Titus of Bostra (A.D. 340-70), Didymus the Blind (A.D. 550-90), Diodore of Tarsus (A.D. 370-90), Isidore of Alexandria (A.D. 370-400), Jerome (A.D. 380-410), Palladius of Gallatia (A.D. 400), Theodore of Mopsuestia (A.D. 380-428), and others, not one of whom could have been a Universalist unless he ascribed to this word the sense of limited duration. To most of them Greek was as familiar as English is to us. THE EMPEROR JUSTINIAN

The Emperor Justinian (A.D. 540), in calling the celebrated local council which assembled in 544, addressed his edict to Menos, Patriarch of Constantinople, and elaborately argued against the doctrines he had determined should be condemned. He does not say, in defining the Catholic doctrine at that time "We believe in aiónion punishment," for that was just what the Universalist, Origen himself taught. Nor does he say, "The word aiónion has been misunderstood, it denotes endless duration," as he would have said had there been such a disagreement. But, writing in Greek with all the words of that copious speech from which to choose, he says, "The holy church of Christ teaches an endless ATELEUTETOS aiónios life to the righteous, and endless (ateleutetos) punishment to the wicked."

Aiónios was not enough in his judgement to denote endless duration, and he employed ateleutetos. This demonstrates that even as late as A.D. 540 aiónios meant limited duration, and required an added word to impart to it the force of endless duration.

BELIEVERS IN ANNIHILATION AND IN UNIVERSAL SALVATION APPLIED THE WORD TO PUNISHMENT

Thus Ignatius, Polycarp, Hermas, Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Hyppolytus, Justinian, and others, (from A.D. 115 to A.D. 544) use the word aiónion to define punishment. And yet, some of these taught that decay out of conscious existence is the natural destiny of men, from which some only are saved by God's grace. Previous to this decay or extinction of being, they held that men experience aiónion punishment. The aiónion punishment is not extinction of being, for that was the soul's natural destiny. The punishment is not endless for it ceases. Let us illustrate: Justin Martyr says "Souls suffer aiónion punishment and die." The punishment is in the future world, but it concludes with extinction, and yet it is aiónion. A.D. 540, aiónion required ateleutetos prefixed to convey the idea of endless duration.

OLYMPIODORUS

Olympiodorus (sixth century) is quoted by Dr. Beecher (Christian Union) as saying, "When aiónios is used in reference to a period which, by assumption, is infinite and unbounded, it means eternal, but when used in reference to times or things limited, the sense is limited to them."

THE FIRST SIX CENTURIES

Hence the word did not mean endless duration among the early Christians for about six centuries after Christ. To say that any one who contradicts these men is correct, and that they did not know the meaning of the word, is like saying that an Australian, twelve hundred years hence, will be better able to give an accurate definition of English words in common use to-day than we are ourselves. These ancients could not be mistaken, and the fact that they required qualifying words to give aiónion the sense of endless duration -- that they used it to describe punishment when they believed in the annihilation of the wicked, or in their restoration subsequent to aiónion punishment, irrefragably demonstrates that the word had not the meaning of endless to them, and if not to them, then it must have been utterly destitute of it.

The uniform usage of these words by the early Church demonstrates that they signified temporal duration.

01.4.0. Conclusion

CONCLUSION

Many sensible people will, with propriety, say, "Why all this labor to establish the meaning of one word?" And the author confesses that such a labor should be unnecessary. Men ought to refuse to credit such a doctrine as that of endless punishment on higher grounds than those of verbal definitions. Reverence, not to say respect, for God, the fact that he is the Father of mankind, should cause all to reject the doctrine of endless torment, though the weight of argument were a thousand fold to one in favor of the popular definition of this word. But there are many who disregard the moral argument against the doctrine, which is unanswerable; who crush under the noblest instincts of the heart and soul, which plead, trumpet-tongued, against that horrible nightmare of doubt and unbelief; who cling to the mere letter of the word which kills, and ignore the spirit which gives life; who insist that all the voices of reason and sentiment should be disregarded because the Bible declares the doctrine of endless punishment for sinners. It is for such that these facts have been gathered, and this essay written, that no shred nor vestige even of verbal probability should exist to mislead the mind, and so seem to sanction the doctrine that defames God and distresses man; that it might be seen that the letter and the spirit of the word agree, and are in perfect accord with the dictates of reason, the instincts of the heart, and the impulses of the soul, in rejecting the worst falsehood, the foulest of all brood of error, the darkest defamation of the dear God's character that ever yet was invented, the monstrous falsehood that represents him as consigning the souls he has created to his own image to interminable torment. The word under examination is the foundation stone of that evil structure.

Thus it has appeared as the result of this discussion that 1. There is nothing in the Etymology of the word warranting the erroneous view of it.

2. The definitions of Lexicographers uniformly given not only allow but compel the view we have advocated.

3. Greek writers before and at the time the Septuagint was made, always gave the word the sense of limited duration.

4. Such is the general usage in the Old Testament.

5. The Jewish Greek writers at the time of Christ ascribed to it limited duration.

6. The New Testament thus employs it.

7. The Christian Fathers for centuries after Christ thus understood it.

Hence it follows that the readers of the Bible are under the most imperative obligations to understand the word in all cases as denoting limited duration, unless the subject treated, or other qualifying words compel them to understand it differently. There is nothing in the Derivation, Lexicography or Usage of the word to warrant us in understanding it to convey the thought of

endless duration.

If our positions are well taken the Bible does not teach the doctrine of endless torment, for it will be admitted that if this word does not teach it, it cannot be found in the Bible.

01.5.0. Appendix - Aidios

APPENDIX

AIDIOS AN IMPORTANT WORD CONSIDERED

There is but one Greek word beside aiónios rendered everlasting, and applied to punishment, in the New Testament, and that is the word aidios found in Jude 1:6 : "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgement of the great day." This word is found in but one other place in the New Testament, Romans 1:20 : "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead."

Now it is admitted that this word among the Greeks had the sense of eternal, and should be understood as having that meaning wherever found, unless by express limitation it is shorn of its proper meaning. It is further admitted that had aidios occurred where aiónios does, there would be no escape from the conclusion that the New Testament teaches Endless Punishment. It is further admitted that the word is here used in the exact sense of aiónios, as is seen in the succeeding verse: "Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." That is to say, the "aidios" chains in verse 6 are "even as" durable as the "aiónion fire" in verse 7. Which word modifies the other?

1. The construction of the language shows that the latter word limits the former. The aidios chains are even as the aiónion fire. As if one should say "I have been infinitely troubled, I have been vexed for an hour," or "He is an endless talker, he can talk five hours on a stretch." Now while "infinitely" and "endless" convey the sense of unlimited, they are both limited by what follows, as aidios, eternal, is limited by aiónios, indefinitely long.

2. That this is the correct exegesis is evident from still another limitation of the word. "The angels - he hath reserved in everlasting chains UNTO the judgement of the great day." Had Jude said that the angels are held in aidios chains, and stopped there, not limiting the word, we should not dare deny that he taught their eternal imprisonment. But when he limits the duration by aiónion and then expressly states that it is only unto a certain date, we understand that the imprisonment will terminate, even though we find applied to it a word that intrinsically signifies eternal duration, and that was used by the Greeks to convey the idea of eternity, and was attached to punishment by the Greek Jews of our Savior's times, to describe endless punishment, in which they were believers.

But observe, while this word aidios was in universal use among the Greek Jews of our Savior's day, to convey the idea of eternal duration, and was used by them to teach endless punishment, he never allowed himself to use it in connection with punishment, nor did any of his disciples but one, and he but once, and then carefully and expressly limited its meaning. Can demonstration go further than this to show that Jesus carefully avoided the phraseology by which his contemporaries

described the doctrine of endless punishment? He never employed it. What ground then is there for saying that he adopted the language of his day on this subject? Their language was aīdīos timoria, endless torment. His language was aionion kolasin, age-lasting correction. They described unending ruin, he discipline, resulting in reformation.

02.00.1. BIBLE PROOFS OF UNIVERSAL SALVATION

BIBLE PROOFS OF UNIVERSAL SALVATION;

CONTAINING THE PRINCIPAL PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE THAT TEACH THE FINAL HOLINESS AND HAPPINESS OF ALL MANKIND.

By J. W. Hanson, D.D.

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CONTENTS Preface: Universal Salvation the Doctrine of the Bible 1. The Silence of God 2. Adam's Punishment 3. Cain's Punishment 4. The Antediluvians

5. The Deluge 6. Sodom and Gomorrah 7. Various Instances 8. The Testimony of Scholars 9. The Promise to Adam 10. The Abrahamic Promise 11. The Promises to the Obedient 12. The Threats to the Wicked 13. Gathered to Their Fathers 14. The Spirit Returns to God 15. The Fate of Amnon 16. Knowledge of God Gives Peace 17. God's Anger is Limited 18. God's Mercy is Unlimited 19. The Testimony of the Prophets 20. Universal Obedience 21. Man's Infirmary Doubts God's Goodness 22. Universal Dominion 23. The Prophet Isaiah 24. God's Word Conquers

25. Jeremiah

26. Hosea

27. Micah

28. Daniel 29. The "Wise Woman"

30. A Refiner 31. The Name Jesus 32. The Word Gospel 33. The First Christmas Anthem 34. John the Baptist 35. An Incident and its Lesson 36. Be Like God 37. The Lord's Prayer 38. The Universal Fatherhood 39. The Good Samaritan 40. The Gospel Leaven 41. The Jewish Leaven 42. All the Lost are to be Saved 43. Ninety and Nine (Poem) 44. Christ Will Accomplish His Mission 45. The Resurrection 46. The Nature of Punishment 47. The Prayer of Jesus for His Murderers 48. God the Creator 49. God's Holiness 50. God's Mercy 51. God's Justice 52. God's Omniscience 53. God's Omnipotence 54. God's Love 55. God's Attributes Unlimited 56. God's

Power Unlimited 57. God's Wisdom Unlimited 58. God's Love Unlimited 59. God's Will, Pleasure, Purpose, Promise, and Oath 60. You Must Be Born Again 61. A Conditional Promise Fulfilled 62. Sin Burned, Sinners Saved 63. Every Soul Worth Saving 64. Comfort for All 65. Heaven's Joys Certain 66. The Substance of Things Hoped For 67. The Wickedest Saved 68. The Image of God 69. Paul's Hope 70. The Glad Tidings of God 71. The Universe Shall Be Delivered from Sin 72. What God Will Not Do 73. What God Will Do 74. Sin, Satan, Death and Hell Destroyed 75. All Shall Be Righteous 76. All Destined to God 77. The People Were Astonished 78. Universal Pardon and Obedience 79. Christ Cancels Adam 80. A Healthful Doctrine 81. No More Sorrow 82. Universal Obedience Prophesied 83. The Universal Propitiation 84. Their Works Follow Them 85. The Building of God Sure 86. God Hates Sin 87. God All in All 88. God's Glory 89. God a Universal Savior 90. Why Paul was Persecuted 91. All Are to be Righteous 92. The Final Consummation

02.00.2. Editor's Notes

Editor's notes:

The following changes have been made to the text:

Old English words in the King James text were changed to modern equivalents.

Verse references were modernized.

A Table of Contents with numbered topic headings was added.

Page numbers and the index were eliminated.

02.00.3. Preface

UNIVERSAL SALVATION THE DOCTRINE OF THE BIBLE

The author of these pages proposes, in the briefest and simplest manner of which he is capable, to set forth the leading Scriptural arguments in favor of the doctrine of Universal Salvation. He will not attempt to exhaust the subject, nor will he endeavor to explain what are called "The Difficult Passages," that is, those that are popularly supposed to teach a different doctrine. Remanding that task - a perfectly easy one - to another volume, a proper companion to this, he will only attempt, in these pages, to present the prominent considerations that are contained in the Bible in support of the final redemption of all souls. In this important task he invokes the benediction of Almighty God; praying that any word herein contained, that is false, may perish, fruitless, while whatever is in harmony with the Divine Oracles may bring forth many good results in the promotion of truth and righteousness in the world.

The first thought that astonishes the mind when the Scriptures are consulted on this great question, by one who has taken for granted that they teach endless torture, for any part of the human family, is ...

02.01. The Silence of God

1. THE SILENCE OF GOD. The Almighty Father of the human family would not fail, at the very beginning of human history, to announce to his children the penalty of sin. To conceal such a doom as that of endless torment from any would be cruel treachery towards those whom he had created, and who would have the right to know all the consequences of disobedience. And yet only limited consequences - temporal punishments - were threatened at the announcement of the law to Adam, or when the penalty of their Sin was referred to, in the history of the earliest transgressors. If endless punishment were true, it would be stated as the threatened penalty of the original sin.

02.02. Adam's Punishment

2. ADAM'S PUNISHMENT. But Adam was neither before nor afterward told that he had incurred or should receive endless woe.

Here is the law, and its penalty:

"And the Lord God took the man and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress it and keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat of it: for in the day that you eat thereof you shall surely die" (Genesis 2:15-17).

Adam died as the penalty of his sin. How? This threatened death is not (1.) of the body, for physical dissolution was the natural result of physical organization, and the death threatened was to be "In the day he sinned." His body did not die in that day. (2.) It was not eternal death for the same reason. He certainly went to no endless hell "in the day" of his transgression. It was (3.) a moral, spiritual death from which recovery is feasible. Paul describes it:

"Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their hearts" (Ephesians 4:18). "You has he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins" (Ephesians 2:1).

Jesus describes it in the parable of the Prodigal son:

"It was meet that we should make merry and be glad; for this, your brother, was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found" (Luke 15:32). "See, I have set before you this day life and good, and death and evil. I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both you and your seed may live" (Deuteronomy 30:15-19).

Adam died this kind of death and no other "in the day" he sinned. The death God threatened was in this life. The devil denied this penalty. If it was any different from that threatened, then the devil told the truth. This penalty is described in the language used toward Adam after he had sinned:

"And unto Adam he said, Because you have harkened unto the voice of your wife, and have eaten of the tree, of which I commanded you, saying, you shall not eat of it; cursed is the ground for your sake; in sorrow shall you eat of it all the days of your life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to you; and you shall eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of your face shall you eat bread, till you return unto the ground; for out of it were you taken; for dust you are, and unto dust shall you return" (Genesis 3:17-19). Would all these consequences be so fully described, and the one of surpassing importance be concealed? Would God perpetrate a "snap judgment" on his poor deluded creatures? Impossible. Our first parents died in trespasses and sins, as did the prodigal, "in the day" they sinned. The whole penalty to which Adam or any other should ever be liable was fully described, but not a word of endless punishment is there.

02.03. Cain's Punishment

3. CAIN'S PUNISHMENT. The case of Cain is equally explicit. What penalty did the first murderer experience? Here it is fully stated:

"And the Lord God said unto Cain, Where is Abel your brother? And he said, I know not; Am I my brother's keeper? And he said, What have you done? the voice of your brother's blood cries unto me from the ground. And now are you cursed from the earth, which has opened her mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. When you till the ground it shall not henceforth yield unto you her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shall you be in the earth; And Cain said unto the Lord, my punishment is more than I can bear. Behold, you have driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from your face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; and it shall come to pass, that every one that finds me shall slay me" (Genesis 4:9-14). Not a word of endless punishment for this greatest of crimes. "A fugitive and a vagabond in the earth," not torment in an endless hell, is the punishment of the first murderer. His punishments were all temporal, and were so understood by him. Is it credible that in addition to all this an endless hell was in store for this first fratricide, and not a word said of the awful doom?

02.04. The Antediluvians

4. THE ANTEDILUVIANS.

Read the detailed account of the Flood and of multitudes of antecedent transactions for the long period of more than seventeen hundred years, and not an instance can be found in which any other than temporal and limited consequences are described as the result of sinfulness.

02.05. The Deluge

5. THE DELUGE. The wicked people who were overwhelmed by the deluge were not threatened with endless punishment. Noah, the first great "preacher of righteous" (2 Peter 2:5), did not say a word of it when he announced the flood. He threatened drowning, but said nothing of post mortem sufferings. Would he have spoken of this comparatively slight disaster, and conceal the enormous one of endless suffering if he knew anything of it?

"And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die" (Genesis 6:17). "The earth also was corrupt before God; and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, the end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth. And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth; and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark" (Genesis 6:11-13; Genesis 7:23).

Just think of charging God with describing the height of the waters, the amount of the flood, the number of days, and all the small particulars of a limited penalty, and entirely overlooking the dreadful fate in store for the millions destroyed!

02.06. Sodom and Gomorrah

6. SODOM AND GOMORRAH.

Nothing is said of endless punishment in connection with the wicked people of Sodom and Gomorrah.

"Then the Lord God rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven; and he overthrew those cities and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and all that which grew upon the ground. And Abraham got up early in the morning to the place where he stood before the Lord, and he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain, and beheld, and, lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace" (Genesis 19:24-28). The fire and brimstone that these people suffered were here, in this world. And that it was limited is evident from the following:

"For the punishment of the iniquity of the daughter of my people is greater than the punishment of the sin of Sodom, that was overthrown as in a moment, and no hands stayed on her" (Lamentations 4:6).

Jerusalem experienced a greater punishment than Sodom, as we know from the words of Jesus:

"Then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time. No, nor ever shall be" (Matthew 24:21).

All this shows that the suffering was in this world. The Sodomites never received a hint that they were exposed to endless punishment, nor is there any record that they ever went to such a doom.

02.07. Various Instances

7. VARIOUS INSTANCES. The wicked whose character is described from Adam to Moses, a period of twenty-five hundred years, are never threatened with endless punishment, nor is it ever said to have been visited upon any. The builders of Babel, Joseph's brethren, Pharaoh, many wicked people are there threatened and punished, but not a word is said of endless punishment. Is it credible that for twenty-five hundred years God should have led men along to the brink of the grave, threatening them with all sorts of things, and entirely conceal this doom, which, if true, should have been reiterated to all from the cradle to the grave? The punishments of sin are thus described two thousand five hundred years after Adam:

"It shall come to pass, if you will not hearken unto the voice of the Lord your God, to observe to do all his commandments and statutes which I command you this day; that all these curses shall come upon you, and overtake you: Cursed shall you be in the city and cursed shall you be in the field. Cursed shall be your basket and your store. Cursed shall be the fruit of your body, and the fruit of your land, the increase of your cattle, and the flocks of your sheep. Cursed shall you be when you come in, and cursed shall you be when you go out. The Lord shall send upon you cursing, vexation and rebuke in all that you set your hand unto for to do . . . He shall smite you with consumption, and with a fever, with blasting and mildew; etc. In the morning you shall say Would God it were evening, and at evening you shall say, Would God it were morning" (Deuteronomy 28:15-22; Deuteronomy 28:67).

All through the Old Testament, subsequent to the enunciation of the law, the wicked who are spoken of are never threatened with any but temporal penalties. Abimelech is a case in point: "Thus God rendered the wickedness of Abimelech, which he did unto his father in slaying his seventy brethren" (Judges 9:56). So with Ahithophel, the suicide: "And when Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed, he put his household in order, and hanged himself, and died, and was buried in the sepulcher of his father" (2 Samuel 17:23). Is it asked how this suicide was punished? Paul answers: "Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment" (1 Timothy 5:24). Hence Paul tells us that under the Law "every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward" (Hebrews 2:2).

Now for four thousand years every wicked act was fully punished in this life. "Every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward." Would God have an endless hell and keep it a secret from the world for four thousand years? Would he keep sinners for four thousand years from a hell he had made, and then use it as a prison for other sinners no worse? No; the silence of God for forty centuries is a demonstration that he had no such place reserved for any of his children.

If God, all the time he was threatening these limited consequences of sin, intended to inflict a doom compared to which all these are as nothing, then he deceived the people, for this is the full statement of the law:

"These are the statutes and judgments and laws, which the Lord made between him and the children of Israel in mount Sinai by the hand of Moses" (Leviticus 26:46). The laws of Moses enumerate many forms of punishment, many different penalties, but never list a hint of endless woe.

02.08. The Testimony of Scholars

8. THE TESTIMONY OF SCHOLARS. That endless punishment is not revealed in the law, the wisest theologians of all creeds agree:

Warburton: In the Jewish Republic, both the rewards and punishments promised by heaven were temporal only. Such as health, long life, peace, plenty, and dominion, etc. Diseases, premature death, war, famine, want, subjections, and captivity, etc. And in no one place of the Mosaic Institutes is there the least mention, or intelligible hint, of the rewards and punishments of another life. Div. Leg, vol. iii.

Jahn: We have not authority, therefore, decidedly to say, that any other motives were held out to the ancient Hebrews to pursue the good and avoid the evil, than those which were derived from the rewards and punishments of this life. Archaeology p. 398.

Milman: The law-giver (Moses) maintains a profound silence on that fundamental, if not of political, at least of religious legislation -- rewards and punishments in another life. He substituted temporal chastisements and temporal blessings. On the violation of the constitution followed inevitably blighted harvests, famine, pestilence, defeat, captivity; on its maintenance, abundance, health, fruitfulness, victory, independence. How wonderfully the event verified the prediction of the inspired legislator! How invariably apostasy led to adversity - repentance and reformation to prosperity! Hist. Jews, vol. i.

Dr. Campbell: It is plain that in the Old Testament the most profound silence is observed in regard to the state of the deceased, their joys and sorrows, happiness or misery.

If, then, the penalties of sin are limited in duration, we can understand this reticence, even though those penalties should continue in the future state, but if God meant all the time he was thus declaring temporal consequences, to inflict endless torment, he was deceiving his children -- an impossible supposition. Were endless punishment true, the Garden of Eden should have sighed the awful tidings from all its leaves, it should have been thundered from the rocky pulpit of Sinai, and have been shrieked into the ears of every transgressor from Adam down. Would a good being, a Father, would a decent being, any one better than a demon, sum up and particularize a score of trivial penalties, and conceal the one that should be mentioned most of all? Would a wicked human king threaten three months' imprisonment, say, for crime, and then behead the criminal, when convicted, all the time concealing from him this capital penalty? Is it supposable that God would stay to talk about drought, and fever, and scab, and itch, when he had intended to burn, or even to imprison in an endless hell? Such a supposition is too enormous for the human mind to cherish. The silence of God for four thousand years, the fact that he never hinted at such a doom, demonstrates that it was not then impending, and if not then, under the severe dispensation of Moses, it is impossible that it should be found in the milder message of the Gospel of the grace of God.

Now all Christians admit that the people in the times of the Old Testament accepted the doctrine of the resurrection. Is not the fact that nothing is said to the contrary prima facie evidence that the resurrection state was by then regarded as one in which all was to be well? Is not the silence of the Scriptures concerning any evil fate there, a powerful argument in behalf of the New Testament doctrine of the resurrection, that all there are equal to the angels? But let us proceed to some of the most striking of the positive declarations teaching universal salvation. We adduce first: ..

02.083. The Last Days

83. THE LAST DAYS The terms "last days," "end of the world," etc. found in connection with judgment, are made very clear to the careful reader of the Bible. The words "last day," "last days," etc., refer to the closing of the Mosaic dispensation, and not, as is often supposed, to the final closing up of mundane affairs. Peter demonstrates this, by applying the words of Joel to what was then transpiring, "But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel, And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; and on my servants, and on my handmaidens, I will pour out in those days my Spirit; and they shall prophesy; and I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath, blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke; the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come" (Acts 2:16-20).

Paul testifies to the same idea, "God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds" (Hebrews 1:1-2). See also 1 Peter 1:20 : "Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you." 1 John 2:18 : "Little children, it is the last time". Peter says, "But the end of all things is at hand" (1 Peter 4:7). The "last days" always refer to the end of Judaism, and the establishment of Christianity, and not to the closing of human affairs on earth.

02.09. The Promise to Adam

9. THE PROMISE TO ADAM.

While we would not claim that God gave to Adam a distinct declaration that our first parent understood to mean universal salvation, we are certain that he gave him the germ of that sublime result when he announced the consequences of the warfare between man and evil. After Adam had sinned, the first promise was given:

"I will put enmity between you (the serpent) and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; it shall bruise your head and you shall bruise his heel" (Genesis 3:15). This was an announcement of the destruction of Satan, the tempter and enemy of man, inasmuch as a wound on the head of a serpent indicates his destruction, while a wound on the heel of man is not irremediable. What is the serpent? It is explained as follows:

"Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed. From whence come wars and fighting amongst you? come they not hence, even of the lusts that war in your members?" (James 1:14; James 4:1). But Satan and his works, the lusts and sins of mankind, are to be destroyed: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver them who through fear of death, were, all their life-time, subject to bondage" (Hebrews 2:14-15). "For this purpose the son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (1 John 3:8). "So Death and Hell were cast into the lake of fire" (Revelation 20:14). And the apostle exulted over their destruction: "Oh Death where is your sting? Oh Grave where is your victory?" (1 Corinthians 15:55). The promise to Adam was fulfilled in Christ, who came to vanquish the vanquisher, and who placed in operation those means that will result in delivering man from all his foes, death, hell, the devil, and the works of the devil. The original promise to Adam contained in embryo the idea of universal deliverance through Christ.

02.10. The Abrahamic Promise

10. THE ABRAHAMIC PROMISE.

How can any believer in the Bible escape the conclusion that the reconciliation of all men to God is taught in the promise to Abraham?

"Now the Lord had said unto Abraham, Get you out of your country, and from your kindred, and from your father's house, unto a land that I will show you; and I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing; and I will bless them that bless you; and curse him that curses you; and in you shall all families of the earth be blessed" (Genesis 12:1-3). "And the Angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time and said, By myself I have sworn, says the Lord, for because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son, that in blessing I will bless you, and in multiplying, I will multiply your seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore: and your seed shall possess the gate of his enemies: and in your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because you have obeyed my voice" (Genesis 22:15-18). "You are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in your seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Unto you first God, having raised up his son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities" (Acts 3:25-26).

I. It is a Universal Promise. Every human being who ever lived or ever shall live is included in "all the nations, families, and kindreds of the earth."

II. The blessing is Christian Salvation. "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He says not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to your seed which is Christ" (Galatians 3:16).

III. It consists in a Gospel Blessing. "And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the Gospel to Abraham, saying: In you shall all nations be blessed" (Galatians 3:8).

IV. It is Salvation from Sin, through faith. "Know you therefore, that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the scripture foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In you all nations shall be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham" (Galatians 3:7-9). It included the murderers of Christ. "But you denied the Holy One, and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; And killed the prince of life, whom God has raised from the dead: whereof we are witnesses. You are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in your seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Unto you first, God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities" (Acts 3:14-15; Acts 3:25-26).

V. It is to be fulfilled in the resurrection. "And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers; unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. For which hope's sake, king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews. Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" (Acts 26:6-8). "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made a high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec" (Hebrews 6:19-20).

VI. It has been attested by the Oath of God. "For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, saying, surely, blessing I will bless you, and multiplying, I will multiply you. And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For men verily swear by the greater; and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us; which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters into that within the veil: whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made a high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec" (Hebrews 6:13-20).

VII. Man's unbelief will not prevent its fulfillment. "For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar: as it is written, That you might be justified in your sayings, and might overcome when you are judged" (Romans 3:3-5). "If we believe not, yet he abides faithful: he cannot deny himself" (2 Timothy 2:13).

VIII. Man's disobedience will not always exist. "And this I say, that the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, can not disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect" (Galatians 3:17).

IX. All the conditions are to be complied with, and it is so certain that it is spoken of as already accomplished. "And the Lord said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?" (Genesis 18:17-18).

X. Abraham believed it. "Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness" (Galatians 3:6). "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded, that what he had promised, he was able also to perform. And, therefore, it was imputed to him for righteousness" (Romans 4:20-22).

XI. All Christians are required to believe it. "Now, it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him: but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead. Who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification" (Romans 4:23-25).

Thus God's promise to Abraham is (1) a universal one, (2) of Christian salvation, (3) consisting in a Gospel blessing, (4) of deliverance from sin, including even the murderers of Christ, (5) and will be finally fulfilled in the resurrection, to which (6) the oath as well as (7) the promise of God is pledged, and (8) against which man's unbelief, (9) and sinfulness will not always be opposed, but

(10) all the conditions will be complied with, and it is so clearly stated that (11) Abraham believed it, and enjoyed the righteousness that comes through faith, and (12) all men are under obligations to see in Christ the promised seed that will deliver humanity from sin. Can Scriptural demonstration go beyond this positive language?

02.11. The Promises to the Obedient

11. THE PROMISES TO THE OBEDIENT in the Old Testament teach that immortal blessedness is not, but that limited happiness and prosperity, are, the reward of goodness:

"He that dwells in the secret place of the Most high shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. You shall not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flies by day; Nor for the pestilence that walks in darkness; nor for the destruction that wastes at noonday. He shall call upon me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him and honor him. With long life will I satisfy him, and show him my salvation" (Psalms 91:1-16). "Great peace have they which love your law: and nothing shall offend them" (Psalms 119:165). "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord; and he delights in his way. Though he fall he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholds him with his hand. I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread. He is ever merciful, and lends; and his seed is blessed" (Psalms 37:23-25). "You will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you; because he trusts in you" (Isaiah 26:3). "My son, forget not my law, but let your heart keep my commandments, for length of days and long life, and peace shall they add to you. Let not mercy and truth forsake you; bind them about your neck: Write them upon the table of your heart; So shall you find favor and good understanding in the sight of God and man" (Proverbs 3:1-4). "See, I have set before you this day life and good, and death and evil; in that I command you this day to love the Lord your God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments, and his statutes, and his judgments that you may live and multiply; and the Lord your God shall bless you in the land whither you go to possess it" (Deuteronomy 30:15-16). "And it shall come to pass, if you shall hearken diligently to the voice of the Lord your God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command you this day, that the Lord your God will set you on high above all nations of the earth: And all these blessings shall come on you, and overtake you, if you shall hearken unto the voice of the Lord your God. Blessed shall you be in the city, and blessed shall you be in the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of your body, and the fruit of your ground, and the fruit of your cattle, the increase of your kine, and the flocks of your sheep. Blessed shall be your basket and your store. Blessed shall you be when you come in, and blest shall you be when you go out. The Lord shall cause your enemies that rise up against you to be smitten before your face: they shall come out against you one way, and flee before you seven ways. The Lord shall command the blessing upon you in your storehouses, and in all that you set your hand unto; and he shall bless you in the land which the Lord your God gives you. The Lord shall establish you a holy people unto himself, as he has sworn unto you, if you shall keep the commandments of the Lord your God, and walk in his ways. And all people of the earth shall see that you are called by the name of the Lord; and they shall be afraid of you. And the Lord shall make you plenteous in goods, in the fruit of your body, and in the fruit of your cattle, and in the fruit of your ground, in the land which the Lord swore unto your fathers to give you. The Lord shall open unto you his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto your land in his season, and to bless all the work of your hand: and you shall lend unto many nations, and you shall not borrow. And the Lord shall make you the head and not the tail;

and you shall be above only, and you shall not be beneath; if that you hearken unto the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you this day, to observe and to do them" (Deuteronomy 28:1-13). This was the reward, and the extent of it, of well doing. Exactly opposite were ...

02.12. The Threats to the Wicked

12. THE THREATS TO THE WICKED.

These were not endless but limited, not hereafter but here.

"Thorns and snares are in the way of the froward" (Proverbs 22:5). "A fruitful land into barrenness, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein" (Psalms 107:34). "The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace says my God, to the wicked" (Isaiah 57:20-21). "This is the portion of a wicked man with God, and the heritage of the oppressors, which they shall receive of the Almighty. If his children be multiplied, it is for the sword; and his off-spring shall not be satisfied with bread. Those that remain of him shall be buried in death: and his widows shall not weep. Though he heap up silver as the dust, and prepare raiment as the clay; he may prepare it, but the just shall put it on, and the innocent shall divide the silver. He builds his house as a moth, and as a booth that the keeper makes. The rich man shall lie down, but he shall not be gathered; he opens his eyes, and he is not. Terrors take hold on him as waters, a tempest steals him away in the night. The east wind carries him away, and he departs: and as a storm hurls him out of his place. For God shall cast upon him, and not spare: he would fain flee out of his hand. Men shall clap their hands at him and, shall hiss him out of his place" (Job 27:13-23). To attempt to quote all the passages that teach this doctrine would be to cite every precept and every declaration in the Old Testament. All that refers to Adam, Cain, the Antediluvians, Sodom and Gomorrah, Lot's Wife, Pharaoh, the Egyptians, Ahab, Solomon, Jeroboam, Absalom, Amnon, David, the Israelites, teaches that all are visited by limited, temporal punishments and pains, and the doctrine is continually taught, that after the wrath of God has run its full career in pain and penalty to the transgressor, the Divine Mercy remains unspent and inexhaustible.

02.13. Gathered to Their Fathers

13. GATHERED TO THEIR FATHERS. The reader of the Old Testament is frequently met by passages that demonstrate that the ancient worthies who spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, cherished this sublime faith. Is not this the teaching of such passages as these:

"Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people." "And these are the years of the life of Ishmael, a hundred and thirty and seven years: and he gave up the Ghost and died, and was gathered to his people." "And Isaac gave up the ghost, and died, and was gathered unto his people, being old and full of days." "And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people." (Genesis 25:8; Genesis 25:17; Genesis 35:29; Genesis 49:33).

They all went to "one place" to meet the "great majority," and there is no hint that any part of them went to any endless prison house. Indeed, the testimony is that at death all go to God.

02.14. The Spirit Returns to God

14. THE SPIRIT RETURNS TO GOD.

Solomon declared, when describing the dissolution of the body:

"Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it" (Ecclesiastes 12:7).

He depicts the destiny of every member of the body: the "keepers of the house," the hands; the "strong men," the legs; "the lookers out at the windows," the eyes; "the silver cord," the spinal marrow; "the golden bowl," the skull; "the pitcher at the fountain, the wheel at the cistern," the heart; all these become dust (Ecclesiastes 12:3-6). Would he not tell us the fate of the soul? He does, it "returns to God who gave it." There, in the hands of its maker and owner, it cannot fail to be cared for.

02.15. The Fate of Amnon

15. THE FATE OF AMNON.

Incidental passages frequently occur in the Old Testament showing that the Bible worthies entertained the idea that the next state of existence is an improved one, even to those who die in sin. We find an instance where it reads:

"And the soul of King David longed to go forth unto Absalom, for he was comforted concerning Amnon seeing he was dead" (2 Samuel 13:39). The king of Israel loved his two sons, but when the wicked of them died, he felt at ease concerning him, was even comforted, while he still mourned over the living one. Why? Because he believed in his heart that he had gone where "the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest" (Job 3:17). Would David have been comforted concerning his son who committed a horrible and nameless crime, and died drunk, had he believed that he had gone to a world of endless torment? No, he was comforted because he believed he had bettered his condition. This harmonizes with what his son Solomon subsequently said:

"So I returned, and considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun: and behold the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors there was power; but they had no comforter. Wherefore I praised the dead which are already dead, more than the living which are yet alive" (Ecclesiastes 4:1-2). When the wise seer uttered these words millions of sinners had died - the ante-diluvians, the people of the wicked cities, and multitudes besides, and yet he could say of the dead - all the dead - they are more to be praised, that is, better off, than the living. He therefore agreed with his father David that those who leave this world improve their condition. He teaches that those who lay aside what Paul calls "the body of this death," our earthly nature, are in improved relations. They cannot, therefore, be in a state of ceaseless torment, but must be in a world where Divine disciplines are being administered, for the purpose of working out the redemption of the sinner. The dead are not more to be praised than the living unless they are better, purer, holier; and no father, loving a son, could be comforted because he was dead, unless he believed in his heart of hearts that he was better, happier, and so better off than when living. David mourned over wicked Absalom, living, but was reconciled, "COMFORTED," as he thought of wicked Amnon, dead. The dead son must have been better off than the living son.

Let us glance at a few of the declarations in the Old Testament, confessedly less numerous and less explicit than those of the New Testament, and yet developing the increasing purpose that grows and augments from the beginning to the end of Revelation.

02.16. Knowledge of God Gives Peace

16. KNOWLEDGE OF GOD GIVES PEACE.

Job says: "Acquaint yourself with God and be at peace" (Job 22:21). If he were the being the creeds describe, the better we knew him the more we would be tormented. Ignorance of his character would be the soul's bliss. But the better he is known the more peace the soul enjoys. Hence he must be incapable of torturing the soul forever, or punishing it more than its good demands. It is ignorance of God that makes the soul unhappy, while knowledge of him renders the soul peaceful. Hence it follows that God has no attribute that would harm or injure. To know his purposes, to understand his disposition, to see him as he is, gives joy.

02.17. God's Anger is Limited

17. GOD'S ANGER IS LIMITED. A great number of passages of Scripture speak of what the Bible calls God's anger or wrath - meaning thereby his disapprobation and punishment of sin - as limited, brief and destined to end, frequently contrasting it with his mercy, which, it is said, will never end, and declaring that the soul of man could not exist as the victim of endless wrath.

God's delight is in mercy, and he displays anger towards men for their benefit, and when the purpose of the anger is accomplished, mercy is resumed.

"He retains not his anger forever because he delights in mercy" (Micah 7:18). "The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and plenteous in mercy. He will not always chide; neither will he keep his anger forever" (Psalms 103:8-9). "For his anger endures but a moment: in his favor is life; weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning" (Psalms 30:5). "In a little wrath I hid my face from you for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on you, says the Lord, your Redeemer" (Isaiah 54:8).

One reason why God will not "be angry forever" is, because no soul could endure the storm of God's endless wrath. The benevolence of God is demonstrated in the statute of limitations, by which when pain becomes unendurable, the victim dies. Endless torture no soul could endure.

"For I will not contend forever, neither will I be always wroth: for the spirit would fail before me and the soul which I have made" (Isaiah 57:16). Hence, "The Lord will not cast off forever; but, though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies, for he does not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men" (Lamentations 3:31-33).

God could not be angry with any soul forever, because it would be infinite folly in him to do so. The wise man says:

"Anger rests in the bosom of fools!" (Ecclesiastes 7:9). Can it rest forever in the great heart of infinite wisdom? Preposterous thought! Anger is contrary to God's nature, but mercy is his delight. Hence ...

02.18. God's Mercy is Unlimited

18. GOD'S MERCY IS UNLIMITED.

"O, give thanks unto the Lord for he is good; for his mercy endures forever" (Psalms 107:1). In Psalms 136:1-26, this language, "his mercy endures forever" occurs twenty times. There never can come a moment, in the endless existence of the sinner, when he cannot resort to the fountain of infinite mercy, and find a full supply of Divine grace. It is for all souls, and the fountain will ever be accessible.

02.19. The Testimony of the Prophets

19. THE TESTIMONY OF THE PROPHETS. The prophets often "built better than they knew," and uttered truths which later generations comprehended better than they did themselves. Especially is this true of some of their utterances concerning man's final destiny. Even in the times of our Savior, the prophets were not understood even by those who professed to follow them. For instance, the Sadducees did not accept the doctrine of the resurrection, while they professed to follow Moses, and yet Jesus told them that God taught the resurrection to Moses when he said:

"I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, for God is not the God of the dead but of the living" (Luke 20:37-38). So the Apostle declares:

"And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began" (Acts 3:20-21).

We have shown that Moses prophesied the destruction of man's passions and sins, when he announced the death of the serpent. And we must accept the declaration of the Apostle that all the holy prophets, ever since the beginning of the world, foresaw and foretold "the restitution of all things." Let us consult a few of the prophetic declarations. The sweet singer of Israel often utters the great truth on which he built the hopes he cherished.

02.20. Universal Obedience

20. UNIVERSAL OBEDIENCE.

"He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass; as showers that water the earth. In his days shall the righteous flourish: and abundance of peace so long as the moon endures. He shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth" (Psalms 72:6-8). "All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord; and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before you" (Psalms 22:27). "All nations whom you have made shall come and worship before you, O Lord; and shall glorify your name" (Psalms 86:9). This is David's method of expressing universal obedience.

02.21. Man's Infirmary Doubts God's Goodness

21. MAN'S INFIRMITY DOUBTS GOD'S GOODNESS.

He regards doubt of God's universal and unending goodness as an infirmity of man, founded on no reality in God's purpose or disposition. Hence he declares:

"Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favorable no more? Is his mercy clean gone forever? does his promise fail for evermore? Has God forgotten to be gracious? has he in anger shut up his tender mercies? Selah. And I said, This is my infirmity: but I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High" (Psalms 77:7-10). For he says, "The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. He will not always chide: neither will he keep his anger forever" (Psalms 103:8-9). "For his anger endures but a moment; in his favor is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning" (Psalms 30:5). "If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquities with stripes, nevertheless my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail" (Psalms 89:30-33).

02.22. Universal Dominion

22. UNIVERSAL DOMINION.

"The Lord is gracious and full of compassion; slow to anger and of great mercy. The Lord is good to all and his tender mercies are over all his works" (Psalms 145:8-9). "All nations whom you have made shall come and worship before you, O Lord, and shall glorify your name" (Psalms 86:9). "O you that hears prayer, unto you shall all flesh come" (Psalms 65:2). "All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn unto the Lord; and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before you" (Psalms 22:27).

See also his faith in the welfare of his wicked son Amnon as expressed heretofore. We might here rehearse his triumphant exaltations concerning the brevity of God's anger, and the endless duration of his mercy, elsewhere found in the Psalms. He evidently looked forward to the expiration of God's anger, and the triumph of Divine mercy and grace in all souls.

02.23. The Prophet Isaiah

23. THE PROPHET ISIAH uttered some of the most comprehensive and glorious of all the statements of this doctrine ever framed by human lips or pen.

"He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces" (Isaiah 25:8).

If we have any doubt whether this teaches universal deliverance from death and sorrow, in other words, whether the prophet inculcates universal life, and happiness, we have but to turn to 1 Corinthians 15:1-58, where Paul quotes it, and applies it to the final resurrection, so that if Paul has not made a mistake, Isaiah, in this language teaches the restitution of all things to God.

02.24. God's Word Conquers

24. GOD'S WORD CONQUERS.

"Look unto me and be you saved, all the ends of the earth, for I am God, and there is none else. I have sworn by myself; the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear, surely shall say: In the Lord have I righteousness and strength" (Isaiah 45:22-24).

Here is universal worship and service.

"He, (Christ) shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied" (Isaiah 53:11). As he died to redeem all souls, and is satisfied with the result, it follows that the purpose of his mission was accomplished. The triumph of God's grace is thus described:

"As the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, and returns not thither, but waters the earth and makes it bring forth and bud that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes forth out of my mouth, it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" (Isaiah 55:10-11). The Divine word is irresistible, and it has gone forth to compel every soul to confess righteousness and strength in the Lord. This certainly was a prophetic anticipation of the universal reign of Christ. The prophet must have been inspired by the spirit of this faith when he inquired: "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget you" (Isaiah 49:15).

God will never forget a child of his or cease to care for it, or neglect it, and can only fail to restore it to himself from lack of means, a lack we cannot impute to one whose wisdom and power are infinite.

02.25. Jeremiah

25. JEREMIAH foresaw the grand result when he declared:

"Behold, the days come, says the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they broke, although I was a husband unto them, says the Lord. But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, says the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord, for they shall all know me from the least of them unto the greatest of them, says the Lord, for I will forgive their sin and I will remember their iniquity no more" (Jeremiah 31:31-34).

It will at once be perceived that this language is uttered of the Jews, but it should be remembered that the Jews cannot be saved till after the Gentiles are redeemed.

"For I would not, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own conceits, that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved" (Romans 11:25-26). This is the substance of his declaration found in Lamentations 3:31-32. Thus even the "weeping prophet" saw the bow of promise in the sky, beheld "the rainbow round about the throne!"

02.26. Hosea

26. HOSEA agrees with his brethren, the prophets.

"I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be your plagues: O grave, I will be your destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes" (Hosea 13:14).

We are not left in doubt as to the meaning of this language for Paul quotes it in 1 Corinthians 15:1-58 and declares that it denotes the anastasis, or ascension of all humanity to a condition of holiness and happiness. Even Hosea foresaw the destruction of hell, and the delivery of its inhabitants at the final resurrection.

02.27. Micah

27. MICAH.

"Who is a God like unto you, that pardons iniquity, and passes by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retains not his anger forever because he delights in mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us. He will subdue our iniquities, and you will cast all their sins into the depth of the sea. You will perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which you have sworn unto our fathers from the days of old" (Micah 7:18-20). This reference to the promise to Abraham, coupled with the declaration that he retains not his anger forever, harmonizes with the idea expressed by ...

02.28. Daniel

28. DANIEL.

"And there was given him dominion, and glory and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed" (Daniel 7:14).

Thus, whatever may be the extent of sin, or its duration, even those who had not seen the fullness of the Gospel as revealed by him "who brought life and immortality to light," were able to agree with ...

02.29. The "Wise Woman"

29. THE "WISE WOMAN," who told King David:

"For we must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground which cannot be gathered up again, neither does God respect any person, yet does he devise means, that his banished be not expelled from him" (2 Samuel 14:14). The Prophet Malachi comprehended this when he called Jesus ...

02.30. A Refiner

30. A REFINER.

"And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver" (Malachi 3:3). The silver refiner kindles the fire beneath his crucible that he may purge the dross away from the precious metal, and when he can see his perfect image reflected in the molten mass, his task is done. So Jesus will pursue his great work till the dross of sin shall be purged from all hearts, and every soul shall "resemble the Son as the Son resembles the Father." In thus designating Jesus as the Refiner, the prophet foretold the Divine event to which the whole creation moves, when "O'er every foe victorious, He on his throne shall rest, From age to age more glorious All blessing and all blest. The tide of time shall never His covenant remove. His name shall stand forever, That name to us is Love."

Thus the end of the elder dispensation harmonizes with its beginning, when the universe was finished, and all that God had made was pronounced very good.

"And God saw everything that he had made and behold, it was very good" (Genesis 1:31).

We have thus briefly denoted the more prominent considerations in behalf of our blessed faith that are recorded in the Old Testament. It was not to be expected that the dim twilight of Revelation would be radiant with the glory that bursts from the cross. Having beheld the dawning of the truth, let us turn with delight to the glory that streams from the Sun of Righteousness. In the Gospel of Jesus Christ we shall find the truth so plainly revealed that "he who runs may read," and "the wayfaring man need not err," as he consults the declarations of him "who spoke as man never spoke," and the words of his disciples who repeated the blessed truths they had heard him utter. The great truth of universal redemption is taken for granted, or expressed on nearly every page.

02.31. The Name Jesus

31. THE NAME JESUS.

Before the birth of Jesus the Angel of the Lord comprehended the grand result when he said to Joseph, "You shall call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21).

He is to save his people. Who are his people? Sinners, for they are to be saved from their sins. How many sinners will he reach and redeem?

"Ask of me, and I shall give you the heathen for your inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession" (Psalms 2:8). "The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into his hands" (John 3:35). In one sense, in the sense employed in this passage, the people of Christ are sinners, and all sinners are his people, and as "no man lives and sins not," the expression "his people" denotes all men. The apostle illustrates the thought when he says:

"God has concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy on all" (Romans 11:32). The heavenly messenger made his name, Jesus, (one who saves,) an epitome of his character and mission. He is entitled to be called Jesus, because he will deliver his people, sinners, all men from transgression and sin.

02.32. The Word Gospel

32. THE WORD GOSPEL. The word Gospel, (Anglo Saxon, "good spell,") signifies good news, glad tidings. Nothing so deserves this description as the doctrine that announces the deliverance of universal humanity from sin and sorrow; and this Gospel is to all.

"Behold I bring you good tidings (the Gospel) of great joy, which shall be to all people" (Luke 2:10).

It is a glad announcement to all souls, because it teaches all that sin, error, suffering, and evil shall be destroyed. No other Christian doctrine so deserves the name Gospel, and this blessed assurance is fully entitled to it.

02.33. The First Christmas Anthem

33. THE FIRST CHRISTMAS ANTHEM. This was the burden of the first Christmas song, on the plains of Bethlehem, on the birth-night of the Savior. The messenger from the skies said to the shepherds:

"Fear not, for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:10-11). And the heavenly choir repeated the declaration in angelic chorus:

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men" (Luke 2:14). The glad tidings of joy are ultimately to reach all people, Christ's people, sinners. To say that one soul will be omitted from the saving influence of his grace and truth, is to charge the angels with falsehood, for then the glad tidings would not be to all people. The aged Simeon caught a glimpse of the truth when, taking the infant Jesus in his arms, he said:

"Lord, now let you your servant depart in peace, according to your word: For mine eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared before the face of all people; A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel" (Luke 2:29-32).

02.34. John the Baptist

34. JOHN THE BAPTIST.

John the Baptist differed very much from modern Baptists in the style and substance of his preaching. In announcing the coming of one, after him, whose shoe latchet he was not worthy to loosen, the forerunner and herald of the Savior cried:

"As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, the voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare you the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God" (Luke 3:4-6).

He thus affirms that the moral universe shall have no valleys, no hills, nothing crooked or perverse, but that universal salvation shall result from the laws of Christ. "All flesh shall see the salvation of God." He uttered the same great truth, when, seeing Jesus approach, he said:

"Behold the Lamb of God which takes away the sins of the world" (John 1:29). Not the sin of a few, or even of many, not of a part only, but of the WHOLE WORLD!

02.35. An Incident and its Lesson

35. AN INCIDENT AND ITS LESSON. In the very beginning of our Savior's ministry he came to "Nazareth where he had been brought up," and the account says (Luke 4:16-20) He read to the people in a Jewish synagogue. He read these words:

"The spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor; he has sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord" (Isaiah 61:1-2).

Here he stopped short, in the middle of a sentence, refusing to read the remainder of the prophet's language, and "closed the book, and gave it to the minister, and sat down." What was the sentence he refused to read? This:

"And the day of vengeance of our God" (Isaiah 61:2).

Why did he end thus abruptly, and decline to read what the prophet had spoken of him? Because he came to represent God as a Father and Savior, and would not utter of himself one word that would seem to contradict that great fact. Now it is admitted by all commentators that the Old Testament is silent concerning the subject of endless hell, but say some, the New Testament teaches that awful doctrine, and Jesus came to reveal to men endless torment in the immortal world. And yet when Jesus stood for almost the first time in the presence of his people, and read the prophetic declaration concerning himself, he refused to admit that he came to announce a day of vengeance, but rolled up the parchment in the middle of a verse. He would not read language that might seem to teach that he came to represent God as other than the Father and Savior of all.

02.36. Be Like God

36. BE LIKE GOD.

What is the spirit of that grandest discourse ever yet heard or uttered, the Sermon on the Mount? Be like God. He is kind to the wicked, good to the bad. Be like him.

"Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you. But love you your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again, and your reward shall be great, and you shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. Be you therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful" (Luke 6:27-28; Luke 6:35-36). "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you, that you may be the children of your Father who is in heaven, for he makes his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just, and on the unjust. For if you love them which love you, what reward have you? do not even the publicans the same? And if you salute your brethren only, what do you more than others? do not even the publicans so? Be you therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matthew 5:44-48). Could this language be employed concerning God, if he consigned the sinner to an endless hell? And if he did torment his enemies forever, should we be like him, if we loved our enemies? The fact that we are like God only when we are kind to those who injure us, demonstrates that God is the same, and as he is "without variableness, or even the shadow of turning" (James 1:17), the same yesterday to-day and forever (Hebrews 13:8), it follows that he will always manifest himself with impartial kindness towards all. The spirit of this language is in eternal hostility to the idea of endless torment, and inculcates the restitution of all souls to Him whose property they are. We must treat each other as God treats us, in order to be merciful as God is merciful. If God is not merciful to all who offend him, where is our obligation? and if we must not be unmerciful because He is not, how can He eternally punish? God forbids us to overcome evil with evil, and demands of us that we overcome evil with good.

"Be not overcome with evil, but overcome evil with good" (Romans 12:21). And yet it is said that he employs his infinite power in overcoming evil by evil to all eternity! "Recompense no man evil for evil" (Romans 12:17), is the Divine injunction, and yet God employs eternity in disobeying his own commands! We are told to bless our foes:

"If your enemy hunger feed him; if he thirst give him drink; for in so doing you shall heap coals of fire on his head" (Romans 12:20). And yet we are taught that damned souls shall cry for water in vain - a drop of water - to all eternity. Thus God is represented as not doing what he commands us to do, and doing what he commands us not to do, and that to all eternity! Let it be shown that God is unforgiving, cruel, unmerciful, will torment his enemies forever, and men will resemble him most when they are most fiendish. If God were to torment one soul forever, a Sioux Indian would be his best representative among men. But as we are most like him when kindest and tenderest, it follows that his mercy and love towards every child of his will be without limit or bound. As this Divine discourse proceeds, it culminates in ...

02.37. The Lord's Prayer

37. THE LORD'S PRAYER. And this may be called the Universalist Profession of Faith. All men are required to recognize and address God daily as their Heavenly Father; one who is always kind and merciful toward all his children. They are commanded in that prayer to pray for his kingdom to come, his kingdom of holiness and purity, and for his will to be done. We will show hereafter that his will is that all souls shall be saved (See 1 Timothy 2:1-6; Ephesians 1:9-14; John 6:38-40). It is declared that all true Christian prayer must be in faith, nothing doubting (1 Timothy 2:8), for whatever is not of faith is sin (Romans 14:23). Now, how can any one address God as a Father, and pray that his will may be done, and understand that will to include the final welfare of all souls, and offer that prayer in faith, and not be a Universalist? The doxology of the prayer is in the same vein. He who offers it understandingly, and who prays in faith, can say triumphantly, "Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory," and his "Amen," signifying, So may it be, and So shall it be, is an aspiration and a psalm, a petition and an exultation. He sees the Father's will universally triumphant, or his Amen is but an ignorantly pronounced expletive offending heaven with idle rhetoric. Unless he utters it as a triumphant ejaculation that the desire "Deliver us from evil" will at length be answered in universal redemption, his Amen has no meaning. But let us dwell a little on the one great fact in this prayer that demonstrates universal salvation: ...

02.38. The Universal Fatherhood

38. THE UNIVERSAL FATHERHOOD. The prophet Malachi asks, "Have we not all one Father?" (Malachi 2:10). If he employed this language in a restricted sense, confining it to the Jews, Christianity enlarges it. In the Lord's Prayer, above, all are under perpetual obligations to call God by the dear name that describes as no other word can, his kindly purpose towards all men, his children. Jesus declares: "One is your Father" (Matthew 23:9). Paul affirms, "There is one God and Father of all" (Ephesians 4:6), and he adds that his punishments are all administered to correct and reform those who, by sinning, deserve them.

"We have had fathers of our flesh, which corrected us and we gave them reverence. Shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of Spirits and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure, but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness" (Hebrews 12:9-10).

He illustrates his paternal love not only in sending the sunshine and the rain on the evil and the good, who are alike his children, but he punishes because he loves and for the purpose of redemption. Sin does not destroy this relation. It continues when man forgets or disregards it.

"A certain man had two sons; and the younger of them said to his father, father, give me the portion of goods that falls to me. And he divided unto them his living. And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in the land; and he began to be in want. And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his field to feed swine. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks the swine did eat; and no man gave unto him. And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before you, and am no more worthy to be called your son: make me as one of your hired servants. And he arose and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck, and kissed him. And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in your sight, and am no more worthy to be called your son. But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him: and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it, and let us eat and be merry; for this my son was dead and is alive again, he was lost and is found" (Luke 15:11-24).

God continues to be the father of the lost, remaining always the same to sinners.

"A voice was heard upon the high places, weeping and supplications of the children of Israel, for they have perverted their way, and they have forgotten their God. Return you backsliding children, and I will heal your backsliding" (Jeremiah 3:21-22).

We are to judge God's feelings towards his children by our own feelings towards our offspring.

"Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask for a fish, will he give him a serpent? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" (Matthew 7:9-11).

Make the heart of the best earthly parent the unit to be multiplied as far as the mind can go, and the quotient - differing in degree, but the same in kind, indicates Our Father. The earthly parent will do all he can for his children, but God not only will do so much, but he can do all he will. Let any earthly parent look into his own heart, and in the drop of love there he will see reflected the great heart of God, planning, devising, executing, in time and in eternity, the best possible for every child. The fact of God's paternity infinitely wise and powerful, is a guaranty of universal salvation. God created, governs, punishes, does all things as a Father. He will not permit final woe to befall any one of his vast family. He will accomplish the ultimate welfare of each and all, this we know, as truly as we know that he is "Our Father."

How the Scriptures dwell on this great fact.

"Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you that you may be the children of your father which is in heaven, for he makes his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust" (Matthew 5:44-45). That is, being the children of God, we ought to imitate him in character. God's paternal love resembles that of the good earthly parent for his children, only it is infinitely greater, and far more enduring.

"Or what man is there of you whom, if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" (Matthew 7:9-11). "But Zion said, the Lord has forsaken me, and my Lord has forgotten me. Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget you" (Isaiah 49:14-15). A parent would not cast off his child forever. Will God, whose love is infinite? The wicked are still God's children, and are punished that they may be made better.

"And you have forgotten the exhortation which spoke unto you as unto children. My son, despise not you the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when you are rebuked of him, for whom the Lord loves he chastens, and scourges every son whom he receives. If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons, for what son is he whom the father chastens not? But if you be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are you bastards and not sons. Furthermore, we have had fathers of our flesh that corrected us and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure, but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seems to be joyous, but grievous, nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness unto them that are exercised thereby" (Hebrews 12:5-11).

We act like illegitimate children until punishment reforms us, but we are not such, for what would God be, if we were really illegitimate?

God is father in three senses:

1. By creation in his image. "You have made him a little lower than the angels, and have crowned him with honor and glory" (Psalms 8:5).

2. By faith in Christ and love of God. "For you have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but you have received the Spirit of adoption whereby we cry Abba, Father" (Romans 8:15).

3. By being raised in his perfect likeness at the final resurrection, as all souls will be. "And Jesus answered and said unto them, the children of this world marry, and are given in marriage, but they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection of the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage, neither can they die any more, for they are equal unto the angels, and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection" (Luke 20:34-36).

If the sinner forgets his relation as a child of God, the Father remembers it, and though man cannot say, "Abba, Father," God says, "My son give me your heart" (Proverbs 23:26).

02.39. The Good Samaritan

39. THE GOOD SAMARITAN.

What else than this is taught in that immortal parable, the Good Samaritan?

"A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance there came down a certain priest that way, and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was, and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence and gave them to the host, and said unto him, take care of him, and whatsoever you spend more, when I come again I will repay you. Which now of these three, think you, was neighbor unto him that fell among the thieves? And he said, He that showed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, go and do you likewise" (Luke 10:30-37).

Here a man is given as an example to all time, of a divine and godlike spirit, because he was merciful and compassionate to an enemy, ministered to his necessities, and relieved his wants. Would the God who gave to man this sublime ideal, violate it in his treatment of his enemies? Is not the parable of the Good Samaritan a demonstration that the Father of men will employ all his infinite attributes in the most blessed work that men or angels, or the great God himself, can ever perform - the hallowed work of restoring and saving? Is not this story a guaranty of universal redemption?

02.40. The Gospel Leaven

40. THE GOSPEL LEAVEN. The power of leaven is irresistible. However small the quantity placed in meal it overcomes by its fermentation all opposition, and assimilates the entire mass to its own likeness. Jesus makes this beautiful figure illustrative of the irresistible influence of his Gospel in the human heart, in the moral world.

"Another parable spoke he unto them: The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened" (Matthew 13:33). "And again he said, whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God? It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened" (Luke 13:20-21). The Gospel leaven must prevail universally; it will ferment until "the whole is leavened."

02.41. The Jewish Leaven

41. THE JEWISH LEAVEN. The Sadducees taught that there is no resurrection, and the Pharisees taught endless torment after death, for a portion of mankind. Jesus warned his disciples, alike, against the doctrines of each party.

"Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees. The disciples did not understand his meaning. And they reasoned among themselves, saying, it is because we have taken no bread. Which when Jesus perceived, he said unto them, O you of little faith, why reason you among yourselves, because you have brought no bread? How is it that you do not understand that I spoke it not to you concerning bread, that you should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees? Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the DOCTRINE of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees" (Matthew 16:6-12). The Sadducees taught no resurrection, the Pharisees believed in the future happiness of a portion of mankind. Jesus told his disciples to beware of both. Only one other view is possible, the final happiness of all.

02.42. All the Lost are to be Saved

42. ALL THE LOST ARE TO BE SAVED.

All Christians admit that men are in a lost condition. While there is no such language as "finally impenitent," or "finally lost" in the Bible, the Gospel everywhere assumes that souls are lost. For the purpose of seeking and saving such, all such, Jesus came to this world.

"The Son of Man is come to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). Not a part, but all the lost. Will he succeed? This question he answers, and in the three parables, the Lost Silver, the Lost Sheep, and the Lost Prodigal, he teaches that all the lost are to be restored.

"What man of you having a hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, does not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it. Either what woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, does not light a candle and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find it. A certain man had two sons: And the younger of them said to his father, father give me the portion of goods that falls to me. And he divided unto them his living. And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. And when he came to himself, he said, how many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, father, I have sinned against heaven, and before you, and am no more worthy to be called your son: make me as one of your hired servants. And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. And the son said unto him, father, I have sinned against heaven, and in your sight, and am no more worthy to be called your son. But the father said to his servants, bring forth the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet, - for this, my son, was dead and is alive again; he was lost, AND IS FOUND" (Luke 15:4; Luke 15:8; Luke 15:11-24).

Now, had these parables been related to teach the common doctrines of the sacrificial church, they would have represented the shepherd as having found say twenty sheep, while eighty were irreclaimable; the woman would have lost, say six pieces of silver, and found but two, while four were utterly gone, and the father would have had, say four disobedient children, only one of whom returned, while three wandered in the great desert of sin irredeemable forever. But this is not the teaching of these simple yet divine stories. Their significance is not in the loss of sheep, or silver, or prodigal, nor in the value placed on them by their owners, nor in their diligence in searching. There are beautiful lessons in all this, but the emphasis is placed where the Christian world does not place it, not on the loss, or the finding of a part, but on the fact that the search was continued until all the lost were found. The word that Christians overlook, is the word UNTIL - "Until he find it," "Until she find it," the search continues for sheep and silver, and the father of the prodigal waits until he can see his son return, until he can say, "My lost son is found." These parables teach beyond all controversy that however many are lost, they are all found, that when the search is finished there are no lost. Hence the divine author of the parables says:

"All that the Father gives me shall come to me; and him that comes to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which has sent me, that of all which he has given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day" (John 6:37-39).

Christianity tolerates no final loss. All the lost are to be found by the Heavenly Seeker. When the divine task is consummated the entire race will be brought home - "no wanderer lost, a family in heaven!" The language of our Savior can have no significance, if he does not accomplish the redemption of all souls.

"I am the good shepherd and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knows me, even so know I the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd" (John 10:14-16).

02.43. Ninety and Nine (Poem)

43. Ninety and Nine.

Christians of all creeds rise to the sublime height of the salvation of all, in their best moments, as witness the universal singing of the "Ninety and Nine," a song that breathes the spirit, while it expresses the literal language of our faith, and yet is sung by Christians of every sect, everywhere.

There were ninety and nine that safely lay
In the shelter of the fold, But one was out on the hills
away, Far off from the gates of gold.

Away on the mountain wild and bare, Away from the tender Shepherd's care.

"Lord, you have here your ninety and nine: Are they not enough for you?" But the Shepherd made answer, "This one of mine Has wandered away from me; And although the way be rough and steep, I go to the desert to find my sheep." But none of the ransomed ever knew How deep were the waters crossed, Nor how dark was the night the Lord passed through Ere he found his sheep that was lost.

Out in the desert he heard its cry - Sick and helpless and ready to die.

"Lord, whence are those blood-drops all the way That mark the mountain's track?"

"They were shed for one who had gone astray Ere the Shepherd could bring him back!"

"Lord, whence are your hands so rent and torn?"

"They are pierced to-night by many a thorn."

All thro' the mountains thunder-riven, And up from the rocky steep, There arose a cry to the gates of heaven, "Rejoice! I have found my sheep!" And the angels echoed around the throne, "Rejoice, for the Lord brings back his own!"

02.44. Christ Will Accomplish His Mission

44. CHRIST WILL ACCOMPLISH HIS MISSION.

1. The object of Christ's ministry was to redeem universal humanity.

"For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). "Jesus says unto them, my meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work" (John 4:34). "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world: but that the world through him might be saved" (John 3:17). "And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world" (1 John 4:14).

2. He labors in this and in the future world to effect his purpose.

"For Christ also has once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water" (1 Peter 3:18-20). "Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead. For for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit" (1 Peter 4:5-6).

3. He has ample power to do all he attempts.

"And Jesus came and spoke unto them, saying, all power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Matthew 28:18). "As you have given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as you have given him" (John 17:2). "For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living" (Romans 14:9). "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who will change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself" (Php 3:20-21). "The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into his hand" (John 3:35).

4. He will be successful.

"The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied" (Isaiah 53:10-11). "This is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world" (John 4:42).

Jesus himself said: "It is finished" (John 19:30).

He undertakes to save all men, he labors here and thereafter to accomplish his purpose, he has power to achieve it, and is actually and absolutely "the Savior of THE WORLD," which he could not be if one soul were lost.

Hence:

1. All souls were created for Christ.
2. Having become unreconciled, he died to bring them into harmony with God.
3. He had so succeeded in establishing the requisite means that he was able to see the result accomplished.

It is a universal reconciliation, "all things are reconciled."

"For the love of Christ constrains us: because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again. Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh; yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who has reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and has given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and has committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be you reconciled to God. For he has made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin: that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Corinthians 5:14-21). "Who has delivered us from the power of darkness, and has translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: who is the image of the invisible God, the first born of every creature: for by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist, and he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell: and, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were some time alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now has he reconciled" (Colossians 1:13-21).

Therefore, 5. He will draw all men unto him, and they will obey the call, and submit to him in willing and righteous obedience.

He tasted death for every man (Hebrews 2:9), that each might become his disciple, and possess eternal life, and this he declares all men will have, as surely as he is lifted up, that is, crucified. "Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die" (John 12:31-33). "No man can come to me, except the Father which has sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, and they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that has heard, and has learned of the Father, comes unto me" (John 6:44-45). "As you have given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as you have given him" (John 17:2). "All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knows the Son, but the Father: neither knows any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him" (Matthew 11:27). "All that the Father gives me shall come to me; and him that comes to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do

mine own will but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which has sent me, that of all which he has given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which sees the Son, and believes on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day" (John 6:37-40). "All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before you. For the kingdom is the Lord's: and he is the governor among the nations" (Psalms 22:27-28). "Wherefore God also has highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name. That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Php 2:9-11). The phrase "under the earth," Kataxthonion, means infernal, and the whole description, says Bretschneider, is equivalent to all mankind. Professor Stuart says: "Things in heaven, earth and under the earth is a common periphrasis of the Hebrew and New Testament writers for the universe."

Albert Barnes says:

"The whole universe shall confess that he is Lord. This is a willing confession, to God's glory, and must therefore be of sincere worship."

"Who so offers praise glorifies me" (Psalms 50:23). This must be universal worship, as it is all to the glory of God the Father. There are no unwilling worshippers. Hence the apostle teaches that the result of Christ's mission is to render all souls righteous:

"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: (for until the law sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come. But not as the offense, so also is the free gift: for if through the offense of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, has abounded unto many. And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift; for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offenses unto justification. For if by one man's offense death reigned by one: much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.) Therefore, as by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation: even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. Moreover the law entered, that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: that as sin has reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 5:12-21).

All have sinned, and become subject to death, and the same all are to be made spiritually alive. The same "many" who were disobedient sinners are to be made righteous.

Says Dr. Macknight (Scotch Presbyterian):

"For as hoi polloi, the many, in the first part of the verse, does not mean some of mankind only, but all mankind, from first to last, who without exception are constituted through the disobedience of Adam sinners; so the many in the latter part of the verse, who are said to be constituted righteous

through the obedience of Christ, must mean all mankind, from the beginning to the end of the world, without exception."

Thus these many, i.e. all mankind, are to become actively righteous. Says Professor Stuart:

"Dikaioi, moreover, must have an active sense here, in order to make out the antithesis to hamartoloi, which clearly bears only an active sense, if the usus loquendi may decide this point; at least it does so wherever else it is employed." The "many" who died in sin, died as Adam died and are to be made alive with spiritual life, as Christ was alive - that is, all men are to resemble Christ as they have resembled Adam. This the Apostle illustrates by the figure of a pair of scales: As in Adam --- Even so in Christ all die --- shall all be made alive.

1 Corinthians 15:22

02.45. The Resurrection

45. THE RESURRECTION.

Nothing can be plainer or more positive than the Bible presentation of the Final Resurrection. It demonstrates the deliverance of universal humanity from sin and suffering. It describes a state in which evil has vanished from the moral universe. The resurrection is employed as a figure, sometimes, that is, as a national, or local, or moral awakening, and sin is said to follow it, but in all such instances the circumstances limit it, and show that it is not the final resurrection. Such a usage is the following:

"The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones, and caused me to pass by them round about; and behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry. And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O, Lord God, you know. Again he said unto me, prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O you dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus says the Lord God unto these bones, behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and you shall live: and I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live; and you shall know that I am the Lord. So I prophesied as I was commanded; and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above, but there was no breath in them. Then said he unto me, prophesy unto the wind, prophesy, Son of man, and say to the wind, thus says the Lord God; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army. Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel; behold they say our bones are dried, and our hope is lost; we are cut off for our parts. Therefore prophesy, and say unto them, thus says the Lord God; behold, oh my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And you shall know that the Lord has spoken it, and performed it, says the Lord" (Ezekiel 37:1-14). Had not the explanation in verse eleven been given, it might have been thought that this is a description of the literal resurrection, but it is seen to be a poetical statement of deliverance from the Babylonish captivity. A similar use of language is found in the following passages:

"I know your works, that you have a name that you live, and are dead" (Revelation 3:1). "And you has he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins" (Ephesians 2:1). "For this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found" (Luke 15:24). "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus" (Php 3:10-12). This is a resurrection attainable in this life. "Not

as though I had already attained, but if I might by any means attain unto the resurrection of the dead." But the following is the most striking instance:

"Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth: they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (John 5:28-29). That this is not the general resurrection is evident.

1. Because it took place then, and is not now future, "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live."
2. Because in this account all are not said to be raised, but only those who had "done good or evil." This excludes half the human race, which, dying in infancy, never has done good or evil.
3. Or if it be claimed that all are raised, then only the good and evil are assigned and the rest are left unprovided for.
4. Because this resurrection follows the judgment, whereas, in the popular view, the final resurrection precedes the judgment.
5. Because in the final resurrection no judgment follows. See 1 Corinthians 15:1-58.
6. Because the dead are not raised from hades, but from the "the graves," as in Ezekiel 37:1-28.
7. This is a moral awakening, of those dead in trespasses and sins, and therefore can only include those who have done good or evil, and not all men. It is parallel with Daniel 12:2 and Matthew 24:1-51. Daniel says:

"Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." That Daniel's is a local and figurative use of the word is evident:

1. Because it is not all men but "many" who are raised, and
2. Because this was to be at the second appearing of Christ during the lifetime of those who heard Christ speak. Daniel says:

"And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which stands for the children of your people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time" (Daniel 12:1).

Jesus says:

"There shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be" (Matthew 24:21). That the prophet and the Savior refer to the same event is evident:

"When you, therefore, shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (who so reads, let him understand,) then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains. Let him which is on the house-top not come down to take anything out of his house. This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled" (Matthew 24:15-17; Matthew 24:34).

All these descriptions refer to the moral awakening, or anastasis that Jesus caused. But the final resurrection is a different event. It is described by Jesus and Paul.

"The same day came to him the Sadducees, which say that there is no resurrection, and asked him saying, Master, Moses said, that if a man die, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother. Now there were with us seven brethren; and the first, when he had married a wife, deceased, and having no issue, left his wife unto his brother; likewise the second also, and the third, unto the seventh. And last of all the woman died also. Therefore, in the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven? For they all had her. Jesus answered and said unto them: You do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven. But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have you not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living" (Matthew 22:23-32). "And Jesus answering said unto them, the children of this world marry, and are given in marriage; but they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain the world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; neither can they die any more; for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection. Now that the dead are raised, even Moses showed at the bush, when he calls the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living; for all live unto him" (Luke 20:34-38). See also Mark 12:18-27.

1. All are raised according to this statement, "the dead are raised."
2. All the dead are immortal. "Neither can they die any more."
3. They are "angels."
4. They are like God in character.
5. All must be holy and happy forever, as all are immortal, godlike, angels. The objection sometimes offered to this view is in the phrase Luke uses, but that the other evangelists do not. "They which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world." But this phrase is a reply to the Pharisees who denied that some would be deemed worthy to rise. Jesus having said that all will rise, says they "having been accounted worthy," (kataxiothentes) are immortal and holy. The lexicographers define this word thus: Donnegan, "To deem worthy, to honor, to esteem, to desire, to sue for." Greenfield, "to account worthy, to esteem fit." Dr. George Campbell thus translates it:

"But among them who shall be honored to share in the resurrection and the other world." The "Emphatic Diaglott" defines the phrase "having been accounted worthy." The language is this:

"The children of this world marry and are given in marriage but they having been accounted worthy to obtain that world, that is, the resurrection of the dead, are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection." That he taught this doctrine is evident from verse 33. "And when the multitude heard this, they were astonished at his doctrine." What astonished them? In his audience were ...

1. Pharisees who believed in partial salvation. Had he taught that he would not have astonished them.

2. Sadducees, who denied the resurrection. Had he taught that, he would not have astonished them.

3. Heathen, who entertained views similar to those of the partialists of the present day. Had he taught endless punishment for a portion of mankind, he would not have astonished them. The only doctrine that could have astonished all these classes, was the resurrection of all souls to holiness and happiness. He taught something new and different to what all these classes received. Universal salvation is the only possible view different from the doctrines of all these. Hence Jesus warned his hearers against the old ideas.

"Then Jesus said unto them, take heed, and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees. Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees" (Matthew 16:6; Matthew 16:12).

He rejected the ideas of all and taught that the resurrection condition is one of universal holiness.

Paul's view accords perfectly with the doctrine of the Savior:

"But now is Christ risen from the dead and become the first fruit of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order; Christ the first fruits, afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then, comes the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power. For he must reign till he has put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy (that) shall be destroyed (is) death. [The words "that," and "is" are supplied by the translators. What Paul says is, "The last enemy, Death, SHALL BE DESTROYED."] For he has put all things under his feet. But when he says, all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. And so it is written, the first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural, and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither does corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible; and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, death is swallowed up in victory. O death where is your sting? O grave where is your victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be you steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as you know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 15:20-28; 1 Corinthians

15:42-58).

Here we see, 1. All mankind are included. The same all that die as Adam died will be resuscitated.

2. They are not merely to live, but are to live "in Christ." And as is the first fruit so is the harvest.

3. They are to be new creatures, and wear the image of the heavenly. If any man be in Christ he is a new creature (2 Corinthians 5:17).

4. It is a condition of "glory," "incorruptibility," "immortality."

5. It is not the resurrection of the body, "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God."

6. Death is to be destroyed.

7. All man's enemies are to be annihilated.

8. And man is to be victor through Christ over all. "And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow; of wines on the lees well refined. And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory, and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall be taken away from off all the earth; for the Lord has spoken it" (Isaiah 25:6-8).

9. That the final resurrection is to holiness, is evident from Paul's words in Acts 24:15, in which he hopes for "the resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust." It is not supposable that Paul could hope, that is, desire and expect, the resurrection of the unjust, if he believed that they would rise to endless torture. The fact that he hoped for the resurrection of the unjust proves that he regarded it as a blessing to them, even.

It is said that there is a resurrection to be attained by human effort. True, Jesus says:

"Then said he also to him that bade him, when you make a dinner or a supper, call not your friends, nor your brethren, neither your kinsmen, nor your rich neighbors; lest they also bid you again, and a recompense be made you. But when you make a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind; and you shall be blest; for they cannot recompense you; for you shall be recompensed at the resurrection of the just" (Luke 14:12-14). This is the result, not of faith, but of good works, and gives a higher measure of glory to those who are worthy of it. "In the resurrection one star differs from another." Those who deserve it, have the larger measure of joy in the resurrection.

"Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection" (Hebrews 11:35).

There are grades hereafter, all are not alike, though all are equal to, or like the angels. The anastasis, or resurrection, is not merely being, it is a rising, a moral and spiritual ascent ultimately to be experienced by all mankind, who are to be made alive in Christ, and become equal to the angels. It is "rising to a better life," in the words of Macknight, Scotch Presbyterian. This is the clear and unmistakable testimony of Jesus the Savior and Paul the Apostle. Well did this sublime consummation compel the apostle to exclaim:

"For God has concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all. O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor? Or who has first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen." (Romans 11:32-36). And let all the people say Amen.

02.46. The Nature of Punishment

46. THE NATURE OF PUNISHMENT. The office of punishment to correct and reform, as punishment is explained in the New Testament, demonstrates that it is to be followed by reformation and restoration. In Matthew 25:46, where certain wicked are sent away into "everlasting punishment," the word "everlasting" denotes - as is its usual meaning in the Bible - long but not endless duration, and the word punishment is a translation from kolasin, which means to prune. These are sent away to be pruned, that is improved; this is the exact meaning of the language. Paul conveys this idea:

"To deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus" (1 Corinthians 5:5). "We have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us and we gave them reverence; shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of Spirits and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seems to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby" (Hebrews 12:9-11).

We must therefore charge God with being unable to accomplish his purpose in the punishment he inflicts, or we must admit that his pruning, sooner or later, causes those punished to yield to God "the peaceable fruit of righteousness," by "partaking of his holiness." Hence all God's punishments must end in reformation.

02.47. The Prayer of Jesus for His Murderers

47. THE PRAYER OF JESUS FOR HIS MURDERERS.

Long before his death, Jesus commanded his disciples to forgive those who injured them. This injunction is in the Lord's Prayer, and it is also found in the following:

"Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Till seven times? Jesus says unto him, say not unto you, until seven times, but until seventy times seven" (Matthew 18:21-22). The reason is, because God places no limit on his forgiveness. If it could be shown that God ever ceases to forgive, then the obligation would not rest on man to forgive those who wrong him. But as God always forgives, man should do likewise. "Seventy times seven," four hundred and ninety times, denotes continual forgiveness. How sublimely was this illustrated on the cross:

"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). Did Jesus offer this prayer "in faith, nothing doubting?" If not it was not Christian prayer. Was his prayer answered? If not, then Jesus was mistaken, for he said, addressing the wicked Jews:

"You shall not see me henceforth, till you shall say, blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord" (Matthew 23:37-39). And certainly Peter looked beyond the guilt of the murderers of Jesus to their deliverance from sin, when he said:

"The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his Son Jesus; whom you delivered up and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go, but you killed the Prince of Life . . . You are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers; saying unto Abraham, and in your seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Unto you first, God having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities" (Acts 3:13-15; Acts 3:25-26).

Jesus prayed for the forgiveness of his murderers. He must have prayed in faith, for he condemns all other prayer. He believed that even his disciples' prayers would be answered, - and of course his own - and Peter declares that these wicked men for whom Jesus prayed, were to be delivered from their iniquities. And if this be true, certainly no human sin can fail, sooner or later, to receive the divine forgiveness.

02.48. God the Creator

48. GOD THE CREATOR.

"God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwells not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he gives to all life, and breath, and all things; and has made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: for in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, for we are also his offspring" (Acts 17:24-28).

He did not create without a good purpose.

"You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor and power; for you have created all things, and for your pleasure they are and were created" (Revelation 4:11).

He created for his pleasure, but he can only be happy in the happiness of others. He foreknew, foresaw the destiny of his children. He was good and desired their welfare, wise and planned as he pleased, powerful and will execute his plans. Therefore he has not created one soul whose welfare he has not fixed.

"The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works" (Psalms 145:9).

He created as an infinitely wise, powerful and good Father. Therefore all his children will reach a happy immortality. Let the Christian always remember that God is the Creator of souls only as he is their Father, and his faith will infallibly perceive that he is the final Savior of just as many as he is Creator.

02.49. God's Holiness

49. GOD'S HOLINESS.

"You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy" (Leviticus 19:2). "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come" (Revelation 4:8). A holy God might allow sin and sorrow as a means, but he could not allow it as an end, unless he were compelled. Such a God could not permit, as the best thing he could do, what only an infinite devil could do at his worst, perpetuate vice, and continue wickedness forever. Infinite holiness will wage a continual warfare with sin until universal holiness shall reign. To shut up sin in the prison house of hell, and keep it alive forever, is to violate God's love of holiness. How absurd to say that a holy God has affixed penalties to his law that will insure final unholiness! All men must be holy because he is holy.

02.50. God's Mercy

50. GOD'S MERCY.

"The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works" (Psalms 145:9). "His mercy endures forever" (Psalms 107:1). He is as merciful when punishing as when forgiving. "Also unto you, O Lord, belongs mercy, for you render to every man according to his works" (Psalms 62:12).

Psalms 136:1-26 employs the phrase, "mercy endures forever," twenty times. A God all mercy is not a God unjust, nor is a God all justice a God unmerciful, inasmuch as God's mercy and justice are as the two wings of the Holy Spirit, identical in object and purpose. God is merciful and just in punishing and forgiving. When the Divine Love plans it is wisdom, when it executes it is power, when it punishes it is justice, and when it forgives it is mercy. If one sinner escape his full punishment God is unjust. If one is lost he is unmerciful.

He is a just God and a Savior (Isaiah 45:21). "You were a God that forgave them, though you took vengeance of their inventions." (Psalms 99:8). The meaning of this verse is, he punished first and then forgave. This he must do toward each soul. But if he torments one soul forever, where is his mercy? The worst a depraved devil could do would be to torture an enemy forever. Can infinite benevolence do no better than the worst malevolence would do? His infinite mercy demonstrates the final salvation of every child of his.

02.51. God's Justice

51. GOD'S JUSTICE.

"A God of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is he" (Deuteronomy 32:4). "A just God and savior" (Isaiah 45:21). "Who will render to every man according to his deeds" (Romans 2:6).

God will not judge for unbelief but for "deeds." Hence, as each has done good and evil, each is to be, at the same time, forever happy and forever wretched, or all rewards and punishments must be temporal. Justice requires obedience. Justice demands that every mortal being should receive the full measure of his desert. If all deserve endless punishment, all must be forever miserable, or God will work eternal injustice on those who escape the penalty, and as no soul will ever be able to suffer endless torment, so no soul will ever be justly punished. If endless torment be the just penalty of God's law, justice can never be administered to any one soul, inasmuch as no soul can ever experience the penalty in its fullness.

"O man, what does the Lord require of you but to deal justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?" (Micah 6:8). Will he require men to do justly, and then compel them forever to deal unjustly? Could he love and demand justice, and issue a just law, and then affix a penalty that would insure its defeat, and perpetuate injustice?

"God Almighty, just and true are your ways, you King of saints" (Revelation 15:3). "Justice and judgment are the habitation of your throne" (Psalms 89:14). The law of God and the object of justice is to convert men.

"The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul" (Psalms 19:7). "Love is the fulfilling of the law" (Romans 13:10). "For verily, I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled" (Matthew 5:18). "Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned" (1 Timothy 1:5). "Jesus said unto him, you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment, and the second is like unto it, you shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets" (Matthew 22:36-40).

All men are to receive strictly according to their works. If it is just to punish sinners forever, then all souls must be damned. And as all are to be dealt justly by, it follows, if any are to be saved, that endless punishment cannot be the just due of any one. As all have performed both good and evil deeds, all have merited both endless happiness and endless torment. Can men then accuse God of so stultifying himself as to make his law a failure by annexing a penalty that shall forever prevent its fulfillment? But justice is satisfied here, without an infinite penalty. "Comfort you, comfort you my people, says your God. Speak you comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she has received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins" (Isaiah 40:1-2).

Here the law was satisfied with a temporal penalty, therefore it does not require an endless one. Hence we are taught that God fully punishes the sinner, and then forgives his sins.

"You were a God that forgave them, though you took vengeance of their inventions" (Psalms 99:8). That is, justly punished and then mercifully forgave. Justice can only be satisfied with universal obedience to God's law. Therefore it cannot demand the infliction of endless torment but must forever insist on obedience, and forever labor to secure it.

Justice can only be satisfied when all men do justly. It requires all men to love God, and cannot therefore be satisfied with anything less than universal obedience. Endless punishment would defeat the demands of justice, and would be unjust, and is therefore impossible. Justice is identical with mercy and demands the same. The divine law will always be binding on all moral beings, therefore, God's attribute of justice can only result in universal holiness, so that the fact that God is just is a guaranty that the infamous injustice of endless sin and woe can never be perpetrated, but that his just and perfect law will be fulfilled in the conversion of the souls of all mankind. A just finite being secures the prevalence of justice far as he has power. A just infinite being will not fail to secure universal justice, for he possesses not only the disposition, but the means requisite to that great end.

02.52. God's Omniscience

52. GOD'S OMNISCIENCE.

"O Lord, how manifold are your works, in wisdom have you made them all" (Psalms 104:24). "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world" (Acts 15:18). "Great is our Lord and of great power; his understanding is infinite" (Psalms 147:5). "He is perfect in knowledge" (Job 36:4). "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure" (Isaiah 46:10). "For you, even you, only, know the heart of all the children of men" (1 Kings 8:39). "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight; but all things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do" (Hebrews 4:13). "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good" (Proverbs 15:3). "You understand my thought afar off, and are acquainted with all my ways. There is not a word in my tongue but lo! O Lord, you know it altogether" (Psalms 139:2-4).

God foresaw every event and could have prevented any. Knowing the final result, with ability to prevent he must have intended it. Therefore he designed the endless torment of some or the happiness of all. Everything will be as he wishes. He desires universal happiness, and is wise enough to accomplish it. Man's freedom of will and all other impediments were foreseen and provided for.

"Did he o'erlook the least of his concerns, Since from the least the greatest oft originates, Then unforeseen contingence might alarm him, And disturb the calm and equal course Of his affairs."

Nothing can surprise him or long prevent the operations of his perfect wisdom. To say that a father foresaw that a child, if created, would suffer forever, is to say that he would never create such a child. When we say he is all omniscient Father, we demonstrate his care and love, and final protection and grace to all his children. He could not create an immortal being of whose salvation he was not absolutely sure.

02.53. God's Omnipotence

53. GOD'S OMNIPOTENCE.

If it were possible for him to be infinitely good, as he is, to desire the salvation of all, as he does, and infinitely wise to plan what he desires, as he is, he might fail for lack of infinite power to execute his desires and designs. But he is almighty to execute.

"And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigns" (Revelation 19:6-7).

He will do what he can, being love, and he can do what he will, being omnipotent, and being omniscient, he can devise the requisite means to accomplish all he wishes. His love desires, his wisdom plans, and his power accomplishes the salvation of all. If he does not desire universal happiness he is not infinitely good, if he cannot plan he lacks wisdom, and if unable to execute he lacks power. But he desires that result, plans to accomplish it, and executes all plans. What shall hinder them? Nothing.

"He does according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth and none can stay his hand or say unto him, What are you doing?" (Daniel 4:35). "There are many devices in a man's heart, nevertheless, the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand" (Proverbs 19:21). "But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desires, even that he does" (Job 23:13). "Who works all things after the counsel of his own will" (Ephesians 1:11).

Praise, everlasting praise be paid To him who earth's foundations laid:

Praise to the God whose strong decrees, Sway the creation as he please.

02.54. God's Love

54. GOD'S LOVE.

"Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God: and everyone that loves is born of God, and knows God. And we have known and believed the love that God has to us. God is love; and he that dwells in love, dwells in God, and God in him" (1 John 4:7; 1 John 4:16). "Love works no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law" (Romans 13:10).

Good will is the divine nature and essence. Whatever God does is always directed by what he is. Such a God will do the best he can by each of his creatures. But endless torment would be the worst he could do. Is the best a God of Love can do no better than the worst he can do? Can a God of Love do that which does not benefit himself, angels, men nor devils, which will defeat his benevolent purpose, render heaven an exile to millions, who miss their loved ones, and fill hell with agony? No. His "love works no ill." Therefore he will always be kind to the unthankful and evil, will punish to reform and bless.

"For I am the Lord, I change not" (Malachi 3:6). "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (James 1:17).

Then he will always love his enemies; will always seek their good, for this he does and always has done.

"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commends his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:6-8). "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved" (John 3:16-17). "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:9-10).

He loves sinners, and will do the best he can for them. God is Love. This is the passion that he ever manifests towards his children. It will never cease in the bosom of the Father.

"They sin who tell us love can die; With life all other passions fly.

All others are but vanity Its holy flame forever burns. From heaven it came to heaven returns."

Hence the Apostle says:

"If a man say, I love God, and hates his brother he is a liar" (1 John 4:20). So if a man says God is love, and will hate and curse his child, he is a liar. He can only ordain or allow, what is for the final good of his children. Even his punishments will result in their improvement. "Our God is a

consuming fire" (Hebrews 12:29). But the fire is love, and will only consume the enemies of his children; for "Love works no ill" (Romans 13:10). And God so loved the world that he sent his Son to die for it (John 3:16).

"We have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the World" (1 John 4:14). So that the believing Christians can say:

"For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the Love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:38-39).

God created, governs, judges, punishes, and does all things as a Father, all-wise, almighty, all-merciful. All that the best earthly father would do for his children, God can do for his offspring. Good will, kindness, the best he can do with infinite might and wisdom, God will do for every child - for all mankind. The best thing that infinite love, aided by omnipotence and omniscience can accomplish - the only thing these divine attributes will accomplish, is universal happiness.

02.55. God's Attributes Unlimited

55. GOD'S ATTRIBUTES UNLIMITED. The Psalmist reprehends a practice prevalent both in his day and now of "limiting the holy One or Israel" (Psalms 78:41), of placing boundaries to the abilities of the divine attributes. Infinite, they are without limitation, and it is a sort of profanity to adopt any conclusions that place bounds to them, and yet many Christians represent God as like the foolish man:

"For which of you, intending to build a tower, sits not down first, and counts the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, saying, this man began to build, and was not able to finish" (Luke 14:28-30).

02.56. God's Power Unlimited

56. GOD'S POWER UNLIMITED.

"He does according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, what are you doing?" (Daniel 4:35). "For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, and returns not thither, but waters the earth, and makes it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" (Isaiah 55:10-11). "Who works all things after the counsel of his own will" (Ephesians 1:11). "The Lord God omnipotent reigns" (Revelation 19:6).

Then nothing can hinder his power from executing whatever he wishes to accomplish. And yet how often it is said that the weakest human being who ever lived, is endowed with a will so strong that if he please to exercise it, God cannot accomplish a plan between which and himself that stubborn will shall rise, though it is a plan which he has pledged his sacred word, and sent his only son to live and die to accomplish! God has commanded all souls to obey him; has declared that all shall obey him; but we are told that if we help him he will succeed, but if we decline to do so, we can defeat him - can throw the divine purpose from the track, and though God's omnipotence exert itself to the utmost, it shall fail utterly of its purpose. Is not this limiting that attribute of Deity on which the Divine character rests?

02.57. God's Wisdom Unlimited

57. GOD'S WISDOM UNLIMITED.

"His understanding is infinite" (Psalms 147:5). "Declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure" (Isaiah 46:10). "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world" (Acts 15:18). To claim that God desires the final welfare of all men, and that his wisdom has devised the best plan possible to infinite wisdom, but that man's rebellion has not been foreseen, or, if foreseen, not amply provided for, presents the same disastrous result. What would be said of a mechanic who should construct a sewing machine which, on trial, would not sew? On examination it is found that a little wheel or spring has been inserted that utterly prevents the machine from doing what its maker declares it was constructed to do! Would not such a machinist convict himself of folly? To say that God has created men to serve him, and has conferred upon them an agency that prevents them from serving him - that he has not wisdom enough to overcome the agency he has given them, is to limit God's wisdom. To say that man's agency is not abundantly provided for in the plans of God, and that all souls will not be willing to obey him in the day of his power, is to limit the Holy One of Israel. The divine perfections are equally impeached if we suppose that God will do all he wishes, but that he does not desire that all souls shall enjoy him; that his wisdom and power will accomplish all he pleases, but the final triumph of evil in a portion of his universe is a part of the divine plan. This is Calvinism. It plumes itself on a strong and wise God, but it builds his wisdom and power on the ruins of his goodness, just as in other systems of error his goodness stands on the ruins of his wisdom and power.

02.58. God's Love Unlimited

58. GOD'S LOVE UNLIMITED.

He desires to save all.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). "But God commends his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, has quickened us together with Christ, (by grace you are saved)" (Ephesians 2:4-5). "The Lord is good to all and his tender mercies are over all his works" (Psalms 145:9).

It matters not which view we take. No theory of the loss of a single soul can be adopted that does not drag to ruin one or more of the attributes of God. Does he not desire the welfare of that soul? Then he is deficient in goodness. Can he not plan its welfare? Then he is not infinitely wise. Can he not execute the plan he desires? His power is limited. To be infinite in all his attributes he must be so good as to desire, so wise as to plan, and so powerful as to execute the good of all. The God of Calvinism is strong but bad; the God of Arminianism is good but weak. The Christian God has the faults of neither and the merits of both.

If, therefore, we say that God will not and cannot, or can but will not, or will but cannot, save every human soul, we limit him in some direction, but if he will and can, then the result contemplated by the Universalist faith must be accomplished.

02.59. God's Will, Pleasure, Purpose, Promise ...

59. GOD'S WILL, PLEASURE, PURPOSE, PROMISE, AND OATH.

It is the will of God to save all souls.

"I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Timothy 2:1-6). "All that the Father gives me shall come to me; and him that comes to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which has sent me, that of all which he has given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which sees the Son, and believes on him, may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day" (John 6:37-40). This is not a will of desire merely, but of purpose, such being the meaning of the word *thelo*, as the following passages show:

"For as the Father raises up the dead and quickens them, even so the Son quickens whom he will" (John 5:21). "And Jesus put forth his hand and touched him, saying, I will; be you clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed" (Matthew 8:3). "The same day there came certain of the Pharisees saying unto him, get you out, and depart hence; for Herod will kill you" (Luke 13:31). "We will not have this man to reign over us" (Luke 19:14). A good being, a Father, could have no other will than the welfare of his children. His will is finally to be accomplished.

"But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desires, even that he does" (Job 23:13). "There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand" (Proverbs 19:21). "He does according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him what are you doing?" (Daniel 4:35). "Your people shall be willing in the day of your power" (Psalms 110:3). "Your will be done" (Matthew 6:10).

It is God's pleasure that all shall be redeemed from sin and error.

"For you have created all things, and for your pleasure they are and were created" (Revelation 4:11). "As I live says the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked" (Ezekiel 18:23; Ezekiel 18:32). "Having made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he has purposed in himself, that in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in him" (Ephesians 1:9-10).

God's pleasure will be performed.

"I will do all my pleasure" (Isaiah 46:10). "So shall my word be that goes forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" (Isaiah 55:11). "The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his (Christ's) hands" (Isaiah 53:10).

It is God's purpose to save all.

"Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he has purposed in himself; that in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who works all things after the counsel of his own will; that we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ: in whom you also trusted after that you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that you believed, you were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory" (Ephesians 1:9-14). The phrase, "all things," here employed, denotes "the universe," according to Professor Stuart, and Archbishop Newcome says the phrase means "all intelligent beings." God, then, purposes to unite in one, all intelligent beings, that is "the whole purchased possession." God's purpose will be executed.

"The Lord of Hosts has sworn, saying, surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed so shall it stand - for the Lord of hosts has purposed, and who shall disannul it? And his hand is stretched out and who shall turn it back?" (Isaiah 14:24-27). "I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it" (Isaiah 46:11). "Who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began" (2 Timothy 1:9).

If God had no purpose he would not be God. If a bad purpose he would not be a father. He had a good purpose. It embraces the moral universe. It will be fulfilled in the holiness and happiness of all mankind. It is sometimes said that the Divine will is defeated.

"O, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you that killed the prophets, and stoned them which are sent unto you; how often would I have gathered your children together, even as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not! Behold your house is left unto you desolate" (Matthew 23:37-38). But such critics do not read the next verse:

"For I say unto you, you shall not see me henceforth, till you shall say, Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord."

It was a postponement, but not a defeat, of the will of Christ. Thus God's Will, Purpose and Pleasure are all invested in the work of universal redemption, and his will, purpose and pleasure will be accomplished, for they will remain eternally the same, inasmuch as he is "without variableness or shadow of turning" (James 1:17). God wills, and Christ wills universal salvation, the people shall be willing, and God's will shall be done.

He has pledged his sacred promise to render all his offspring holy and happy. In the beginning he announced the temporal duration of sin, and the death of evil. "And I will put enmity between you (the serpent) and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; it shall bruise your head and

you shall bruise his heel" (Genesis 3:15).

What is the serpent or man tempter?

"Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed" (James 1:14).

Satan and his works are the lusts of the flesh, and are to be destroyed.

"For as much, then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil: and deliver them, who though fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Hebrews 2:14-15). "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (1 John 3:8). This promise he renewed to the patriarchs and confirmed to the apostles.

"In you shall all families of the earth be blessed" (Genesis 12:3). "In your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (Genesis 22:18). "I will perform my oath which I swore unto Abraham your father, and I will make your seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and I will give unto your seed all these countries; and in your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (Genesis 26:3-4). "And in you, and in your seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed" (Genesis 28:14). "You are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, and in your seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Unto you first, God, having raised up his Son, Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities" (Acts 3:25-26). "And the Scripture foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, in you shall all nations be blessed" (Galatians 3:8). "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He says not, and to seeds as of many; but, as of one, and to your seed, which is Christ" (Galatians 3:16).

All the nations, families and kindreds of the earth are to be blessed with a gospel blessing, to consist in being turned away from iniquity, and the Universalist can plead the promise of God for his faith. "That anchor holds."

He will fulfill his promise.

"God is not a man that he should lie, neither the son of man that he should repent. Has he said and shall he not do it? or has he spoken and shall he not make it good?" (Numbers 23:19). "For what if some did not believe? Shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid: yea, let God be true but every man a liar" (Romans 3:3-4). "For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him amen" (2 Corinthians 1:20).

God has confirmed his promise by an oath. He has sworn to redeem all mankind from sin and error.

"I have sworn by myself; the word has gone out of my mouth and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow and every tongue shall swear, surely shall say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength" (Isaiah 45:23-24). "For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie we might have a strong consolation, who have fled

for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made a high priest forever after the order of Melchisedek" (Hebrews 6:16-20).

Thus we have GOD'S AFFIDAVIT to plead in evidence of our faith.

Jesus is the appointed means to accomplish this end.

"My meat is to do the will of him that sent me and to finish his work" (John 4:34). "Your will be done" (Matthew 6:10), was his prayer. "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved" (John 3:17). "We have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world" (1 John 4:14). "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (John 12:32).

God wills the salvation of all men.

"Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth" (1 Timothy 2:4). The will of God shall be done.

"He does according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What are you doing?" (Daniel 4:35). The will of God is law, alike in the spiritual as in the material world. It must ultimately be accomplished.

God purposes to save all men.

"Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he has purposed in himself, that in the dispensation of the fullness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him" (Ephesians 1:9-10).

God's purpose will be executed.

"My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure" (Isaiah 46:10).

God promises to save all men.

"You are the children of the prophets and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, and in your seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed" (Acts 3:25).

God will fulfill his promises.

"For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him amen, unto the glory of God by us" (2 Corinthians 1:20).

God makes oath that he will save all men.

"I have sworn by myself; the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear, surely shall say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength" (Isaiah 45:23-24). And God will make good his oath.

"Wherein, God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us" (Hebrews 6:17-18).

Jesus will accomplish the work he came to do.

"He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied" (Isaiah 53:11). "Wherefore God also has highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father" (Php 2:9-11).

WHAT GOD WILLS, HE PURPOSES; WHAT HE PURPOSES, HE PROMISES; WHAT HE PROMISES HE MAKES OATH TO, SENDS HIS SON TO ACCOMPLISH, AND JESUS DOES ACCOMPLISH.

02.60. You Must Be Born Again

60. YOU MUST BE BORN AGAIN. In this language addressed by Jesus to Nicodemus (John 3:7), is the perpetual declaration of the Almighty Father to all who are unregenerated, and it will continue to be uttered, as long as there is an unregenerated soul. Usually it is understood as expressing what ought to be, but it also expresses what God has determined shall be - what must be will be. "You MUST be born again;" is prophetic of all human beings.

02.61. A Conditional Promise Fulfilled

61. A CONDITIONAL PROMISE FULFILLED.

"I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (John 12:32).

Here Jesus predicates universal salvation on his crucifixion. "If I am crucified," he says, "I will ultimately attract all men unto myself." For he said this (verse 33) to signify the mode of his death. The conditions have been complied with; he has been crucified. We must believe in the result announced, or we deny the declaration of Jesus himself.

02.62. Sin Burned, Sinners Saved

62. SIN BURNED, SINNERS SAVED.

Paul declares:

"If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire" (1 Corinthians 3:15).

02.63. Every Soul Worth Saving

63. EVERY SOUL WORTH SAVING.

"Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God" (1 Corinthians 4:5).

02.64. Comfort for All

64. COMFORT FOR ALL.

"Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God" (2 Corinthians 1:3-4).

What can the Christian say to those who mourn the death of unrepentant friends, that will comfort them - "those in any trouble" - except that they are still in the hands of Divine Grace, who will do for and by them better than their dearest friends can ask or think? Only the Universalist faith can comfort those in any trouble.

02.65. Heaven's Joys Certain

65. HEAVEN'S JOYS CERTAIN.

"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (2 Corinthians 5:1). The apostle could not know this, unless it depended on God's immutable purpose. If human weakness or sin could sacrifice it, then Paul could only hope or believe that he might have such a house. His certainty renders its existence absolute, and its inheritance sure.

02.66. The Substance of Things Hoped For

66. THE SUBSTANCE OF THINGS HOPED FOR.

Paul gives one grand definition of Christian faith: "It is the substance of things hoped for" (Hebrews 11:1). What partial view of God's redeeming grace merits this description? What do all Christians ardently hope for, but the ultimate deliverance of all souls from the thralldom of sin?

02.67. The Wickedest Saved

67. THE WICKEDEST SAVED. The apostle Peter addressed the wickedest of human beings, those who committed the worst act ever perpetrated, the murder of the sinless Savior, as destined to salvation, after having received the just penalty of their sins. He said:

"You men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as you yourselves also know; Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, you have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts 2:22-23). And when they were "pricked to the heart" he added:

"Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts 2:38-39).

It is not possible that the promise was to these men, and that they are to be saved, and any less wicked than they "lost." Their deliverance insures the redemption of all. Hence Peter adds to the same wicked people:

"You denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; and killed the Prince of Life. You are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, and in your seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Unto you first, God having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities" (Acts 3:14; Acts 3:25-26).

02.68. The Image of God

68. THE IMAGE OF GOD.

Jesus was:

"The image of the invisible God" (Colossians 1:15). "The brightness of his glory and the express image of his person" (Hebrews 1:3). That is, in all his conduct, in every trait of his disposition, he was just like God, and did just what God would have done. How did he treat sinners? To the woman taken in adultery, he said, "Go, and sin no more" (John 8:11). To Thomas, the skeptic, who refused to credit his resurrection, he showed the evidence of that great fact in his hands, his feet, and his side (John 20:24-29). To Peter, denying with oaths and curses that he had ever known him, he looks with pity and grief, and the heart of the false disciple is melted (Luke 22:54-62). To Saul, hating him and persecuting his followers, he sends no stroke of doom to annihilate him, but the opening heavens are radiant with light as he arrests the cruel persecutor with the unanswerable question, "Saul, Saul, why persecute you me?" (Acts 9:4). For those who nailed him to the cross his last breath is a prayer that they may be forgiven for their unparalleled crime (Luke 23:34). Was it the prayer of faith, and will that prayer be answered? Christ was the friend of sinners in this world; is he their friend now? Will he always be their friend? If not, is he the same yesterday, to-day, and forever? As God's image he will always remain the loving friend of sinners, employing all possible means for their improvement and welfare. His whole life was in the same spirit. He invoked no vengeance, demanded no bloody sacrifice, either of the sinner or of a vicarious substitute, but pity, mildness, mercy and love went from him towards even the vilest of the vile. God must treat the skeptic, the profane, the cruel, the murderer, the wicked of every grade in the same manner, or the resemblance between image and original would be destroyed. Can God justify the resemblance to Christ, unless, though he punish, he continues to love, and employs all his infinite attributes, and all the ages of eternity if need be, in the blessed work of purifying and saving his children from the sins that alienate them from him? This was the work that always occupied Jesus, that still occupies him as he sits at the right hand of the Father. As truly as Jesus is the image of God, the Father must always thus be employed, until the last exile from the home of the soul returns to allegiance, and duty, and heaven.

02.69. Paul's Hope

69. PAUL'S HOPE.

Paul hoped that the unjust would be raised. He said:

"I have hope towards God that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust" (Acts 24:15).

He must have believed that the resurrection of the unjust would be a moral as well as an existential anastasis. He might believe in it, if it were an unhappy fate, but he could not hope for it. Hope is compounded of desire and expectation. He therefore expected and desired the resurrection of the unjust. Only a demon could desire their rising if it were to a condition of endless torment. But Paul, whose heart always yearned for human happiness, tells us that the unjust will rise into an improved condition, a desirable and therefore good and happy existence, when he says he hopes for the resurrection of the just. Hoping for it he demonstrates that he believed it to be something desirable, a benefit to them.

02.70. The Glad Tidings of God

70. THE GLAD TIDINGS OF GOD. The apostle Paul, in the first verse of the first chapter of his letter to the church in Rome, calls Christianity "The Glad Tidings of God," the gospel (euaggelion). His writings show that he delighted to dwell on the universal grace and mercy of God. He announces it in scores of passages, found in this book, and asks concerning those who deny it:

"What if some did not believe? Shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar" (Romans 3:3). Believe what? That ...

02.71. The Universe Shall Be Delivered from Sin

71. THE UNIVERSE SHALL BE DELIVERED FROM SIN.

Paul says:

"The creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Romans 8:21).

1. Dr. Macknight says "Ktisis" (the creature in this passage) "signifies every human creature." Prof. Stuart declares its meaning to be, as in Mark 16:15, and Colossians 1:23, "mankind in general."

2. It is subject to evil.

3. It has a hope of deliverance.

4. It shall be delivered.

5. Into the liberty of God's angels, or children. Though not yet accomplished it is the province of Christian faith to believe in this result, and thus eat celestial fruit on earthly ground. Hence the same apostle says:

"You have put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man" (Hebrews 2:8-9). The subjection of all men to Christ is like that of Christ to God.

"And when all things shall be subdued unto him, (hupotagee) then shall the Son also himself be subject, (hupotageesetai), then to him that put all things under (hupotazanti) him, that God may be all in all" (1 Corinthians 15:28). "For I would not, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery lest you should be wise in your own conceits, that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, there shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins" (Romans 11:25-27).

It is therefore a willing service, the love and homage of faithful and obedient children. All men are to be subject to Christ with the same subjection under which Christ is subject to God.

02.72. What God Will Not Do

72. WHAT GOD WILL NOT DO.

He will not always chide (Psalms 103:9). He will not contend forever (Isaiah 57:16). He will not cast off forever (Lamentations 3:31). He will not retain his anger forever (Micah 7:18).

02.73. What God Will Do

73. WHAT GOD WILL DO.

He will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth (1 Timothy 2:4). He will swallow up death in victory, and wipe tears from off all faces (Isaiah 25:8). He will destroy the devil (Hebrews 2:14). He will destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:8). He will destroy man's last enemy (1 Corinthians 15:26). He will reconcile all things unto himself (Colossians 1:19-20). He will finish sin, make an end of transgression, and bring in everlasting righteousness (Daniel 9:24).

02.74. Sin, Satan, Death and Hell Destroyed

74. SIN, SATAN, DEATH AND HELL DESTROYED.

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil, and deliver them who through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Hebrews 2:14-15). "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (1 John 3:8). The Revelator saw the work accomplished.

"Death and Hell were cast into the lake of fire" (Revelation 20:14). This denotes their destruction. Paul declares:

"The last enemy that shall be destroyed is Death" (1 Corinthians 15:26). The words "that" and "is" are supplied by the translators. The passage as Paul wrote it is "The last enemy shall be destroyed, Death." So whether we suppose he meant physical or moral death, it is to be destroyed, and all other enemies are to be destroyed previously. Death is the last. This is what caused the apostle to exclaim triumphantly:

"O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory?" (1 Corinthians 15:55).

There is no sting, no victory. Then there is no sin. "The sting of death is sin," and Christ is victorious over sin and death, by accomplishing their destruction. These passages teach that Jesus became mortal to destroy man's enemies, the devil, sin, and death, and that he succeeded in his great mission, leaving not an enemy of man in existence, when he had finished his work.

"O'er every foe victorious, He on his throne shall rest, From age to age more glorious - All blessing and all blest. The tide of time shall never His covenant remove, His name shall stand forever That name to us is Love."

02.75. All Shall Be Righteous

75. ALL SHALL BE RIGHTEOUS.

"Your people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land forever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified" (Isaiah 60:21). Who are his people?

"You shall call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people FROM THEIR SINS" (Matthew 1:21). His people are sinners, and as "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God," all men are sinners, and all are "his people." "All souls are his," and though all have gone out of the way in sin, all are to return to willing obedience.

"I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear, surely shall say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength" (Isaiah 45:23-24). And that word shall be fulfilled:

"It shall not return unto me void; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" (Isaiah 55:11).

Hence we read:

"I shall give you the heathen for your inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for your possession" (Psalms 2:8). "You have given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as you have given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent" (John 17:2-3). "And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the WHOLE WORLD" (1 John 2:2). "He gave himself a ransom for ALL" (1 Timothy 2:6). "He tasted death for EVERY MAN" (Hebrews 2:9).

Jesus foresaw and announced this when he said:

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth (crucified), will draw all men unto me" (John 12:32). "All that the Father gives me shall come to me; and him that comes to me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37). This explains the meaning of such passages as these:

"All nations whom you have made shall come and worship before you" (Psalms 86:9). "Unto you shall all flesh come" (Psalms 65:2). "All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord" (Psalms 22:27). "And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying know the Lord, for they shall all know me, from the least of them, unto the greatest of them, says the Lord, and I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sins no more" (Jeremiah 31:34). "For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell; and having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven" (Colossians 1:19-20).

Archbishop Newcome and Prof. Stuart say "all things" here mean "all intelligent beings." Thus all souls are to be converted to God, and universal holiness will prevail.

02.76. All Destined to God

76. ALL DESTINED TO GOD.

"For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever" (Romans 11:36). Can human language more fully state the sublime truth of God's universal triumph over sin and death in briefer terms, than it is here declared? As truly as all souls came from God, and exist by him, they shall go to him. For it is of human beings that the great apostle is here speaking. Having reached the conclusion of universal salvation, what wonder that he said:

"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who has known the mind of the Lord? or who has been his counselor? Or who has first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?" (Romans 11:33-35). And then he closes with that grand epitome:

"OF HIM, THROUGH HIM, AND TO HIM ARE ALL THINGS."

O You whose power o'er moving worlds presides, Whose voice created and whose wisdom guides, On darkling man in pure effulgence shine, And clear the clouded mind with light divine.

'Tis Yours alone to calm the pious breast, With silent confidence and holy rest; From You alone we spring, to You we tend, PATH, MOTIVE, GUIDE, ORIGINAL AND END!

What wonder that, on hearing this great truth for the first time, ...

02.77. The People Were Astonished

77. THE PEOPLE WERE ASTONISHED. The common people were astonished at this doctrine of the resurrection of all souls to holiness. They were familiar with the idea of annihilation, and of endless punishment, but universal salvation was new to them. No other news could have astonished them. "They were astonished at his doctrine" (Matthew 22:33). Had he taught annihilation in this argument concerning the resurrection, he would not have astonished the Sadducees, had he taught endless punishment he would not have astonished the Pharisees and Pagans. But universal salvation astonished all because it was new to all. He taught the resurrection of all mankind to an equality with the angels.

02.78. Universal Pardon and Obedience

78. UNIVERSAL PARDON AND OBEDIENCE.

"I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord; for they shall all know me" - "whom to know is life eternal" - "from the least to the greatest of them, says the Lord, for I will forgive their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more" (Jeremiah 31:33-34). "For all [the house of Israel] shall know me, from the least to the greatest" (Hebrews 8:11). "Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Romans 8:21).

02.79. Christ Cancels Adam

79. CHRIST CANCELS ADAM.

Christ's labors cancel Adam's influence, Adam: Therefore as by the offense of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation,

Christ: even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. -- Romans 5:18.

Adam: But where sin abounded, Christ: grace did much more abound. -- Romans 5:20.

Adam: As sin has reigned unto death, Christ: even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord. -- Romans 5:21.

Adam: As in Adam all die, Christ: even so in Christ shall all be made alive. -- 1 Corinthians 15:22.

Adam: For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, Christ: so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. -- Romans 5:19.

Here observe:

1. All mankind are to be made alive.
2. They are to live "in Christ."
3. They are therefore to be new creatures, for "if any man be in Christ he is a new creature" (2 Corinthians 5:17).
4. They wear the heavenly image.
5. Grace reigns wherever sin has borne sway.
6. The exact number "made sinners," namely, all men, are "made righteous." This is ...

02.80. A Healthful Doctrine

80. A HEALTHFUL DOCTRINE. A belief in universal salvation exerts a good moral influence.

"For the grace of God that brings salvation to all men has appeared, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world" (Titus 2:11-12). This is the true reading. God's grace has not appeared to all men, but it brings salvation to all.

02.81. No More Sorrow

81. NO MORE SORROW.

"The Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces" (Isaiah 25:8). Can there be a hell full of agony and woe? Must not heaven, then, be universal?

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