

Human Destiny

by Robert Anderson

The author argues that the concept of an endless hell is incompatible with the idea of infinite love and that Scripture teaches that all the lost will be saved.

Scripture: John 10:10, Romans 6:23, 1 Corinthians 9:7, 2 Corinthians 11:8, 1 John 5:11

Topics: "Sin And Death", "Eternal Life"

Description

H.C.G. Moule preaches about the concept of 'wages' in relation to sin and death, drawing parallels between the provision-money given to Roman soldiers and the consequences of sin leading to spiritual and physical death. The metaphor of wages signifies the conflict against God and the ultimate result of sin. While sin earns death, eternal life is a free gift from God through Christ Jesus, emphasizing the importance of surrendering to God and living a life of willing holiness.

Transcript

PREFACE TO THE SEVENTH EDITION.

APPEALS have been received from many quarters for an edition of Human Destiny at a price to bring it within reach of a wider circle of readers. And it has been urged by some that in re-issuing it account should be taken of what has been published on the subject during the seven-and-twenty years since the book was written. But later writers have added nothing to the standard works dealt with in these pages, namely: (i) Dean Farrar's *Eternal Hope*, Five Sermons preached in Westminster Abbey, November and December 1877. (2) *Salvator Mundi*; or, *Is Christ the Saviour of all Men?* by Dr.

Samuel Cox. (3) *The Second Death, and the Restitution of All Things*, by Mr. Andrew Jukes. (4) Mr. Edward White's *Life in Christ*. The first of these books is throughout a passionate appeal to prejudice. *Salvator Mundi*, though written in a different strain, is in some respects quite as unsatisfactory. The author of the third was a man of another type, but, as his very title indicates, his exegesis is utterly unreliable; for the Apostle's words in Acts iii. 19-24 relate expressly to Israel's promises of blessing for earth, and have no reference whatever to the eternal state.

Life in Christ is the ablest work this controversy has produced. But the criticisms it evoked rendered the author's main position untenable, save at the cost of denying the resurrection of Christ as man; and in his "Third Edition" he frankly jettisoned that essential truth of Christianity. Of more recent books there is one that, perhaps, may seem entitled to notice because of its phenomenal popularity, a popularity which is

due, no doubt, to its being an exceptionally pleasing and plausible presentation of that most ancient of all evangels by which the Old Serpent of Eden deceived the Mother of our race-" Ye shall not surely die."

I refer to Our Life after Death, by the Rev. Arthur Chambers.. The burden of the book is an "intermediate life," in which people who die "in a state of salvation" (whatever that means) will, in common with less favoured mortals, be "perfected" to fit them for heaven. "The popular idea," the writer tells us, "is that when a good person dies, he goes direct to heaven" (p. 31). And he adds, "You may search the Bible from end to end without finding a passage which will justify such a statement."

Most true it is that the popular belief that "good people go to heaven when they die" is shattered by an elementary knowledge of Scripture. But the denial of the truth that sinners saved by Divine grace pass at death to heaven, to be "at home with the Lord" (2 Cor. v. 9, R.V.), displays strange ignorance of Christian doctrine. Scripture teaches, moreover, that at the Coming of the Lord "the dead in Christ" shall be raised, and "we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them to meet the Lord," and to be with Him for ever (1 Thess. iv. i6, ii).

But as all this conflicts with the writer's theory, it is ignored and implicitly denied - a further proof that these eschatological heresies involve our jettisoning the distinctive truths of the Christian revelation. The writer's tone and argument respecting this "intermediate-life" theory may be gathered from his stating that "the Bible proclaims it, Jesus confirms it, and our reason approves it" (p. 33). The Christian does not distinguish in this manner between the authority of the written Word and of the Living Word, nor does he acknowledge human reason as a Court of Appeal from either; but the "Jesus" of this writer is cited to confirm the teaching of Holy Scripture, provided always that "our reason approves it."

The figment that good men are fitted for heaven in an "intermediate-life" rests upon an erroneous reading of Heb. Xii. 23, which he always quotes as spirits made perfect "-a blunder from which a glance at the Greek Testament might have saved him. The passage speaks of "the spirits of righteous men who have been perfected"; and from chapter x. 14, we learn that we are "perfected," not by purgatorial discipline but by the "one offering" of Christ. Our thoughts are thus turned to "the Father, Who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light" (Col. 1: 12).

In common with other writers of the same school, Mr. Chambers seeks to excite prejudice against the doctrine he rejects by citing deplorable language used by some of its exponents. This is untruth of a kind which, though common in political controversy, is unworthy both of the author and of his theme. For the relevance of his quotations depends on the innuendo (which he must know to be false) that they express beliefs to which we are committed if we reject his heresies. Nothing can justify the language of these quotations.

So awful is the teaching of the Lord Jesus respecting the doom of the impenitent that every statement upon the subject ought to adhere strictly to the very words of Scripture. And it is not on this point only that "the orthodox" supply a leverage by which divine truth is undermined. "The larger hope" theory is not more un-warranted by Scripture than is the "orthodox" dogma that it is death which determines the destiny of men. In the case of all to whom the gospel comes, the consequences of accepting or rejecting Christ are immediate and eternal.

This is declared by the Lord Himself in words so simple that not even a child can miss their meaning, and so explicit that not even a casuist can evade it (John iii. 16-18). But it will be asked, What of those upon whom the light of the gospel has never shone, and of others who have seen but glimpses of it, dimmed or

distorted by Christendom religion? "I do not know," is the only answer we ought to give to questions such as these. The Bible is not designed to solve problems of the kind, but to be our guide in respect of all that concerns us.

And what concerns us is to receive the gospel of the grace of God ourselves, and to make it known to others. Not content, however, with this, our most blessed lot as fellow-workers with God, too many there are who impiously claim to anticipate the judgments of "the Great Assize" respecting the ignorant masses around us and the unnumbered millions of the heathen world. (See Chap. XII, post.) From follies and excesses of this kind the following pages are wholly free. They make no claim to deal *ex cathedra* with mysteries which have perplexed the thoughtful in every age.

They record the struggles of one who has sought to reach the truth by calm and patient study and earnest thought; and their method has been to bring to the test of Holy Scripture what others of different schools have written. And whatever the faults and failings of the book, the author is happy in the conviction that it can never serve as a "wrecker's fire" to lure men to their eternal doom by persuading them that they may neglect the "great salvation" in this life with the certain hope of finding an escape in the life to come.

Human Destiny After Death What?

BY Sir ROBERT ANDERSON, K.C.B., LL.D.,

Author of "The Gospel and Its Ministry," "Redemption Truths," "The Silence of God." &c.;

EIGHTH EDITION.

THE QUESTION STATED.

ACCORDING to the most careful estimate, the population of the world exceeds one thousand four hundred millions. Not one third of these are Christian even in name; and of this small minority how few there are whose lives give proof that they are travelling heavenward! And what is the destiny of all the rest? Any estimate of their number must be inaccurate and fanciful; and accuracy, if attainable, would be practically useless. As a matter of arithmetic, it is as easy to deal with millions as with tens; but when we come to realise that every unit is a human being, with a little world of joys and sorrows all his own, and an unbounded capacity for happiness or misery, the mind is utterly paralysed by the effort to realise the problem.

And these fourteen hundred millions are but a single wave of the great tide of human life that breaks, generation after generation, upon the shore of the unknown world. What future then awaits these untold myriads of millions of mankind? Most of us have been trained in the belief that their portion is an existence of endless, hopeless torment. But few there are, surely, who have carried this belief to middle age unchallenged. Sometimes it is the vastness of the numbers whose fate is involved that startles us into scepticism.

Sometimes it is the memory of friends now gone, who lived and died impenitent. As we think of an eternity in which they "shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever," the mind grows weary and the heart grows sick, and we turn to ask ourselves, Is not God infinite in love? Is not the great Atonement infinite in value? Is it credible then that such a future is to be the sequel to a brief and sorely-tempted life of sin? Is it credible that for all eternity - that eternity in which the triumph of the Cross shall be complete, and God shall be all in all - there shall still remain an under-world of seething sin and misery and horror?

We can have no companionship with those who refuse to bring these questions to the test of Scripture. If such a hell be there revealed, faith must assert its supremacy, and all our difficulties, whether intellectual or moral, must be put aside unsolved. But what is, in fact, the voice of Scripture on the subject? The voice of the Church, it is true, has been heard in every age in support of the doctrine of an endless hell; and in some sense the testimony gains in weight from the fact that a minority never has been wanting to protest against the dogma, thus keeping it unceasingly upon the open field of free discussion.

This affords sufficient proof, no doubt, that Scripture seems to teach the doctrine here in question. But more than this must by no means be conceded. On such a subject no appeal to authority will avail to silence doubt. The minority may, after all, be right. What men call heresy proves sometimes to be the truth of God. But how is such an inquiry to be entered on? It needs some scholarship and not a little patient study, and yet it is of interest to thousands who have neither learning nor leisure.

Common folk whose opportunities and talents are but few must take advantage of the labours of others more favoured than themselves. And we turn to their writings with the honest wish to find there an escape from the teaching of our childhood. Some, indeed, have used language which betokens pleasure at the thought of endless torment; but apart from the enthusiasm or the bitterness of controversy this would be impossible. Surely there is no one unwilling to be convinced that hell itself shall share at last in the reconciliation God has wrought; or, if the lost of earth are lost for ever, that in the infinite mercy of God their misery shall end with a last great death that shall put a term to their existence.

But here are two alternatives which are wholly inconsistent, two paths which diverge at the very threshold of the inquiry. Of which shall we make choice? If our instincts and prejudices are in the least to guide us, none will hesitate. We refuse to contemplate the annihilation of the lost save as an escape from something still more grievous. But what if Scripture warrants the belief that all the lost shall yet be saved, the banished ones brought home, and God's great prison closed for ever as the crowning triumph of redemption? This is indeed a hope that with eagerness we would struggle to accept.

II

"ETERNAL HOPE."

THERE is one volume which cannot be ignored in any inquiry as to the future of the lost. It has made more stir in this controversy than any other publication in recent years, both here and in America ; and according to a high authority, it "may fairly be looked on as an epoch-making book, both in the wide circulation it has attained, and the discussion of which it has been the starting-point. Its title, and a glance at its contents, will lead the inquirer to expect from its pages the light he is in search of.

No sooner does he enter on the study of it than he finds himself carried away by a rushing, bubbling torrent of impassioned rhetoric, which leaves him at the last with a bewildered, vague impression that heaven is the final goal of all the human race, and that the conception of an endless hell is but a hateful dream. But though this is undoubtedly the lesson which superficial readers have generally extracted from the book, it is by no means the writer's own conclusion. The following is his scheme:- "There are, in the main" (he tells us), "three classes of men: there are the saints ; there are the reprobates; and there is that vast intermediate class lying between yet shading off by infinite gradations from these two extremes."

Of the saints he declines to speak. They are "few," he declares, "and mostly poor." He does not suggest the possibility that he himself or those whom he addresses could be of the number, and his description of

them would preclude their venturing to claim so high a place. "But" (he proceeds), "if they be unassailably secure, eternally happy, what of the other extreme? what of the reprobates?" He indicates the slaves of brutal vice, the most depraved of our criminals, as falling within the category, and then proceeds: "If you ask me whether I must not believe in endless torments for these reprobates of earth, my answer is, Ay, for these, and for thee, and for me, too, unless we learn with all our hearts to love good, and not evil; but whether God for Christ's sake may not enable us to do this even beyond the grave, if we have failed to do so in this life, I cannot say."

Other statements scattered through the volume throw further light on this. "I cannot preach the certainty of universalism," he declares. "God has given us no clear and decisive revelation on the final condition of those who have died in sin." "My hope is that the vast majority, at any rate, of the lost, may at length be found." It thus appears that this apostle of "the wider hope," who seemed to us to exhaust the thunders of his rhetoric in denouncing all who believe in an endless hell, himself believes in an endless hell.

He thus admits that the conception of "endless torments" is warranted by Scripture, and therefore compatible with infinite love. In a word, the chief difference in this respect between his own position and that of the so-called orthodox, is a mere question either of statistics or of words. Both he and they agree to believe in hell. Both he and they would admit that it is reserved for reprobates. But while they would give the term a wider scope, he would limit it to "a small but desperate minority."

Might they not retort upon him that a fuller and truer apprehension of the Gospel would teach him that, if indeed there be hope beyond the grave, Divine love will most surely reach forth to the very class which he has singled out as possible victims of the most hopeless doom. The wretched offspring of depraved and vicious parents, this world has been no better than a hell to them from cradled infancy. If there be after-mercy for the pampered sinners of the synagogue, shall it be denied to these poor outcasts of humanity?

But "the saints" are "few, and mostly poor," and "the reprobates" are "a small and desperate minority." The "vast intermediate class" remains; the class, in fact, to which we all belong. What shall be said of these? There are thousands among us who, we know, cannot be "saints" - for, as the writer tells us, there "is an Adam in them, and there is a Christ" - but whose lives, though marred by blemishes and sins, are still set heavenward. Though deeply conscious that they deserve only judgment, they have learned to believe that Christ died for their sins, and that trusting in Him, their portion shall be life, and not judgment.

They believe that God justifies "freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus," and that being thus "justified by His blood," they "shall be saved from wrath through Him." They regard these great doctrines of the Reformation as Divine truths; and, living in the faith of Christ, they hope at death to pass into His presence in blessedness and joy. If our author shares in this belief he carefully conceals it. He admits, no doubt, that earth's sinners can have no way to God's heaven, save through Christ's redemption.

But, according to his teaching, personal fitness for the scene does not depend on Christ at all, but must be won either by a life of saintship, or, for the vast majority who never could attain to saintship as here defined, and are "incapable of any other redemption," by being purified in "that Gehenna of aeonian fire" beyond the grave. And if we ask whether these are "endless torments," we are answered YES, "unless we learn with all our hearts to love good and not evil." This is our constant prayer and effort, but we know how utterly we fail of it; and in terror we inquire "whether God for Christ's sake may not enable us to do this

even beyond the grave, if we have failed to do so in this life."

The author's answer is "I cannot say." "I CANNOT SAY!" We are to bury our dead in the sure and certain expectation of "aeonian fire," but with a dim and distant hope that in the "uncovenanted mercy" of God they shall reach heaven at last! The writer's argument is wrapped in clouds of words, and his statements sometimes seem contradictory, but on close analysis his scheme stands out consistent and clear. The future happiness of the "saints" is assured. They, however, are a minority so insignificant that for our present purpose we may ignore them.

The rest of the departed (believers and unbelievers, regenerate and unregenerate alike, for these are distinctions of which the writer takes no account) are cast into Gehenna; but the torments of Gehenna are purgatorial, and sooner or later "the vast majority" will pass to heaven purified in "aeonian fire." And mark, the awful discipline is draconian. Its duration will be measured, not as with us, by days or years, but by ages; and in the case of "a desperate minority," "eternal hope" means a hope that will last eternally, only because it will be eternally unsatisfied. * This is not the only feature of the writer's scheme which savours of Rome.

He implicitly bases his statement on 2 Cor. iii. 6; but surely no one who is not too absorbed by the study of "the broad unifying principles of Scripture" to give his attention to a particular passage, can fail to see that the Apostle is there contrasting, not the letter of Scripture with the spirit of it, but the old covenant with the new, law with grace. The texts to which the writer refers in support of his position shall be considered in the sequel. It is enough to say here that most of them have no special bearing on the question in dispute (see p.169, and App.

I.), and the rest are of no account for the author's purpose, unless they be construed to teach the universalism which he himself repudiates. As for his remarks on the word (Greek), nothing further need be said than he himself has elsewhere said in answer to his critics : "Some of the greatest masters of Greek, both in classical times and among the fathers, saw quite clearly that though the word might connote endlessness, by being attributively added to endless things, it had in itself no such meaning."

And if any one object that any part of this scheme is opposed to Scripture, he will be told it is in accordance with "the broad unifying principles of Scripture," and that the letter of the Scripture kills. That is to say, the effect of Holy Writ upon the minds of common men, who accept its statements in their plain and simple meaning, is absolutely mischievous and destructive. Surely we may well exclaim, Is this what English theology is coming to?

III

"SALVATOR MUNDI"

THE author referred to in the preceding chapter (Farrar) has publicly acknowledged that while preparing the sermons which form the basis of his book, he was "largely indebted" to an earlier work on this same subject. The volume alluded to is from the pen of a noted expositor of Scripture, and it has obtained such a wide circulation, and is held in such high authority in the controversy, that it is impossible to pass it by unnoticed. "The Question Raised" is the title of the opening chapter.

If, the writer asks, Tyre and Sidon and the cities of the plain would have repented had they seen the mighty works of Christ, are they never to see Him? Are they to be damned for not having seen Him? Must

there not be a "place of repentance" for such in the under-world? Suffice it here to say that this question is altogether wide of the real issue in this controversy, which is not whether the destiny of all mankind is fixed at death, but whether all mankind shall yet be saved, including those who have rejected the full revelation of the Gospel.

The author then proceeds to fix the "limits of the argument." The appeal is to the Bible ; but before he will open the Bible he must insist that reason and conscience are also to have a voice. That is to say, the question is what the lawgiver has decreed against the criminal, and the criminal himself is practically to formulate the answer. The next point is that the Old Testament, the Book of Revelation, and the parables of our Lord, are all to be eliminated from the inquiry.

No one has a right to insist on such conditions, but yet they might be accepted without endangering the issue, provided always, first, that it is only the symbolic visions of the Apocalypse which are to be excluded and, secondly, that the Scriptures themselves, and not the critic, shall decide what is "parable" and what is not. Next comes the inevitable protest against the use of the words damnation, "hell," and "everlasting." Much of what is said about the first of these words is true, and would be helpful if written in any other connection.

As for the second, he argues that whereas Hades and Gehenna both refer to the intermediate state, "our word 'hell' denotes the final and everlasting torment of the wicked," and therefore it should be banished from our language altogether. The fact is, that so far from this being the only meaning of "hell," it is a meaning which the word scarcely possesses at all in classical English. It is only they who believe that Gehenna indicates the final state who have any right to object that "hell" is a mistranslation.

A word about this Gehenna. The writer tells us how the beautiful valley of Hinnom, under the south-western wall of Jerusalem, in time "became the common cesspool of the city, into which offal was cast, and the carcasses of animals, and even the bodies of great criminals who had lived a life so vile as to be judged unworthy of decent burial. Worms preyed on their corrupting flesh, and fires were kept burning lest the pestilential infection should rise from the valley and float through the streets of Jerusalem."

Such is the author's own description. And what is the moral he would draw from it? That the offal and the carcasses were thrown there to purify and fit them for some high and noble use! It is amazing how any one can be so blind as not to see in this a figure the most graphic and terrible of utter and hopeless destruction. Two more chapters being thus accounted for, in the fifth and sixth the author takes up the words which are variously rendered in our English Bible to express infinite duration.

"If (he pleads) these words really carried in themselves the sense of eternity or everlastingness, they could not possibly have been applied," as, in fact, they were applied, to what was material or transitory. Will the author specify any words which carry in themselves this meaning, or indeed any meaning whatsoever? What is true of most words is true in a special degree of these; chameleon-like, they take a colour from what they touch, and their significance must in every case be settled by the subject-matter and the context.

"Words are the counters of wise men, the money of fools : " these teachers one and all seem to take them for more than counters. Every tyro in philology is aware that it is the use of a word which decides its meaning; and to be guided only by its derivation is as unwise as it would be to accept a man of sixty on a character given to him when a schoolboy. But yes, the author tells us there is a word "which unquestionably means 'for ever.'" This word, however, occurs only twice in the New Testament, and in one

of these two passages, as he himself notices, it unquestionably does not mean "for ever." * But the author's disquisition upon the "Greek word aiōn and its derivative, must by no means be dismissed thus lightly.

With other writers such a discussion is mere skirmishing; here it is vital to his scheme. These words, he declares, "so far from denoting either that which is above time, or that which will outlast time, are saturated through and through with the thought and element of time." This needs looking into. The heathen philosophers and poets had probably no thought of "Eternity" as distinguished from time. Their conception was limited to the aeon which includes all time, but that these words were used to express that conception is admitted.

It is further admitted that the New Testament unfolds an "economy of times and seasons," many "ages" heading up in one great "age" within which all the manifold purposes of God in relation to earth shall be fulfilled. Here again these same words are applicable and are used. But revelation has taught men a higher conception of eternity than the heathen ever grasped. How then could such a conception be expressed in the language of ancient Greece, a language formed upon and moulded by the thoughts of a heathen nation?

To invent a word is impossible, and yet words are but counters. Therefore when translating the sacred Hebrew into Greek the Rabbis could only take up some of the counters ready to their hand, and, as it were, restamp them to mark a higher value than they had formerly possessed. Thus, when they came on statements such as that of the 90th Psalm, "From everlasting to everlasting, thou art God," they could but fall back on this very word aeon.* Now the New Testament is written in the language of the Septuagint version of the Old; not in the language of heathen Greece, but in that language as moulded and elevated by contact with the God-breathed Scriptures.

Many a word had thus gained a fuller or a higher meaning than ordinarily pertained to it. The question here, therefore, is not what is the meaning of aeon and aiōnios in the classics, but what was the thought of the inspired writers in such passages as that above quoted. The "aeonian" scholarship of Christendom has recognised that they are used to express eternity in the fullest sense, and this conclusion is wholly unaffected by our author's bold denial of it. But let us for the moment accept the author's theory, and see what it will lead to.

Brushing aside all other considerations, let us come at once to the foundations of our faith, and see how they will bear this new "doctrine of the aeons." If it be true, the sacrifice of Calvary is no longer what we dreamed it was, the climax of a Divine purpose formed in a bygone eternity when the Word was alone with God, and the supreme and final display for all eternity to come of God's great love to man. The author will tell us that "the historical cross of Christ was but a manifestation within the bounds of time and space of the eternal passion of the Father"-a passion which "must continue to manifest itself in appropriate forms through all the ages and changes of time."

And lest charity should put an innocent interpretation on this language, and thus destroy his argument, he repeats his thought in still plainer words: "If God has once shown that He will make any sacrifice for the salvation of the guilty, must not that be always true of Him? Must He not continue to manifest His blended severity and mercy in the ages to come?" As we hear the Cross of Christ thus lowered and degraded, we cannot but demand, What part then can it have in man's redemption? and as far as the author can enlighten us the answer must be, practically none.

He shall speak for himself. Here is his new Gospel of "the larger hope." "The Scriptures, then, have much to teach us of the future, though not much of the final, estate of men. And what they teach, in so far at least as we have been able to gather it up, comes to this. No man is wholly good, no man wholly bad. Still some men may fairly be called good on the whole, although much sin and imperfection still cleaves to them and others may fairly be called bad on the whole, although there is still much in them that is good, and still more which is capable of becoming good.

When we die, we shall all receive the due recompense of our deeds, of all our deeds, whether they have been good or whether they have been bad. If by the grace of God we have been good on the whole, we may hope to rise into a large and happy spiritual kingdom, in which all that is pure and noble and kind in us will develop into new vigour and clothe itself with new beauty; in which also we shall find the very discipline we need in order that we may be wholly purged from sin and imperfection ; in which we may undo much that we have done wrongly, do again and with perfect grace that which we have done imperfectly, become what we have wished and aimed to be, achieve what we have longed to achieve, attain the wisdom, the gifts and powers and graces to which we have aspired; in which, above all, we may be engaged in errands of usefulness and compassion, by which the purpose of the Divine love and grace will be fully accomplished.

If we have been bad on the whole we may hope - and we ought to hope for it - to pass into a painful discipline so keen and searching that we shall become conscious of our sins and feel that we are only receiving the due reward of them; but since there has been some good in us, and this good is capable of being drawn out and disentangled from the evil which clouded and marred it, we may also hope, by the very discipline and torment of our spirits, to be led to repentance, and, through repentance, unto life; we may hope that the disclosures of the spiritual world will take a spiritual effect upon us, gradually raising and renewing us till we too are prepared to enter the Paradise of God and behold the presence of the Lord and the glory of His power: we may hope that our friends who have already been redeemed will pity us and minister to us, bringing us not simply a cup of cold water to cool our tongue, but words of instruction and life.

And as for the great mass of our fellow-men, we may hope and believe that those who have had no chance of salvation here will have one there; that those who have had a poor chance will get a better one; that those who have had a good chance and lost it will get a new but a severer chance, and even as they suffer the inevitable results of their folly and sin will feel 'the hands that reach through darkness, moulding men.' "This, on the whole, I take to be the teaching of Scripture concerning the lot of men in the age to come,-a teaching which enables us to see 'beneath the abyss of hell a bottomless abyss of love.'

And if it clash with some dogmas that we have held and some interpretations which are familiar to us, it nevertheless accords, not with 'the mind of Christ' only, but also with the dictates of Reason and Conscience, the voices of God within the soul. It presents no such sudden break in our life as, in the teeth of all probability, we have been wont to conceive; no heaven for which we feel that even the best of us must be unfit, no hell which is a monstrous offence to our sense of justice.

It promises to every man the mercy of justice, of a due reward for all he has been and done; and, while it impresses on us the utter hatefulness and misery of sin, it holds out to every one of us the prospect of being redeemed from all sin and uncleanness by that just God Who is also a Saviour. Nor does it less accord with the demands of Science than with the dictates of Reason and the Moral Sense; for it carries on the evolution of the human race through all the ages to come.

And, therefore, let others think as they will, and cherish what trust they will: but as for us, with the Apostle of the Gentiles, our own Apostle, 'we trust in the living God Who is the Saviour of all men.' " * Throughout the quotation the italics are my own. I have reluctantly quoted at such length that the reader may be enabled to judge what this doctrine implies. To refute the errors, expressed and implied, of this book, would involve a treatise upon each one of the fundamental truths of Christianity.

If any can read the above extract unshocked by the heathen darkness and contemptuous unbelief which characterise it, it is idle to discuss the matter with them within the limits of the present volume. If any one thinks this language too strong, let him turn back upon the quotation and seek to find where there is room for redemption in the writer's scheme. It is a deliberate and systematic denial of Christianity. This is not an isolated paragraph snatched from its context; it is the author's recapitulation, the closing passage of his book.

We read it again and again, and study it with bewildered wonder. The question here is no longer of the doom of the lost, but of the truth of Christianity. Of the vital and characteristic truths of our religion there is not so much as one which it does not ignore or deny. The righteousness of God, the grace of God, man's ruin, redemption through the blood of Christ, the forgiveness of sins, the justification of the believer by grace through redemption, eternal life as the free gift of God, the resurrection of the just in the image of the heavenly, and of the unjust to appear at the last great judgment - not a trace of one of these foundation doctrines of our faith remains.

And what is offered us instead? The weakness of an easy-going deity who will strike an average between good and evil, sending those who are "good on the whole" to a purgatorial paradise, and those who are "bad on the whole" to a purgatorial hell. A redemption "to be achieved in due time" for men with the aid of "the aeonial fire, which alone could burn out their sins," and "the aeonial Spirit," who "will still be at work for the regeneration of the race." Instead of eternal life, we have "the spiritual life distinctive of the Christian aeons"; and eternal punishment is but "the punishment which those inflict on themselves who adjudge themselves unworthy of that life."

"This, on the whole," he takes to be "the teaching of Scripture concerning the lot of men in the age to come." "The teaching of Scripture!" It was not thus the Church's million martyrs read the mingled warnings and promises of God. Such views are utterly opposed to the great creeds of the Reformation and the older creeds of Christendom. The author's scheme renders due homage doubtless to that miserable bantling of modern science, evolution; but whether it accords with "the dictates of reason" we are not concerned to discuss. It is enough to be assured that it is not Christianity - it is not even a bastard Judaism; it is the most utter heathenism, concealed by the thinnest possible veneer of Christian phraseology.

* Finding, perhaps, that even in this infidel age the unchristianity of his book was too pronounced, the author has published "a sequel," in which he attempts to restate the question "as a part of the Christian doctrine of atonement." But the "sequel" restates with increased definiteness his dogma of retribution, which denies "the Christian doctrine of atonement" altogether. It then offers as "a new argument" for his views, the theory that there is a "surface current" and a "deeper current" in Scripture, the former of which is false, as Israel's hope of the promised messianic kingdom! Next comes a disquisition on i Cor. v. 5 (as proving that "destruction may be a condition of salvation"), and on demoniacal possession in connection therewith. As the result, the veneer is somewhat strengthened perhaps, but the heathenism remains.

"THE RESTITUTION OF ALL THINGS."

EVERY step in this inquiry is discouraging. But a good cause may suffer from injudicious advocacy, and it must not be assumed that the "wider hope" is false, because its latest champions have thus discredited it. With a sense of relief we turn to another book, which both these writers have singled out for special commendation. Here at last we find ourselves in the calm atmosphere of reverent and patient study of the Scriptures, to the sacredness and authority of which the author gives a noble testimony.

The volume might with fairness be adopted as a handbook in the controversy; but it may be better, while giving it the attention it so well deserves, to pass on to a discussion of the subject on a wider basis. The writer has the courage of his convictions. Taking his stand upon the great sacrifice of Calvary, he proclaims the gospel of universal restoration. Not only fallen men, but fallen angels, shall share in it. Not even Satan shall be excluded. This is truly a glorious anticipation : this is indeed to "think noble things of God."

Who is there who would not crave to find a warrant for accepting it as true ? Certain points in the writer's argument are peculiar, and claim special notice. "The letter of Scripture" (he declares) "is a veil quite as much as a revelation, hiding while it reveals, and yet revealing while it hides ; presenting to the eye something very different from that which is within." This naturally prepares the reader to find meanings he never thought of assigned to various passages of Scripture.

And as a signal instance of this, to which continued emphasis is given throughout the volume, the author points to the law of the firstborn and the law of the firstfruits as affording "the key to one part of the apparent contradiction between mercy 'upon all' and yet 'the election' of a 'little flock.'" " The firstborn and the firstfruits are the 'few ' and 'little flock' ; but these, though first delivered from the curse, have a relation to the whole creation, which shall be saved in the appointed times by the first-born seed, that is by Christ and His body, through those appointed baptisms, whether of fire or water, which are required to bring about 'the restitution of all things.'

" Passing by the extraordinary theory stated here and elsewhere in the book, that creation will be saved in part by the Church, this appeal to the types needs looking into. It is admitted that the firstfruits included the harvest of which it was a part, and the redemption of the firstborn secured that of the families to which they belonged. If then it can be proved from Scripture that the harvest of the saved shall include the whole Adamic race, and that "the elect" are "kinsmen" to them, this type will serve to illustrate the truth.

But the first-fruits had no relation save to the harvest of the favoured land, and the redemption of the firstborn was side by side with judgment on the Egyptians, the tribes of the wilderness and the nations of Canaan. Therefore while these types are a real difficulty in the way of those who would limit redemption to "the Church of the firstborn," they seem no less inconsistent with the author's own position. If types can be thus used at all, they establish the views of those who hold a place between these two extremes.

The sheaf of the firstfruits, the wave-loaves of Pentecost, and the great festival of harvest will have their dispensational fulfilment in the ever-widening circle of blessing upon earth; but if the final harvest will include the lost of previous dispensations, this must be established from other scriptures, for there is nothing in the type to correspond with it. But further: our author here avers that the whole creation shall be saved through the appointed baptisms, whether of fire or water.

So elsewhere he says the fearful and unbelieving must reach the new creation through the lake of fire. This is no flourish of rhetoric, but the sober statement of a doctrine repeated again and again throughout the book, and vital to the writer's argument, that death is the only way to life, judgment the only means of deliverance, Not, be it observed, the death of the Sin-bearer, the judgment which He bore; but death and judgment absolutely. Death and judgment lead to life and deliverance, so that the sinner's doom becomes a pledge and means of his ultimate salvation.

And this he assumes as an axiom of theology! Let us notwithstanding, refusing to be prejudiced against a cause which seems to need such arguments, turn with open mind to pursue the inquiry. No candid person will dispute that the revelation of Divine love creates a presumption against the possibility of eternal punishment. On the other hand, it is still more dishonest to deny - and in fact it is admitted - that certain passages of Scripture support the doctrine. The fairest mode, therefore, in which this inquiry can possibly be entered on is to dismiss for the moment both the presumption against, and the texts in favour of, the "orthodox" belief, and to consider without any bias the passages which are used to prove universal reconciliation.

If these should be found to teach that doctrine unequivocally, the question is at an end, for in a seeming conflict of texts the presumption against endless misery must turn the scale. But more than this: even should these Scriptures seem of doubtful meaning, we shall be prepared to lean towards the broader interpretation, provided only that such a rendering will neither disturb foundation truths, nor land us in difficulties akin to those we seek escape from. We may at once dismiss from notice three classes of texts which are much in vogue with writers on this question.

The first consists of passages which testify to the boundlessness of Divine mercy and love. It is impossible to estimate too highly the love and grace of God; but it is the merest trifling to suppose that creatures like ourselves, with minds so limited in capacity, and moreover so warped by sin, can decide what measure of punishment is inconsistent with infinite love.* Then again, we must entirely ignore the numberless predictions of a reign of righteousness and peace on earth in days to come.

These, though freely used in this controversy, have no bearing on it whatever, unless indeed it be to indicate that at the last great harvest-home, the proportion of the blessed to the lost of earth may prove, perchance, to be vastly greater than a narrow theology supposes. And this suggests the third class of texts above referred to - namely, those which speak in general terms of the triumphs of redemption. A noted example will be found in the great Eden promise that the Seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head.

Does the truth of this rest on the statistics of the Judgment Day? In Christ's triumph over Satan does victory depend, as in some of the games of our childhood, upon which side has the larger following? The suspicion is irresistible that they who argue thus have but a poor appreciation of the moral glories of redemption. It will be found, however, that the special texts which are the very foundation of universalism really come within neither of these categories. But, it will be asked, does not Scripture speak of the restitution of all?

The answer is emphatically No. The passage which is thus perverted speaks of "the times of the restitution of all things," of which every prophet testified, from Moses to Malachi. Was the burden of their prophecies the final state? The answer shall be given by one of the authors already quoted: "It is as certainly true as any such wide proposition can be, that the psalmists and prophets of old time never got

more than momentary and partial glimpses of the life to come." Therefore, he argues, the Old Testament "will be of no avail to us" in considering this question; and yet he cites and relies upon a quotation from the New Testament which is expressly declared to refer to the very prophecies that foretell a reign of righteousness and peace on earth.

But does not St. Paul speak of the reconciliation of all things? Assuredly he does: not, however, as a hope to be realised in eternity to come, but as a present truth -a fact accomplished in the death of Christ.* In keeping with this, and as a part of it, God has revealed Himself as the Saviour of all men; Christ has been manifested as "a ransom for all," the propitiation for the whole world." But will these teachers tell us how men can be reconciled who refuse the reconciliation; how sinners can be saved who reject the Saviour; how the lost can be restored who trample under foot the propitiation?

It is these very truths which make the sinner's doom irreversible and hopeless. It would be unpardonable to attempt to write upon this question without having formed a deliberate judgment upon every text of Scripture relied on as teaching universal restoration; and the expression of such a judgment is offered in these pages. But here arises a formidable practical difficulty. If the progress of the argument is to depend on the reader's accepting in every instance the proposed exposition, further advance must be impossible.

To impose such a condition would be unreasonable and unjust. All that is essential here is to show that the passages in question bear an explanation wholly different from that which these writers put upon them; and this at least has been accomplished. Indeed, it is sufficiently established by the admitted fact that such an explanation has been given by the overwhelming majority of theologians in every age. The advocates of universalism have been content to plead that the surface teaching of these Scriptures is in favour of their views: they must go further, and oust the alternative meanings assigned to them by the scholarship of Christendom.

But this they have never attempted to do. This position is not assumed to avoid the necessity of explaining the passages referred to. The reader will find in the Appendix a full exposition of every text on which the universalist relies to prove his doctrine. This exegesis is offered in acknowledgment of the obligation to explain these Scriptures, but it is dismissed to the Appendix as a protest against the assumption that the acceptance of it is vital to the argument. It is not vital.

On the contrary, having thus cleared the ground, we shall now suppose for the sake of argument,-and it is only on that ground the admission can be made,-that the meaning of these passages is doubtful, and proceed on this assumption to discuss the question in the light of great foundation truths.

V

"THE WIDER HOPE."

THE volumes noticed in preceding pages have not been selected at random. Their respective authors are representative men, the acknowledged champions of "the wider hope"; and their books, when read together, may be taken as a full and exhaustive statement of the doctrine. The omissions therefore common to them all are ominously significant. Where, for example, do they offer us any reasonable explanation of such passages as the following? "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord."

How can such language be reconciled with the dogma of universal restoration ? Is it credible that any one holding that dogma could use such words? The author last referred to, with the candour which characterises him, says, "I confess I cannot perfectly explain all these texts." But there are other omissions of a still more serious kind, and, for our present purpose, far more embarrassing. We may agree to exclude from view any number of "isolated texts," but how can common ground be reached save in the acknowledgment of truths such as the righteousness of God, the grace of God, the "resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust," and the great judgment which is to close the history of Adam's race ?* It is on this ground alone we can consent to discuss the question. * The respective schemes of the first two writers seem inconsistent with belief in the "resurrection of judgment."

The third writer dismisses it thus "Of the details of this resurrection, of the nature and state of the bodies of the judged,-indeed bodies in which there is any image of a man, and therefore of God, then are given to them,- and of the scene of judgment, very little is said in Scripture." The meaning of this is clearly that the body given at the " resurrection of judgment" is merely a temporary clothing for the soul, and that the soul shall not be reunited to the heavenly and final body until after punishment shall have been endured.

It will, therefore, be taken as admitted that the many die unsaved, and that these shall be raised from the dead, and shall stand before God in judgment, and be remitted to punishment for their sins. The question here is not of what may be called the providential consequences of sin, the results which in God's moral government follow the violation of His laws. Neither is it a question of corrective discipline to purge and train the penitent. There is no need of a Day of Judgment to apportion punishment in either of these senses: the one follows the sin by unchanging law; the other belongs entirely to the Father's house.

The final punishment of the lost will be the consequence of a judicial sentence. Such punishment, therefore, must be the penalty due to their sins; else it were unrighteous to impose it. If, then, the lost are ultimately to be saved, it must be either because they shall have satisfied the penalty; or else through redemption - that is, because Christ has borne that penalty for them. But if sinners can be saved by satisfying Divine justice in enduring the penalty due to sin, Christ need not have died.

If, on the other hand, the redeemed may yet be doomed, though ordained to eternal life in Christ, themselves to endure the penalty for sin, the foundations of our faith are destroyed. It is not, I repeat, the providential or disciplinary, but the penal consequences of sin, which follow the judgment. We can therefore understand how the sinner may escape his doom through his debt being paid vicariously, or we can (in theory, at all events) admit that he may be discharged on payment personally of "the uttermost farthing"; but that the sinner should be made to pay a portion of his debt, and then released because some one else had paid the whole before he was remitted to punishment at all,- this is absolutely inconsistent with both righteousness and grace.

But as the advocates of the "larger hope" seem to ignore the penal element in punishment, they would probably urge that this is satisfied by redemption, and that the sufferings of the lost will be essentially of a disciplinary kind. All who know much of the darker side of human nature would probably agree that the poetry indulged in about sinners being purified in aeonian fire would not bear translation into simple prose. The idea of reformation by punishment has been generally abandoned by all who have had experience of criminals and crime.

But passing that by, it may be answered, first, that such a view is incompatible with the language of Scripture. "Wrath," "vengeance," "destruction" are not words that express parental chastisement. But as

these writers must be supposed to have some reasonable explanation of such Scriptures, it may be answered, secondly, that if their doctrines be sound, it is in the intermediate state that suffering would produce these results; and if a further non-penal "punishment" is to be inflicted after the resurrection and the judgment, this must be in order to coerce the sinner to submission.

It might be asked, in passing, what value can possibly attach to a repentance wrung in this way from unwilling souls? and, moreover, if hell and the lake of fire shall produce results so blessed, how can it be evil to warn men of the coming horrors? If the reality shall be so beneficial, surely the fear of its terrors can work only good; and the more appalling the description, the greater will be the effect produced. Thirdly, the question arises whether regeneration, and the need of it, have any place in the theology of the advocates of these doctrines.

Divine "chastening" may produce "the peaceable fruit of righteousness" in those who are already "sons"; but to hold that punishment is necessary either as a preparation for, or a completion of, "the new birth," is to deny the plainest teaching of Scripture. Again, it may be asked still more definitely, what room is there in this scheme for the day of judgment? The believer "cometh not into judgment," just because, for him, the penalty of sin has been borne, the judicial question settled, in the death of Christ; and if this be true for all, the judgment of "the great assize" becomes an anachronism and an impossibility.* * The language of John v. 24 is explicit.

It is not that the believer "shall not come into condemnation" as the A. V. renders it, but that he "cometh into judgment" . This statement must not be made to clash with Rom. xiv. 10, and 2 Cor. v. 10, which relate to the judgment of the saved. At the resurrection the believer shall appear in "the image of the heavenly,"-" we shall be like Him." That is to say, his destiny is not only fixed but declared at the resurrection. For him, therefore, the judgment will be on that basis: it will be a matter of reward or loss, not of life or death.

As Heb. ix. 27, 28 teaches, the cross of Christ and His glorious advent are, for the believer, the correlatives of death and judgment. Matt. xxv. 31-46 describes a session of judgment for living nations on earth, and has no bearing on the special point here raised. This suggests another difficulty. The sceptic who demands, "How are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come?" is branded as a fool. But is it folly to inquire, How shall the lost be translated, and with what body shall they come?

And let it be kept prominently in view that the resurrection precedes the judgment. They who have part in the "resurrection of life" shall bear "the image of the heavenly." "When He shall appear we shall be like Him," is the amazing statement of the Scripture. But in contrast with the "resurrection of life" there is also the "resurrection of judgment." Why then call up the evil body at all, unless it be the final condition of the lost? It is not the body that repents, or believes, or turns to God; and, as already urged, if torment could be remedial, it is in the intermediate state it would be efficacious.

The conclusion is inevitable that the body is reunited to the soul in order that the sinner may in the body in which he sinned endure the punishment his sins deserve. And this is the plain teaching of Scripture. But when we are asked to believe that, after the ages of his torment shall have passed, the sinner will be translated in a new and heavenly body, to share the peace and blessedness of the redeemed, we part company with Scripture altogether. It is not a question here of "isolated texts," but of the great foundation truths of Christianity.

If these torments be necessary, where are the triumphs of redemption through the Cross? If unnecessary, what becomes of the love of God? If sinners can reach heaven through the lake of fire, redemption is but "a short cut" to the same goal to which the broad way ultimately leads. Christ need not have died, or, at all events, far too much has been said about His death. Will they who thus reach heaven through "aeonian torments" have much appreciation of the brief agonies of Calvary ?* *(Footnote - I have already shown that of the books quoted supra two practically ignore redemption.

I desire to be perfectly fair, and I have searched the volume last noticed (which was the first written, and inspired the other two) to find a warrant for clearing the author from this reproach; but I cannot. And if such an one as he is betrayed into such language as the following, it may be taken as certain that the views he advocates are inconsistent with Christian doctrine. "What does he say here" (he writes, quoting Rev, xxi. 5-8), "but that all things shall be made new, though in the way to this the fearful and unbelieving must pass the lake of fire? . . .

The saints have died with Christ, not only to the elements of this world, but also to sin, that is the dark spirit world The ungodly have not so died to sin. At the death of the body, therefore, and still more when they are raised to judgment, because their spirit yet lives, they are still within the limits of that dark and fiery world, the life of which has been and is the life of their spirit. To get out of this world there is but one way, death. Not the first, for that is passed, but the second death."

The italics are my own. The extraordinary mysticism which pervades this makes it difficult to fix its meaning, but I am unable to understand it if it does not teach that the lake of fire (the second death) is to the impenitent what the cross of Christ is to the believer.) To recapitulate. The question is not whether the destiny of all be fixed at death, but whether the judgment of the great day be irreversible and final. Not whether God be a Saviour to all men, but whether all men shall be saved, including those who reject the Saviour.

Not whether Christ be a propitiation for the whole world, but whether the whole world shall share the pardon, including those who despise the propitiation. There is not a single text of Scripture which unequivocally teaches that all men shall in fact be saved; there are many which declare in the plainest terms that the judgment-doom of the lost is final. The dogma of universalism depends solely on the assumption that the love of God is incompatible with the perdition of ungodly men - an assumption which may rest entirely on our ignorance, and which, moreover, when worked out to its legitimate results, undermines Christianity altogether It is blind folly to abandon the doctrine of eternal punishment because of difficulties which surround it, and then to take refuge in a belief which is beset with difficulties far more hopeless. If, then, there be no other escape, we fall back unhesitatingly upon the faith of the Church in all ages. But another alternative remains : punishment may be final, and yet it may not be endless.

VI

WHAT IS LIFE?

To some the doctrine of endless punishment seems to present no difficulty. Others again are so decided in rejecting it that if only the dogma of universal restoration be discredited, they are prepared at once to adopt what seems the only alternative, the extermination of the wicked. For the one class these pages can have but a speculative interest. For the other, their practical importance ceases at the point already reached. But it is only the superficial who can ignore the difficulties that beset the problem which still claims discussion.

And, moreover, the rejection of the "wider hope," just because it narrows the inquiry, deepens immensely its importance and solemnity. When our escape from pressing difficulties depends upon a single door, more care is needed than when we supposed we had a choice. Two questions lie across the threshold of the inquiry: What is the meaning of the Greek word *aiōnios*? and, Does man by nature possess immortality? If, to borrow a military term, we can mask these difficulties, instead of delaying to settle them, we shall avoid an almost interminable controversy.

It is maintained by some that *aiōnios* means age-long, and nothing else; but these admit that all men have an age-long existence.* Others, again, contend that the word means everlasting; but these insist that all men shall exist for ever. In either case, therefore, the solemn language of Scripture, which declares Eonian life to be the peculiar blessing of the believer, loses all its significance, unless we understand the word to describe the quality of the life, and not duration merely:- (I say advisedly, "not duration merely."

"Eternal life," Dr. Westcott writes, "is not an endless duration of being in time, but being of which time is not a measure." And again, it "is beyond the limitations of time; it belongs to the being of God." (Epistles of St. John, pp. 205 and 207.) But surely endless duration is implied in this, though it is not the main element in it.) We must conclude, then, that in all such passages the emphasis is upon life, and it is here our attention should be concentrated. This brings in the second question.

The word immortality occurs but thrice in the New Testament. In one of these passages St. Paul declares that God "only hath immortality": in the other, the believer is twice described as a mortal who is destined to "put on immortality."* It certainly seems strange, therefore, that any who profess to follow Holy Writ should contend for the expression "the immortality of the soul" more especially as man's spiritual condition by nature is described as death and not life? What then is life?

Here science can tell us nothing. If we seek the origin of life, Reason answers in one word, GOD. Let the existence of life be taken for granted, and then, no doubt, evolution will offer to account for all the varied forms of life in the world. But until science can get rid of God, the theory is unnecessary, and therefore unphilosophical. It is the old question, Does the hen come from the egg, or the egg from the hen? If science could account for the egg, it would be entitled to put that first.

But as we are shut up to believe in a Creator, it is more reasonable, and therefore more philosophical, to assume that He created the hen. This, of course, is apart from Revelation, which, for the Christian, puts the question at rest for ever. And science can tell as little about life itself as about its origin. It has its definitions, doubtless, but these either assume or ignore precisely what they profess to give us. "Correspondence with an environment" is the latest and most vaunted.

The table on which this paper lies would soon be destroyed by the action of fire or water, but it corresponds with its actual environment. If however we infer that the table has life, we shall be told that a dead thing cannot correspond with an environment at all ; it must have a principle of life to render correspondence possible. It appears, then, that the vaunted definition deals merely with phenomena; whereas it is life considered essentially, not in its manifestations, that concerns us here.

The fact is, biology can tell us about *bios*, but about *zōe* it knows absolutely nothing. Some will be impatient at a disquisition about life. To them it seems the simplest thing possible : life is the opposite of death, and thus the whole matter is settled. But this is to shelve the difficulty, not to settle it. And the question is of extreme importance here. If we are justified in taking life to mean existence, then death is the termination of existence, and we are within reach of the goal we seek.

But this must be proved, and not taken for granted. Our word "life" has to do duty for the two Greek words just cited. And each of these has several different meanings and shades of meaning. As already indicated, zoe is life in its principle, life intrinsic; bios, life in its manifestations, life extrinsic. But there is more in it than this. Bios may signify the period or duration of life; secondly, one's "living," or the means of life; and thirdly, the manner of life. An example of each of these phases of meaning will be found among the eleven passages in which the word is used in the New Testament.

From this last use of the word, as the manner of life, there is often an ethical sense attaching to it, and this is expressed in classical Greek exclusively by bios; in Scripture exclusively by zoe. Zöe, again, is sometimes the equivalent of bios, as expressing the means of life; and our translators have taken it in Luke xvi. 25 as meaning the period of life. It is also used to express the final blessedness of the redeemed or the sphere in which it will be enjoyed; the present condition of the believer, who, it is said, "is passed from death into life," and finally and emphatically, the prince of life.

The often-repeated statement that the believer "hath life" does not mean merely that he is in a state of blessedness; he is in life, but more than this, he has life in him. This is clear from the contrast, "

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