

of the Gospel truths committed to us by our Lord; let such, on the contrary, remember that our Lord ate meat and fish, both before and after his crucifixion, and that the apostles ate meat, and that in no sense of the word was the eating of it condemned or evil spoken of; and that none of the Lord's people today have any higher authorities or examples than these. And let those who eat meat not mock those who eat "vegetable only," believing this course to be more healthful for them.

The fact that for beast and for fowl the Lord originally provided the same vegetarian diet, is in perfect accord with some of the prophetic statements which seem to imply that under the new conditions of the kingdom even the lower animals will return to vegetable diet, when "The lion shall eat grass like the ox." and when "Nothing shall hurt or destroy in all God's holy mountain [kingdom]." (Isa. 11:6, 7; 65:25) Thus we learn that the animals which at present are carnivorous (flesh-eaters) are not now in their original condition, but have been sharers with mankind in the results of the catastrophe which came upon our earth in the flood; likewise that they will be sharers with man, their king, in the great uplift which will come to him and to all nature when God's kingdom, in the hands of the Sons of God, shall be established, and shall bless the groaning creation.—Rom. 8:19-22.

All that God did was in full accord with what he had purposed, and in his sight was very good; but we cannot think that man and the general conditions of the world today are in God's sight "very good," but, according to his own declaration, very bad—sin has marred all; and, as the Apostle expresses it, nothing is very good in God's sight now. "There is none righteous, no, not one." This is another testimony,

therefore, to the effect that the fall of man was decidedly downward, and that the Evolution theory of a gradual and persistent rise is a fallacy.

The creation of man was just in the close of the sixth day or epoch. It was the crowning feature of creation, and finished it. Having finished his creative work God blessed the seventh day (or epoch) and set it apart, and rested therein from any further creative work—foreknowing, however, that during this seventh day, which has lasted from then until now (and will last yet another thousand years), sin would enter through disobedience, and his sentence of death be executed against Adam and his race, and the whole creation be caused to groan; knowing also that while he would thenceforth withhold his creative power, he would provide for the necessities of the fallen race, in the person of Jesus, "a Savior and a great one," who, by giving the ransom-price for man's sin would become his Redeemer, his Lord, and thus obtain the *right* and the *power* to rescue him from death and to lift up all the willing and obedient by restitution processes to all that was lost in Eden.

This seventh day, in which God has rested, to the intent that Christ may accomplish the great work of redemption, reconciliation and restitution has already lasted six thousand years, and altho this time has been an evil time under the reign of sin and death, the Redeemer is, according to the divine program, shortly to take unto himself his great power and reign for a thousand years, until he shall complete the work of restitution of the willing and obedient, and finally shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father, that God may be the all-in-all throughout eternity.*—Heb. 4:4-10

* Further reading matter upon the subject of the Sabbath free to the interested.

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

THE MESSENGER OF THE COVENANT

We are loth to utter one word of personal criticism in these columns: we much prefer to discuss doctrines rather than persons. And yet at times it seems absolutely to the interest of the Lord's flock to identify persons with false teachings. But even in such cases we seek to deal with the doctrines of the persons and not with their personal affairs. This rule has Scriptural precedent. See the references to Hymenæus, Philetus and Alexander.—1 Tim. 1:20; 2 Tim. 2:17.

A man styling himself "Rev. John Alex. Dowie" has come prominently before the public during the past ten years. His specialty until about two years ago was the healing of the sick, in which he was to a considerable extent successful, according to his own accounts. We are informed that he used neither hypnotism nor medicine, but prayed for the sick in the name of our Lord Jesus. Being as sympathetic with every good work done in Jesus' name as we are opposed to every such work done by sorcery, hypnotism and other Satanic influence to deceive—such as Christian Science, Spiritism, etc.—we watched Mr. Dowie's career with a very friendly interest.

Appealed to by WATCH TOWER readers for advice as to whether or not Mr. Dowie's work were of God, and whether or not it would be proper for them to seek divine healing as he proposed, we were obliged to answer them, and now think proper to summarize our reply for the benefit of all our readers and their friends, as follows:—

We are expecting, according to the Scriptures, that our day will abound in deceptions specially prepared by the adversary to "deceive if it were possible the very elect;" and that in his extremity Satan will even cast out Satan, and heal the sick, with a view to perpetuating his hold of power, and to deceive God's people and turn their attention away from present truth. We must remember our Lord's words, "Many will say unto me in that day, Master, Master, have we not taught in thy name? and in thy name expelled demons? and in thy name performed many wonders? And then I will plainly declare to them, I never approved you. Depart from me, you who practice iniquity." (Matt. 7:22, 23, *Diaglott* translation) This implies that Satan will have not only false teachers, but also false miracle-workers who will deceive themselves, as well as others, as respects the source of their power and teachings,—and only awake to a realization of their true position—that they are rejected from membership in the elect church—that they have failed to make their calling and election sure to a place in the kingdom class, when "the harvest is past and the summer is ended."—Jer. 8:20.

Nevertheless we are not to hastily assume that Mr. Dowie is of this deceived class;—let us wait a little, and not hastily decide, lest we think or speak evil of a servant of the Lord. However, there are a few very unfavorable symptoms in this case—foreign entirely to the Spirit of Christ as we understand it. (1) Mr. Dowie's very apparent vanity and boastfulness—so different from the Lord's example followed by the apostles—manifested in his continual reference to himself in laudatory, boastful terms and in the publication of sundry photographs of himself in his own publications. (2) The gentleman uses extremely harsh, vulgar language in referring to any and all who oppose him;—manifesting a hatred rather than a love for his enemies. (3) One of the charges against the Pharisees was that they were covetous or literally "money-lovers"; and this seems to be one of Mr. Dowie's weaknesses. The poor were drawn to the Lord and got most of his favors, but the poor have very small chance of participating in Mr. Dowie's favors. If they cannot pay \$20 to \$25 per week to stop at the hotel, Zion's Headquarters, they have little chance of contact even with the great man's shadow as he steps from his palatial hotel into his carriage. The occupation and salary of Mr. Dowie's followers are inquired about considerably too, and each is given to understand that the only way to live at peace with God and Mr. Dowie is by faithfully giving one-tenth of his income to the Lord—to Mr. Dowie. These are unfavorable symptoms, and unless they are outgrown we can hope for nothing as respects Mr. Dowie and the harvest work. For it is written that "The Lord resisteth the proud but sheweth his favor to the humble."

As respects the Lord's people expecting miraculous healing in answer to prayer: we do not think that they should expect miraculous healing, or pray for it. All of God's people are surely welcome at the throne of grace, and they are invited to bring all their burdens and cares there and to obtain mercy and find grace to help in every time of need. But the *saints* are never invited to pray for their own physical healing. They are, however, assured that it is the Father's good pleasure to give the *holy Spirit* to them that *ask it*. And the intimation clearly is that physical ailments, sorrows and pain work out for God's people the graces and fruits of the spirit if properly received and patiently endured. It is to those so afflicted that the Lord speaks as to St. Paul, "My grace is sufficient for thee." With this assurance the Apostle could glory in *afflictions*; and so may we also learn to do.—2 Cor 12:7-10.

This one prayer of the Apostle, repeated, he tells us, three times, is the only prayer for physical healing by any of the

apostles, so far as the Bible-record shows. It was offered early in the Apostle's experience, before he had learned that his high calling was not to health and wealth and earthly blessings and ease in their enjoyment, but to *sacrifice* all these, that thus becoming a sharer in the sufferings of Christ he might attain to the heavenly condition—glory, honor and immortality—by and by. Thus also our dear Redeemer prayed not for earthly blessings for himself, and used not his powers selfishly. He could have commanded the stones to become bread, but he would not, and fasted forty days. He could have asked, and would have received for his defence and deliverance from his persecutors, twelve legions of angels; but he would not do so—instead he would endure whatever the Father might permit to be poured into his cup of bitter experience; accepting only the common blessings of nature open to all mankind. When weary he *rested*, or became so weak that he could not carry his cross, and sank under it. But he would not pray for strength. It would have been in opposition to his covenant or *consecration unto death* to have thus sought divine aid in resisting death.

But while there are no evidences of the apostles praying for relief from physical ills (except the one instance above mentioned) we have records of their illness, and the illness of others whom they loved. In one instance the Apostle declares of Epaphroditus,—"He was sick nigh unto death: but God had mercy upon him; and not on him only, but on me also; lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow." (Phil. 2:27) Can we doubt that if his recovery had been miraculous the thing would have been so declared to the glory of God? It is evident, then, that it was as stated, of divine *mercy* and not of prayer that the recovery took place. And so it is with us now: "Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of" and fulfils his promises of love and mercy, that all things, even *sickness*, etc., shall work for good to those called according to his purpose.

Physical healing in answer to prayer, as described in the Bible, was performed upon the public, not upon the church, except (as in James 5:14-16) the saint had gotten into sin and into sickness as a chastisement for sin and so could not go to God in prayer for himself. Such should send for the elders of the church, and they should pray over him, for the forgiveness of his sin; "and though he have committed sins they shall be forgiven him, and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and God will raise him up."

Although we are chronologically in the dawn of the Millennium we incline to doubt that any special restitution blessings will be dispensed to the world until the Gospel church, the elect royal priesthood, is completed and glorified; for this is to be their very work.

THE LEAVEN OF PRIDE AT WORK

Within the past two years Mr. Dowie's income from "tithes" of his followers (one-tenth of their incomes) has amounted to a handsome sum, so that he is now rated a millionaire. He has started a bank, purchased land and laid out a city, and embarked in various commercial enterprises. He has also taken the title of "Overseer" (bishop), and has ordained assistants to represent him in various cities, and the gatherings of his faithful are called churches of Christ;—though they show no sign of recognizing Christ as their Head. Rather, since they are ruled by Mr. Dowie in every particular, and their preachers are appointed by him at his pleasure, they have Mr. Dowie, and not Christ for their *head* and ruler, and in all propriety should be considered Mr. Dowie's churches.

Even to thus lord it over God's too credulous people (Col. 2:18; 1 Pet 5:3) does not seem to have satisfied Mr. Dowie, but rather to have still further intoxicated his pride; until during the past six months he has represented himself as being—

THE MESSENGER OF THE COVENANT—MAL. 3:1.

Although quite a number of his followers left him when this was fully understood (for it was broached carefully to "feel" how it would be received before stating it bluntly), yet the majority of the poor "sheep" under his influence seem to be thoroughly deluded—entrapped by his pomposity, which on the contrary they ought at once to have recognized as alien to the Lord's Spirit, had they known and given close attention to the voice of the true Shepherd, who declares,—"My sheep hear my voice and follow me. A stranger will they not follow, for they know not the voice of strangers." We still have hope, however, that the delusion will not last long with many of the distracted and deluded ones, who in many respects give evidence of being of the Lord's flock.

Whoever will refer to Mal. 3:1 should have no difficulty in seeing what Mr. Dowie evidently has not discerned, namely, that *two* messengers are referred to in the verse: first the antitypical Elijah to prepare the way, and second Jehovah's special servant, "the Messenger of the Covenant"—the Lord,

the Christ. A New Covenant had long been promised, more favorable than the Law Covenant. Its Mediator would be greater than Moses—his antitype—Messiah. (Heb. 8:5-13) Israel delighted to think of this coming Messenger of the New Covenant and of the blessings which would then be theirs.

ELIJAH THE PROPHET

Emboldened by his success with *his people* under the title "Messenger of the Covenant," Mr. Dowie made great preparation for a public declaration of his greatness. He rented the immense Auditorium, made previous announcement that something great and unusual was to be expected, and thus gathered several thousand people including newspaper reporters, who give the following details of the speaker's words, etc.:—

"I am Elijah, the prophet, who appeared first as Elijah himself, second as John the Baptist, and who now comes in me, the restorer of all things. Elijah was a prophet, John was a preacher, but I combine in myself the attributes of prophet, priest and ruler over men. Gaze on me, then; I say it fearlessly. Make the most of it, you wretches in ecclesiastical garb. I am he that is the living physical and spiritual embodiment of Elijah, and my coming to earth a third time has been prophesied by Malachi, by God himself, by his Son Jesus, by Peter, and three thousand years ago by Moses. All who believe me to be in very truth all of this will stand up.

"(Over three thousand people rose to their feet and greeted the blasphemous declaration with cheers and hand-clapping.)

"Understand well what I mean (he continued, striding down to the edge of the platform), I will take no counsel in my methods of government. I have come to proclaim theocracy pure and simple, the government of God by God, and for God, and I will never rest till all other forms of government have been driven from the earth.

"You talk about your democracy. Bah! I tell you democracy has been tried in the balance and has failed. The government of the people, by the people, and for the people is twaddle. I stand loyal to the flag and countenance no revolution, but I demand, here and now, that the name of God must be placed foremost in the Constitution of the United States, and the supreme authority of God over all things must be recognized.

"Listen to the first message of the prophet: You must pay your tithes and offerings into the storehouse of God. Accursed be ye if ye would seek to rob his house of its fullness by not obeying this, his will, sent through Elijah. I am come among you to fight the worship of mammon in all its forms."

CONSIDERS ELIJAH AND THE MESSENGER OF THE COVENANT ONE AND THE SAME PERSON—HIMSELF

Poor man! The kindest view of his course is to presume that his reason has become unbalanced;—in a manner, by the way, that is extremely common. A large proportion of the inmates of insane asylums have the organ of self-conceit too largely developed, and reason is unbalanced. Some think themselves Jesus, some apostles, some Mary, some kings and queens of earth, and dukes, etc., etc. Others of an opposite cast of mind accuse themselves of sins never committed, or imagine themselves given over to devils for torture.

Mr. Dowie's reasoning is faulty: that John the Baptist was not the Elijah because he did not have faith enough to believe it, and to so proclaim himself. Was it a proof that Jesus was not the Christ because he did not so declare until near the close of his ministry? Then, he asked the apostles, "Whom say ye, that I am?" and Simon Peter answered, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father. . . . Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ." (Matt. 16:15-20) How different from Mr. Dowie's course!

Our Lord's words respecting John the Baptist explain the matter much better than does Mr. Dowie. Jesus told his disciples after John was dead that John was the Elias—thus contradicting Mr. Dowie's statement that he had failed to comprehend his privilege and never became the Elijah. (See Matt 17:12, 13) However, our Lord intimates that John did not do *all* that is to be done by Elijah, and hence that a greater Elijah is to be expected, when he said,—"If ye will receive it, this is Elias which was for to come."—Matt. 11:14.

John's work as Elijah did not fail because of his own lack of faith, but because of the Jews' unreadiness of heart to be influenced by him. Not many had faith to receive the message, and hence not many were ready to receive Messiah.

The fact that Jesus came to the Jews as their Messiah in the flesh and was introduced by John as a forerunner or introducer (in the power and spirit of Elijah—Luke 1:17) does not hinder the fact that the Messiah (Head and body,

144,000) is shortly to be presented to the world in spiritual power and great glory. And as the man Christ Jesus was introduced by the man John doing an Elijah work of preparation, so the great and glorious Christ must be preceded by a great Elijah who will make ready for the second advent, by testing the people whether they will receive the King in peace and joy, or whether the earth must be smitten with the curse of a great time of trouble in order to make ready for the heavenly kingdom.

This *great* antitypical Elijah is greater than Mr. Dowie and John the Baptist, as the glorified Christ is greater than Jesus of Nazareth in his humiliation. This antitypical Elijah, as we have already shown, is clearly proven to be the entire

Gospel Church (Head and body) in the flesh. For nearly nineteen centuries this Elijah has been *coming*, and been doing his work in the world. Had men received the message joyfully the world would now be longing for the Lord of glory as do we, praying, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." But as John's message was heeded by but few in nominal fleshly Israel, so also but few have heard the message of the antitypical Elijah. As a consequence the earth must be smitten with a *curse*, a blight—a terrible trouble of anarchy to make mankind ready and anxious for the kingdom. On this subject see our detailed proofs that the church in the flesh is the antitypical Elijah.—MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. II., page 249.

ORIGINAL SIN AND ITS PENALTY

GEN. 3:1-15.—JULY 14.

"Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound."—Rom. 5:20.

Sin is in the world; the fact is indisputable. All intelligent people recognize the fact, but only such as accept the Scriptures have an intelligent idea respecting its origin. True, the narrative of Eden and its first perfect pair, and their fall from perfection under divine condemnation, is more or less held, in a legendary way, in heathen religions; but none of these attempt to connect up and philosophically state the relationship between the disobedience, the fall and the penalty, the redemption and salvation from it, as do our Scriptures—the Bible. To the Bible student who is meek and lowly of heart the explanation is most satisfactory; only to the worldly wise and those who hold to the traditions of men, and neglect the inspired revelation, is there anything obscure or unsatisfactory in connection with the narrative of the fall, the redemption and the restitution, which constitute the Bible story from Genesis to Revelation.

We are to think of Adam (consisting at the time of two parts, male and female) as perfect, in the sense of being mentally and morally fashioned after the likeness of the Creator—well poised, well balanced—not "prone to sin as the sparks fly upward," as he subsequently became, and as his children now are. We are not, however, to think of him as perfect in knowledge or in character; knowledge must be acquired, but he was fully equipped with all the mental and moral apparatus for a rapid acquirement of knowledge. As for character, in an intelligent being it is a fixity of the will; and such a fixity can only come with knowledge. In other words, the perfect Adam was ready to acquire perfect knowledge, and had a perfect Creator, able and willing to give him the requisite instruction; and as this right instruction would be received, and this perfect knowledge be attained, character (good or bad) would be established;—either in favor of the principles of righteousness already established by God, or in opposition to the will of God, in unrighteousness.

We are not to think of Adam's condition and trial as an experiment on God's part, the result of which would be doubtful; but, on the contrary, we are to remember that the results were fully known to the Almighty before the trial began, and that he saw the end of his work from the beginning, else he would never have undertaken it. Divine foreknowledge is conceded by a large proportion of professing Christians, who, nevertheless, are sadly confused by certain false theories which imply that the Almighty's foreknowledge was to the effect that the vast majority of the posterity of Adam would spend an eternity in most horrible suffering, and that God prepared the arrangement for their suffering in advance of their creation. This view is untenable amongst those who combine any measure of knowledge of God's character with any measure of reasoning ability. In this lesson we shall see conclusively that our Lord had a much more just, reasonable and loving plan than that,—that he foresaw beneficent results before creating our first parents.

There are two methods of giving and receiving instruction. One through precept and example; the other through experience. Man was not the first of God's intelligent creatures—previously God had created the angels, we know not of how many different orders or ranks—angels, cherubim, principalities and powers, as the Apostle enumerates. These had all been instructed in the first named manner, by good *precepts*; they had not even had instruction through *example*, except on the side of good example: they had no illustration of evil and its pernicious consequences. The divine purpose was to bring into being a new order of creature, humanity, whose instruction, it was fore-arranged, should be along the lines of experience;—which would incidentally add to the instruction of God's angelic creatures, by way of giving them an example of

sin and its consequences, and of the divine attitude toward sin and toward sinners; and incidentally give an illustration of the operation of divine justice and wisdom and love and power.

ADAM'S ORIGINAL FREE AGENCY

Man was intended from the first to be "a spectacle unto angels" (1 Cor. 4:9) as well as to be himself a miracle of divine mercy and love. It was in harmony with this feature of the divine plan that the perfect but inexperienced pair were subjected to a trial under which the Almighty knew beforehand that they would fail through lack of knowledge. The Almighty did not compel their disobedience; yet neither did he forefend them by minute explanations, warnings, guardings, and assistances against the wiles of Satan; nor was he bound to do so by any principle of justice. His creatures were perfect and were placed in comfortable, well-adapted conditions, with every reason to trust in their Creator and to implicitly obey his commands. But, as we shall see as we progress, while they had this sufficiency of information, their *knowledge being limited*, they were proportionately weak.

SATAN A MURDERER FROM THE BEGINNING OF HIS INTER-COURSE WITH MAN

We have mentioned Satan as the tempter, and this is the testimony of the Scriptures throughout; the same kind of reasoning and logic that would relegate Satan to oblivion as a myth, merely a figurative representative of wrong or sin, and not an individual—this same kind of logic and reasoning, if applied to the Creator himself, would similarly make of him merely a good principle, and deny his personality; and this, indeed, is the course of reasoning adopted by some, "Christian Scientists" and others. But we are writing for those who believe the Scriptural statements, and who are neither seeking to get rid of God nor seeking to deny the personality of Satan, but who are ready and anxious to believe what the Lord has revealed respecting him, his present triumph as "the prince of this world," and his soon-coming overthrow and binding, and eventual destruction by the King of kings and Lord of lords.

Nothing in the Scriptures indicates that Satan assumed any evil disposition or opposition to the Almighty previous to this incident of our lesson—his seduction of our first parents into disobedience to the Almighty's commands. This was the time of Satan's own temptation and fall into sin; previously, holy and in harmony with his Creator, he was one of his honored agents and servants; but now as he beheld the newly created pair in Eden, and saw that in them the Almighty had implanted the powers of procreation, which eventually were to fill the world with a human race, Satan beheld certain possibilities before himself, by which he might set up a separate, and to some extent, a rival kingdom. If he could gain control of this first pair and their posterity he would have an empire of his own on the earth, similar to the empire of Jehovah amongst the spirit beings. He would thus grasp a position higher than the other angels, though not as the equal of Jehovah; he would be like him, an emperor, a ruler, and above the others.—Isa. 14:12-15.

We are not to suppose that Satan comprehended in advance the evil results which have followed his course. He could not know any more than others to what extent his own evil course and the communication of it to humanity would bring in all the degradation and sin and misery and pain and trouble and death which have resulted. He became the murderer of our race (John 8:44), though, like many another murderer, he had not probably intended to commit murder at first, but only robbery; but the wrong course led on and resulted in murder, death.

The serpent in the garden evidently differed somewhat from serpents in general today, and apparently this is implied in the curse which came upon it. The testimony is to the effect that originally serpents were very wise, sagacious, evidently not at all repulsive, as at present, to the human family. It was this animal that Satan concluded to use as his decoy in bringing temptation to our first parents. We may or may not think of the serpent as addressing mother Eve in an audible voice; it is possible, we think highly probable, that the serpent spoke by his actions—that under the direction of Satan its actions aroused certain thoughts, feelings, intentions, in mother Eve; indeed, this fact is so clearly recognized that it has become an adage, that “Actions speak louder than words;” yet we would not consider it an insurmountable difficulty to believe that it spoke with an audible voice. But no matter how the questions and implications were suggested to Eve, they came through the serpent, and from Satan, who was the real tempter, bent upon captivating Adam and Eve and making of them his servants, as he indeed succeeded in doing; for the Scriptures inform us that the entire race was “sold [into slavery] under Sin,” father Adam and mother Eve receiving but a small and highly unsatisfactory price in the transaction.

To appreciate the situation and the nature of the temptation, we must remember that the garden of Eden was full of trees of life;* trees bearing fruit suitable to the perpetuation of human life; so that by continuing in the use of these life-giving fruits all tendency to decay would be counteracted, and the eaters of these, under their favorable surroundings, would have lived forever. While there were many of these trees of life, there was one kind, and one only, whose fruit they were forbidden to eat. This was really not a hardship, as they had an abundance and to spare. They should have reasoned that the Almighty had some wise purpose in objecting to their partaking of the fruit of this one kind of tree. It was no more a tree of life than were the other trees in the garden, but it was forbidden. Our first parents had probably lived in the garden for some time, partaking of the trees of life and enjoying their surroundings, at the time the temptation took place. They had probably wondered frequently why the Almighty had forbidden the use of the fruit of that one particular kind, but could find no answer; and it had been sufficient to them to consider that God, in his wisdom, had a good reason, and that ultimately, no doubt, that fruit would be theirs, as well as others, by divine permission.

It was at this juncture that the serpent, which had previously been seen to be superior in wisdom and intelligence, was noticed going to and eating regularly, of the fruitage of the forbidden tree; and with this observation would naturally come the thought, Why is it that the serpent is the wisest of all the lower creatures, if it is not that he gains from this tree some valuable quickening mental influence which gives him his superiority? And with our higher organism, if we should eat of the fruit of that tree would it not make us still more intelligent, still more wise, than we are? Then came the evil suggestion, Can it be that God has a selfish purpose in forbidding us the use of this fruit? Can it be that he wishes to restrain us from proper liberties and powers? If not, why did he ever forbid the use of this tree which might give us the increased wisdom? Might it not be that if we were to partake of its fruit we would not only be as we now are, greater than the beasts, but be as gods,—even as the serpent is wiser than the other animals?

The suggestion that knowledge was to be attained in that direction, and that the Almighty was not acting justly and disinterestedly in his counsel and laws, and that the penalty attached was evidently a falsehood, since the serpent did not die—these considerations, these evil suggestions thus instigated by the Adversary, had their desired effect upon the mind of Eve, and she concluded that, without informing Adam of her decision, she would risk putting the matter to the test. She ate. We cannot know in what respect the fruit of that tree affected the intellect and the passions, but very evidently it did have a powerful influence which engulfed our first parents in sinful passion, and introduced them thus into a possible *misuse* of a knowledge of which previously they had not been entirely ignorant: the result of which was their realization of their own shame and nakedness. We are to remember that much is here told in a few words, yet all, we may be sure, that is necessary for us to know.

THE WAGES OR PENALTY OF SIN

How strange it seems that this simple narrative, which contains not a word respecting eternal torment, should be made the basis of all the fears which have tormented millions of

Christian believers respecting a future of unutterable woe entailed upon father Adam, and through him upon his race, because of the disobedience set forth in this lesson. How simple the statement of the Lord respecting what the penalty would be—*death*; margin, “dying thou shalt die.” How fully this is in agreement with the experiences which have been upon the race for now six thousand years—dying they have died, to the number of something like forty thousand millions. We would not make light of the original sin; we would have it appear in its full force as a deliberate, wilful disobedience of the divine command on the part of those who were not weak through a fall, but who were strong because fresh from the Creator's hands, in his likeness, mental and moral; and yet we assert with all confidence that no reasonable mind can find anything in this language indicating eternal torment as being the wages of sin. Nor could any reasonable mind admit that if eternal torment had been threatened it would have been a *just* penalty for the crime mentioned—disobedience in the eating of forbidden fruit.

We have heard of the vindictive farmer who maimed a boy with a shot gun for robbing his orchard; and we know how public sentiment properly condemned his course as harsh and unjust; yet that poor, fallen man was merciful and generous as compared with God according to the theory of “Orthodoxy,” that for the theft of one apple Adam and Eve and all their thousands of millions of children were condemned to an eternity of torture.

Comparatively few seem to understand that the “orthodox” teaching is that it was on account of this “original sin” by father Adam and mother Eve that not only they, but all of their posterity were sentenced of God to an eternity of torment at the hands of devils, fully commissioned and empowered to injure and torment them in every conceivable manner throughout an unending future. It is the claim, further, that every member of humanity would surely have gone into that torture, had not Jesus come into the world and died for our sins; and that now only such as believe in Jesus, and lay hold upon him through faith and obedience, can hope to escape this universal catastrophe. Is this reasonable? Do sane people believe it? Do those who claim to believe it act in harmony with such teaching? Are they so unjust to their children or to their servants? Would they consider that such a character on the part of God would be worthy to be copied by any intelligent creature, either as respects its justice, its mercy or its love? The fact, we believe, is that the vast majority of Christian people have never had their senses exercised by reason of use in connection with such matters. They are blindly following blind leaders, who have received and adopted as truth “traditions of the elders,” doctrines and theories promulgated during “the dark ages,” and who do not investigate the *Bible* for themselves.

Surely this lesson of original sin and fall and penalty, taught by over two million Sunday-school teachers throughout the civilized world to over twenty-three millions in Sunday-schools, using the International Lessons, should be productive of great good, should open the eyes of understanding of many, and help them to see wherein they have so greatly erred and misunderstood the sentence, and hence misunderstood also the redemption from it, set forth in this lesson. But we cannot hope for much, seeing, as the Apostle declares, that “the god of this world has blinded the minds” of so many;—some more, some less. They will read over the sentence, and where they read “die,” will think, “live in torment.” They will take the part of Satan as against God, and with him declare, “Ye shall not surely die;”—ye cannot die, ye are immortal by nature, and because so, ye must live forever, either in bliss in heaven, or in eternal torment in hell. Thus Satan has for six thousand years opposed God, opposed the truth, and enslaved many in sin, and blinded others my misrepresentations of the divine character and plan, and his entire effort has been worked out in harmony with his declaration of this lesson, contradicting God, saying, “Ye shall not surely die;”—the wages of sin is not *death*, but *life* in torment.

HOW OTHERS VIEW THIS LESSON

A little curious to know what some of the so-called “theologians” would say respecting the matters of this lesson, and its statement of what the penalty of sin is, we looked up some of their opinions, and give two of these. One says: “Death as the wages of sin includes, not only temporal death, or the death of the body, with all the ills attendant upon a state of mortality, but also spiritual death, or the alienation of the soul from God, who is the only source of spiritual life, and lastly, everlasting death, or final exclusion from God and holiness and blessedness.” The doctor of divinity, whose words we quote, has overlooked entirely the very essence of the sentence against sin expressed by the Lord in the words, “The

* A grove or “woods” or orchard seems to be the thought of the original—See Gen. 3:24. Rev. 2:7.

soul* that sinneth it shall die." The reason undoubtedly is that he does not believe that souls can die; it is contrary to his theology, and hence he treats the subject from every other standpoint than the divine standpoint. From God's standpoint the soul is the entire being; it includes the mental and moral powers as well as the physical; and implies a degradation, a corruption, a destruction, of all these in death. And so we find it; man has not only died physically, as a result of his penalty, but the same dying process prevails in his mental qualities and in his moral qualities, so that when death has completed its work all is gone; the soul, being, is dead; and that beyond any power of recovery, so far as man is concerned—a recovery, a resurrection, being only possible from the divine standpoint, by divine arrangement, and the exercise of divine power. In the quotation we are criticising, notice that the claim is made that Adam died a *spiritual* death; but nothing in the Scriptures informs us that he was a *spirit* being. On the contrary, the Scriptures tell us that he was of the earth, earthy,—not a spirit being, but an animal being, a human being. He could not, therefore, die to what he did not possess.—1 Cor. 15:45, 47, 48; John 3:6; Gen. 3:19.

Nor was man redeemed to a spiritual state or condition. On the contrary, the Scriptures assure us that *restitution* is to be the result of the ransom to whosoever will accept it on God's terms: a restitution, not to spiritual conditions, because these were never enjoyed, and never lost; but a restitution to all that was lost in Adam's disobedience—to the perfection of human life, under blessed conditions, in full harmony with the Almighty and in his image and likeness. As to spiritual life, we find the Scriptures teaching that the natural man has nothing whatever to do with it; that to the new creature, the church, alone has it been offered as a *change of nature*: that only the Gospel church of this present age is begotten to this spiritual nature, and is to experience a change from human to spirit beings in the resurrection. The remainder, even of the obedient, will not be "changed," but will be *restored*.—Acts 3:19-23.

The above expression which we are criticising declares, finally, that the ultimate meaning of the death sentence was, "lastly, everlasting death." We agree with the statement, but not with the meaning which the reverend gentleman expects his readers to attach to his words. He wishes them to think of everlasting death as never being attained, but always being approached. It is a mild way of putting the eternal torment doctrine, and probably nine out of ten of all who have ever read his utterance have so understood him. He was hindered from making his statement more definite by reason of the fact that he had not a single word in the Scriptural account whereon to hang any doctrine of eternal torment; he must hang everything on the word death, which is the declared penalty; he must, therefore, presuppose that his readers have been well indoctrinated according to the false standards, and have learned from theological instructors how to twist language to mean its opposite; how to make *death*, the Scripturally stated penalty, to mean *life everlasting in torment*, and this in the face of the declaration that life is the gift of God, and will be granted only to those who receive the Son. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God [the pronounced penalty for sin, the curse, the sentence, death] abideth on him." "The soul that sinneth it shall die." "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."—John 3:36; Ezek. 18:20; Rom. 6:23; 1 John 5:12.

Another doctor of divinity writes on this subject as follows: "It is not sufficiently borne in mind that man's exclusion from the tree of life, which could have conferred immortality, was the carrying out of the sentence." How confused are the ideas of theologians in general upon this subject! Note in this expression the thought that the eating of the tree of life could have given man *immortality*. Is it supposable that any kind of fruit could produce such a change in man as to make him immortal? It is not supposable; it is unreasonable. But, on the other hand, let us remember that this same doctor of divinity would in the same breath claim that man was already immortal; and that he, like all other theologians, bases all of his doctrines respecting the eternity of torment for the damned upon their assumption that man was *created immortal*, and therefore could not die. How absurd then, every way, is this statement, that Adam was excluded "from the tree of life, which could have conferred immortality!"

The narrative should be taken as it reads. All the trees were good for food, and desirable to the eye;—all trees of life—not trees of immortality, for no tree could give immortality; God alone had immortality inherently, and he hath given it to

the Son, and hath pronounced it to the bride, the Lamb's wife, and to no others. Immortality is the prize set before the Gospel church of overcomers, and none others. Had Adam remained in the garden of Eden forever, and partaken of all the trees of life therein, he would not have attained immortality, though he would have possessed everlasting life thereby. His disobedience resulted in his exclusion from all the trees of the garden,—from all the trees of life: and he was thenceforth compelled to labor with sweat of face in the unprepared soil (outside the specially prepared garden, in which his trial took place), that thus dying by inches the penalty—death—should finally be accomplished to the full.

"THE WOMAN WAS FIRST IN THE TRANSGRESSION"

We cannot share in the general disposition to think of father Adam from the ignoble standpoint of "blaming the transgression upon his wife, and seeking to shirk his own responsibility." As a perfect man, unskilled in deceptions and the telling of "white lies," he would probably feel, especially when addressing his Creator and Judge, and in answer to a direct question, that he must tell the exact truth, and he neither felt shame in telling the truth, nor do we feel shame for him in respect to his testimony. The difficulty is that the majority of those who read the account have not appreciated the grandeur of father Adam's position in respect to his wife and the transgression. To our understanding of the narrative, mother Eve's disobedience and involvement in transgression was wholly apart from her husband's knowledge or complicity; and he, when he learned of her course, was so full of sympathy and so full of love for her, as a member of his own body, that his affection quite overcame his proper sense of duty and obligation toward God.

Concluding that his wife's disobedience had forfeited her life, and that the result to him would mean the everlasting loss of her companionship, he deliberately chose to be with his companion in sin rather than to be separated from her, and to enjoy divine favor and blessing everlastingly without her: therefore he ate knowingly, to share her penalty—he suicided. To our view, in reporting the matter to the Almighty, Adam did not state his case in his own favor, did not state how he was overcome by the pressure of his own heart-love for the one whom the Lord had given him to be his companion; but in the simplest form he explained, as the question properly demanded, how he had partaken of the fruit at his wife's instance. We are not defending Adam; we hold that he sinned wilfully and deliberately, and came justly under the sentence, but we hold also that it was his lack of knowledge that lay at the foundation of his disobedience, even as lack of knowledge and a desire to gain the same lay at the bottom of Eve's disobedience. Had Adam appreciated the divine character, as the Lord's consecrated people may now appreciate it, in the light of fuller knowledge and revelation, his course might have been a different one. He might have trusted the matter to the Lord, that he was able to recover mother Eve from the terrible condemnation under which she had fallen through her disobedient act. It was his despair as well as his ignorance that led Adam to the disobedience that brought the death-sentence, otherwise called "the curse" and "the wrath" of God upon our race.

THE WAGES OF SIN SEVERE

If to some it may at first appear that death is not a severe sentence, not a manifestation of divine wrath, not a curse, let them reflect further; let them note how all of the dying processes are only parts of death, and that as insane asylums mark those who become mentally dead before they are physically dead; and as hospitals mark those who become physically decrepit before they are mentally decrepit; and as prisons mark those who become morally dead or decrepit before they are physically dead; so all of the experiences of our race, "groaning and travailing in pain together," mark "death working in us." All sicknesses, pains and sorrows are parts of the dying process, in the fifty thousand millions of the human family who have come into the world during six thousand years. The "curse" or sentence of death has resulted in blighted hopes and loves and ambitions, and is rapidly placing the entire race in the great prison house of death—the grave. Surely, the true penalty of sin was a heavy one, though we must admit it was a just one. Surely, it involved all of the race of Adam in the most natural manner, because all of his children are partakers of his sentence; because sharers in his weaknesses, his imperfection, resulting from his transgression of the divine law.

THE SERPENT SHALL BITE THE DUST

The Lord's curse or sentence came upon all who were involved in the transgression: upon the serpent, the active agent of Satan; upon the woman, first in transgression; and upon

* See tract, *What is the Soul?* Sample copy free

the man, in whom centered the responsibilities. As to the expression, "Dust thou shalt eat," we incline to consider it as figurative, since we are not aware that the serpent includes dust in its food any more than do the other animals. The expression, "Lick the dust," has long stood for a demeaned, degraded condition, and as a matter of fact, serpents are despised of all and made to "bite the dust" (die) whenever and wherever found, and just such an enmity as is here described, between humanity and serpents, is notorious.

THE ULTIMATE TRIUMPH OF CHRIST OVER SATAN

Our first parents must have understood the concluding sentence of our lesson as a ray of hope—"It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." It was a very indefinite, vague promise of a future triumph of mankind over the adversary, over sin, over all the evils connected with sin and its penalty, death, but we do not yet see such a victory. We see the race still blinded by Satan; we see him still "prince of this world," working in the hearts of the children of disobedience, who, alas! are vastly in the majority. But the faith enkindled by the Lord's word of promise has since grown and developed and been added to. The promise to Abraham, that his seed should bless all the families of the earth, was a further declaration of the statement made in Eden. Christ is this seed. Begotten of a new life, through the seed of the woman, he has indeed triumphed over sin and death, and declared that he will finally vanquish the Adversary; he has paid the penalty, the very penalty that was originally pronounced, death. "Christ died for our sins." We were thus "bought with a price, even the precious blood of Christ."

We have this assurance, then, that God's plan is continuing to operate, to unfold, and we have good reason to hope for the promised ultimate consummation, in which Satan shall be utterly destroyed. The plan of God during this Gospel age is taking another step forward, in that it is selecting a special, "elect" class, to be members of this seed (Gal. 3:29), to be members of the body of Christ; and in harmony with this is the Apostle Paul's statement, "The very God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly"—under the church's feet, for the feet are the body of Christ, and he is the Head

of the church which is his body—hence, under the feet of the Christ.—Rom. 16:20.

Not very long, now, we may hope, will it be until the elect seed of Abraham, the elect seed of the woman, shall be complete, and the work of treading down evil and ultimately destroying it, and eventually destroying Satan himself, with all who intelligently and wilfully are coworkers with him in his rebellion against divine love and justice, will be accomplished. (Matt. 25:41) Meantime the thousand years, the Millennial age, is set apart for this work of crushing evil, of stamping it out, of bringing in everlasting righteousness. Praise God for such a Gospel, such good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people, as a result of the redemption accomplished by our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, and of the great deliverance which by and by, in due time, he shall bring to pass.

Our Golden Text is the key to all of our hopes. Sin abounded as against not only our first parents, but all of their posterity, unto sentence of death. But God's grace abounded still more, and toward all, in that he provided, through Christ, not only a recovery of all who will of mankind from the penalty of sin and death, but also that the restored and perfected race shall have all that was lost in Eden, full and complete, and that *everlastingly*. Additionally God's grace abounded to the extent of taking out of the world of sinners a little flock to be heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, whose nature is to be changed, so that they, instead of longer being of the human nature, will become partakers of the divine nature, sharers of the divine glory and honor and office with their Lord Jesus—far above angels, principalities and powers and every name that is named.

O, for such loving kindness and tender mercy which abounded towards us while we were yet sinners, and which much more abounds towards us in Christ, now that we are accepted in the Beloved one,—for this let the Lord's people give thanks continually, and let the thankfulness of heart extend and manifest itself in words and conduct, in all that we do and say, that all may be to the praise of his glory who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light!

THE STORY OF THE DELUGE

GEN. 8:1-22.—JULY 21.

"Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord."—Gen. 6:8.

"Higher critics" pick at and find fault with the record of the deluge given in Genesis, yet they are unable to gainsay the fact that there was a great deluge. They find its record written in all parts of the world, in some places indicated by the erosion of the rocks and the deposit of shells and gravel in high altitudes, and in other parts by immense alluvial deposits. Moreover, every nation and people throughout the world (the black race alone excepted) has its traditions and records of the great deluge and of Noah. The fact being so well authenticated, the critics have been obliged to content themselves with minor objections—finding fault with the Scriptural account of the Ark—considering it impossible that the flood should have been throughout the whole world, and probable that it was merely upon some portion of it.

"Higher critics," amongst theologians and schoolmen, are disposed to criticise the text and to claim that the Bible narrative gives evidence, as do other parts of Genesis, of the consolidation of two originally separate accounts, combining the features of both. Many of them are disposed to consider that the book of Genesis was written by Ezra only a few centuries before Christ, and claim that Ezra got his account from the Babylonians during the captivity, and that he merely attributed it to Moses to give it the greater force and reverence before the people. Other critics, however, are forced to admit that the Genesis accounts of the creation and of the flood are immensely superior, in order and in every detail, to any and all accounts ever found elsewhere; and that the reasonable theory would be that the ampler and clearer accounts of Genesis were the first written, and that the accounts of surrounding nations were written subsequently,—legends and traditions. Prof. G. F. Wright says respecting the Babylonian records of the flood, which are meager indeed as compared to the Bible record—

"It is proper to observe that the cuneiform tablets (in their account of the deluge, copied from Babylonian records of 1800 to 2000 years before Christ) combine in one account, and in substantially the same order as that of Genesis, both the Elohistic and Jehovistic documents, supposed by many critics to have been united into one only after the exile. In this comparison, therefore, we have well-nigh scientific demonstra-

tion that these critics are wrong in their inferences from literary analysis. And," he adds, "the attempt to make out that there are two combined accounts of Genesis containing irreconcilable chronologies is little more than a gratuitous supposition, for they can readily enough be arranged in one continuous chronological scheme. While we need not maintain that science demonstrates the truth of the Biblical account, we can say that it presents no insuperable obstacle to the account when properly interpreted, while it does add plausibility to the study by bringing clearly before our minds a period of geological history since man came into the world, during which there was great instability of the continents and a succession of catastrophes, startling in their magnitude and short in their duration, which may well have culminated in the Noachian deluge."

One of the pronounced higher critics, President Harper, of the Chicago University, admits the general correctness of the Scriptural account of the deluge, viewed even from the hypercritical standpoint, saying: "We may regard the deluge as a historical fact, preserved in a multitude of forms; 'an actual and terrible event which made so powerful an impression upon the imaginations of the first parents of our species that their descendants could never forget it. This cataclysm took place near the cradle of mankind, and previous to the separation of the families from whom the principal races were to descend.' The deluge was a fact; it was a part of a great plan; its record, as handed down to us in the Hebrew Scriptures, is the one clear, distinct account, and when compared with the other accounts bears on its face indications of its divine origin."

To the Christian mind it is quite sufficient attestation to the truthfulness of the account of the deluge, as given in Genesis, that our Lord, the great Teacher made no criticism of it, but by referring to it clearly implied its truthfulness and general correctness. And the evidence is still further strengthened by the fact that the Apostle Peter refers to it, and under the guidance of the holy Spirit shows that it marked the close of the first dispensation,—as a great cataclysm of trouble, anarchy, symbolically called "fire," will mark the termination of the present dispensation, and prepare the

way for the new era, called the new heavens and the new earth.—Matt. 24:37-39; 1 Pet. 3:20; 2 Pet. 2:5; 3:6, 7.

Considering then that the truthfulness of the narrative is abundantly established, a first foundation for those who have the eye of faith and the ear of faith, we proceed to the examination of the lesson. Although there are evidences that the whole world was at one time under water, pebbles and shells being found in the tops of the highest mountains in all parts of the world, nevertheless it would not be essential to the truth of the narrative that we should assume that the entire earth was covered with water in Noah's day; it may have been, or it may not have been. Apparently western Asia was the cradle of our race, and the whole world at that time was of very limited dimensions. That part of the world could very easily have been submerged, and again elevated, by forces not fully comprehended as yet by anyone,—for this is admitted to have occurred in various parts.

The Ark, according to the measurements given, was an immense structure, with a storage capacity probably at least treble that of any vessel afloat today. Its length, three hundred cubits, would be about five hundred feet; its width, fifty cubits, about eighty feet; its height, thirty cubits, about fifty feet. Let us compare these dimensions with those of a great vessel of today, the *Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse*. Its length is 648 feet; its breadth 65 feet; its depth 43 feet. We are to remember, however, that the Ark was not built for navigation, but merely as a float, like a covered raft; hence it needed not to be pointed at either end, and toward the bottom, as are modern ships. We are told that it had three floors; and when we estimate the difference as respects the width at bow and stern, its capacity would be at least twice as large as the *Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse*; and when we omit the motive power and steering apparatus it would practically give it at least three or four times the storage capacity of the latter vessel.

This peculiar and enormous vessel had an immense cargo of animals, and food for their sustenance during the long period of confinement. Nor need we suppose that all the wild animals of today were wild and troublesome in the Ark; many may have become wild since then. The mention of animals taken into the Ark as being "clean" and "unclean" would rather seem to refer specially to the useful animals, as for instance, the cow and the sheep are clean—proper for human food, as provided by Jewish law, while the horse and the dog would be amongst the unclean, unsuitable for food, but nevertheless useful servants of mankind.

Scientists have indulged in amusement as respects the poor ventilation, claiming that the Ark had only one little window, one cubit, twenty inches square; but rather we should understand that this window, twenty inches high, extended around the Ark on all sides under the eaves. The particulars are not given us, but from our standpoint Noah and his sons, the contractors for the building of the Ark, were not stupid men, only one degree above the monkey, but men of good mind, only a few degrees below the perfect man, as they had maintained to a considerable degree the original image of God, conferred upon Adam and transmitted by him. It was not many centuries after the construction of the Ark that the great Pyramid of Egypt was built, which likewise gives abundant evidence of skill. We can reasonably suppose that the architects and builders of these were sufficiently skillful to know how to provide for the necessary ventilation. Indeed, the Great Pyramid was for a long time a marvel in respect to its ventilation, which later was found fully provided for.

Those who claim that evolution has been the process of mankind's development, find a serious obstacle to their theory in this record of the flood;—not only those who attempt to ignore the divine Creator, but those as well, who recognize Jehovah, and who claim, contrary to the Bible, that he has been developing mankind out of a brute stock. It goes against all evolution theories to claim that the race of Adam became so grossly corrupt that it was just and proper that it should be blotted out of existence, only a remnant being carried over for a new start. If Adam in Eden was but one remove above a monkey, what shall we say of the condition of the world of mankind after 1,656 years, and the Lord's declaration respecting them, that instead of evolving into greatness and dignity, they had corrupted their way and were not fit to live?

SONS OF GOD AND DAUGHTERS OF MEN

The Scriptural account of the condition of mankind previous to the flood, is that the earth was full of giants and full of violence, and the explanation of this condition of things is that the giants had been born as a result of marital union between a class called "sons of God" and certain "daughters of men." Commentators in general have, we believe, fallen into grievous error as respects the meaning of

this statement, supposing it to signify that the expression "daughters of men" refers to Cain's daughters, and that the so-called sons of God were the children of Seth. According to this claim, the wickedness of Cain descended to all of his daughters, and the supposed righteousness of Seth descended to all of his sons, for a certain time, and that the blending of these two families opened the flood-gates of wickedness. This supposition seems to us very untenable, for several reasons. First, there is nothing in the Scriptures respecting the posterity of Cain to imply that they were under any curse, because of their father's sin. To suppose such a law would be to suppose that it prevails still, and that heredity would entail upon the children of all murderers the guilt of their parents, and upon the children of all thieves, marauders and evil-doers the direct guilt of their parents. We admit that evil disposition is transmissible, and that to a certain extent it follows to the third and fourth generation, but we deny that there is any special curse of God after the fashion that is here claimed. Furthermore, according to this very theory, the sons of Seth retained his righteousness and favor with God for a time, and then suddenly lost it all—except Noah,—an unreasonable assumption. Furthermore, it would be difficult for those who take this position to explain to us why the evil seed of Cain intermarrying with themselves would not produce giants, and men of renown, and how a blending of these two families would produce that which neither of them could or did produce alone. The theory is lame and inconsistent in every particular.

The Apostle Peter gives the key to the real solution of the matter when, in reciting the events connected with the flood, he tells us of the fall of the angels at that time, who "in the days of Noah" "kept not their first estate." (1 Pet. 3:19, 20) Those angels who were permitted to have a measure of control of the fallen race, with a view to helping them as much as they might be able, and who, for the purpose of rendering such assistance to mankind, were permitted to appear in human form, became enamored of the human female, and preferred the human or animal form to their own state as spirit beings. They thus left their original estate, as Jude also explains. (Jude 6) These angels are the ones denominated "the sons of God," none of the human family being given that name after the fall. Adam, we are told, was originally a son of God (Luke 3:38), but none were so called subsequently until the Gospel age. We are told that at our Lord's first advent those who received him received privilege or liberty to become the sons of God. (John 1:12) And so the Apostle declares respecting the Gospel church, "Now are we the sons of God [prospectively], and it doth not yet appear what we shall be," when perfected as sons, when our adoption shall be completed, as members of the body of Christ. (1 John 3:2; Rom. 8:17) On the contrary, the term "sons of God" is a general name applied to the angels.—Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7.

From this standpoint the whole matter is clear—every feature of it. Mankind, impoverished in vitality by fifteen hundred years of toil in the condemned earth, battling for his bread with thorns and thistles, was considerably weaker than in his perfection, the image of God, before the dying process began; while the angels, assuming human bodies, would possess completeness of vitality and virility, and in consequence of this, the children born to them by the daughters of men would not only be physically giants in strength, but also mentally—as declared in the record, "men of renown"—superior to other men in qualities of cunning, skill and ingenuity. Thus the agencies which God had permitted for the benefit of mankind became a snare to his spiritual governors, and a test of their loyalty to righteousness, to purity, to fidelity to God. And to our understanding God foreknew, foresaw, this fall of "those angels which kept not their first estate," even as he foreknew the fall of our first parents in their trial in Eden. And from our standpoint both of these falls were permitted to give instructive lessons, useful not only to those more particularly involved, but to all of God's human creatures who should afterward be born, and ultimately be brought to a knowledge of the truth, and additionally instructive to the holy angels who maintained their loyalty to God, to righteousness, to purity, to their first estate.

The Apostles Peter and Jude clearly mark out the punishment visited upon those "sons of God" who thus betrayed their trust and fell into sin, "leaving their own habitation," their own nature, and affiliating with the human nature. Their punishment has been their deprivation of all such liberties, and their separation from God and from the holy angels; and this restraint is called, by the Apostle, "chains of darkness," while the restrained ones themselves, instead of being recognized as "sons of God," or angels of light, were thenceforth known as "angels of darkness," "demons," "wicked spirits."