

SERMON.

“ *These shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal.*”—MATT. xxv. 46.

These are the words which describe the result of the Judgment; when the good, or the blessed (represented by the sheep), are placed on the right hand; and the evil, or the cursed (by the goats), on the left. But what a vague and indefinite, or even perverted and falsified meaning may they present to the mind, unless we have a true idea of the laws or principles on which they are based.

Our opinions and our conclusions will be almost inevitably formed from the nature of our education and surroundings: we shall view the *Words* of God from the same natural stand-point that we do His *Works*; and these, unless we are better instructed, will be from our *sensuous perceptions*, or from *appearances* of truth, rather than from its *realities*. The simple and untaught mind sees in the unclouded sun, and in the smiling face of nature, an ideal picture of a pleased and benignant God; but when the heavens are covered with clouds and darkness—when the storm and the whirlwind rage, the lightnings flash, and the thunder reverberates, it is at once thought that *God is angry*—that the lightnings are the flashes of His vengeful eye, and the loud thunder the utterance of His angry voice.

But a little research into the laws and phenomena of physical science dispels this illusion. We penetrate beyond the clouds which encompass us into the realms above them, and we find that there all is calm and undisturbed repose, and that the turbulence and violence we witnessed upon the earth was due to the state and condition of the earth itself; it was, indeed, but the irruption of its own evils, or the ebullition of its own impurities. And so, in like manner, if we but ascended above those outer coverings, in which the love and wisdom of God are conveyed to man in His *WORD*, we should in like manner see that although, on the mental earth, or from the plane of the earthy or natural mind, we might often see what appeared to be anger and wrath and fiery