

tion, and the utter fallacy and futility of the annihilationist arguments?

We cannot close without some reference to the tendencies and results of the theory we have been examining. In its fully developed form it leads to the grossest kind of materialism. Denying the immortality of the soul, it makes the body the whole of man; it tells the Christian mother that the infant whom God took, and whom she expects to meet again, will have no future existence; it says to those who are mourning the loss of loved ones who have died in the Lord, that the spirits of the departed are *not* "with Christ, which is far better," that to be "absent from the body" is *not* to be "present with the Lord," and that the souls of believers do *not* immediately pass into paradise, but are consigned to a condition of unconscious slumber. With such a prospect before him, instead of being "gain" for the Christian to die, it would be loss, immediate and immense. Oh, it is a dreary, dismal creed, against which I would most solemnly warn you. It cannot be found in the Bible, and no Christian Church of any name has ever held it. We learn from history that for the first three centuries of the Christian era, it was never once heard of, till a rhetorician named Arnobius began to teach it. Of this man the Church historian, Mosheim, says that he was "superficial in his knowledge of Christian doctrines, and commingled great errors with important truths." That is still the characteristic of those who uphold the annihilation dogma. When will men learn that their own speculations are unprofitable, and that it is best for them to abide by the "law and the testimony?"

Over thirty years ago a good but erratic man, called William Miller, aroused public attention in some parts of the United States and Canada to the subject of Christ's speedy coming and personal reign. He ventured to fix the precise date of the advent, and when the day passed and the Bridegroom still tarried, hundreds of his followers, disappointed in their hopes, fell back into avowed infidelity. Hundreds more, carrying out the system of interpretation adopted by Miller, reached conclusions regarding the condition of the impenitent dead similar to those we have been examining, and which their leader would have rejected as utterly unscriptural. Moreover, in its direct results this theory cannot fail to