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"WORK WHILE IT IS CALLED TODAY."

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WILL YOU TELL YOUR FORTUNE, PRETTY MAID.

"I'll tell you 'your fortune,' pretty maid!"
"You may if you tell it true."
"Well, I can see that you love right well,
A sailor lad with a bright black eye,
And a heart both kind and strong."
"Nay, gossip," she said, with a merry laugh,
"You never were further wrong."
"The lad I love has a bright blue eye;
A better lad never was born
He isn't to match behind a plough,
Nor yet in the hay or corn.
He never was in a tossing ship;
He never was near the sea;
His home, it stands in a field of wheat,
And under an apple tree."
"A farmer boy! And you love him well?
Ah, that is a better fate.
Just cross my hand, and I'll tell you, child,
How long you will have to wait
Ere you shall smile at the wedding ring,
And the bridal morn shall see,
And go to the home in the wheat field
Sit under the apple tree."
"It is not long, if the stars speak true—
And when do they speak in vain?"
You will marry the farmer boy you love
When the Summer comes again."
Then merrily rang a mocking laugh—
"Ah, gossip, how little you know!
For my farmer boy and I were wed
A year and a half ago!"
"Whatever of good may come to us,
Whatever grief or ill,
Comes not from any planet or star—
It comes from our Father's will.
The joy or sorrow of the future years
No mortal could ever show;
He knoweth the way that we shall take,
And that is enough to know."

PREDESTINATION.

Are you "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world?" If so, we propose to assist you in arriving at a knowledge of your duty, in order that you may become citizens of God's government on the earth—children of God's family—members of Christ's body, the Church—that you may escape the punishment of the damned, and secure for yourselves the favor of God and the bliss of heaven. But while our primary object is to benefit the alien, it is hoped that a careful reading of our book will be interesting and profitable to the babes in Christ. They should not regard themselves as fully grown at birth, and therefore cease their investigations; but they should desire and feed upon the sincere milk of the Word, that they may grow to the stature of men and women fully grown in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ. Knowledge is one of the adjuncts of faith: "Besides this, giving all

forty days, and Nineveh shall be diligent, add to your faith virtue, and to virtue, knowledge." 2 Pet. i: 5. "Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the truth. Yes, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance; knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle." Vers. 12 and 13
But before we proceed to look for the conditions upon which aliens may secure the favor of our Heavenly Father, it may be well to enquire whether or not there is any thing they can do that will be conducive to this end. There are prominent doctrines taught by those for whose learning and piety we have the most profound respect, which, if true, render it wholly unnecessary, it seems to us, to spend time or labor in instructing the sinner with regard to his duty either to God or man.

That we may place these doctrines properly before the mind of the reader, without any reasonable probability of misrepresenting them, we beg permission to make a few quotations from the fountain whence they flow

"God, from all eternity, did, by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass." Presbyterian Confession of Faith, chap. iii, sec. 1. To the same import we have the answer to Question 12 (Large Catechism), as follows: "God's decrees are the wise, free, and holy acts of the counsel of his will, whereby, from all eternity, he hath, for his own glory, unchangeably fore-ordained whatsoever comes to pass, especially concerning angels and men."

Now, if the doctrine here set forth is true, we think it impossible for man to err. Whatever he does, is in keeping with and brought about by God's fore-ordination or decree, and therefore can not be wrong. If he does any thing—it matters not what—whether good or bad—if God has ordained every thing, He has ordained that thing. If it comes to pass that a man lies, God has not only ordained that he should lie, but He has unchangeably ordained it. If it comes to pass that a man steals, God has unchangeably ordained that, too. If it comes to pass that a man kills his neighbor, God has unchangeably ordained that, also. It did come to pass that Cain killed his brother: why, then, did God put a curse upon him for it? It was not only in accordance with the most wise and holy counsel of His will, but He had freely and unchangeably ordained that Cain should do the very thing for which He cursed him!!! Can any sane man believe it? God has said: "Thou shalt not kill. Thou shalt not commit adultery. Thou shalt not steal. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor." Ex. xx: 13-16. As God has thus plainly forbidden things which do come to pass, it can not be true that He has unchangeably ordained them. That

God should unchangeably ordain that a certain thing should come to pass, and at the same time positively forbid it, is an inconsistency entirely incompatible with His divine character, especially when we add to it the thought that He threatens the guilty with endless punishment. Surely He, whose laws ever bear the impress of that infinite Justice, goodness, love, and mercy which characterize their Author, would not punish His dependent creature man in the rude flames of an angry hell forever for doing that which He had unchangeably ordained that he should do: "The Lord is good to all: and His tender mercies are over all His works." Ps. cxlv: 9. "The Lord is righteous in all His ways, and holy in all His works." Ver. 17. Therefore when the murderer stains his hands in the blood of his fellow, he can not take shelter under the doctrine of the creed by saying that God, in ordaining every thing that comes to pass, ordained that he should kill his neighbor, and thereby avoid the responsibility of the act and the punishment due his crime. It is true that the makers of the creed disclaim the consequences of the doctrine, saying, "Yet so as thereby neither is God the author of sin;" but they have failed to show us how His character may be vindicated from such a charge in harmony with such a doctrine; and we are unable to see how God is not the author of what He has unchangeably ordained should come to pass. If He has unchangeably ordained every thing that comes to pass, then how can man change God's unchangeable ordinance? and if he can not change it, surely no blame can attach to him for any thing he does. If God unchangeably ordained that a certain man, on a certain day, should do a certain thing, then there is no power left to man not to do the thing; for were he to avoid doing it, he would have changed God's unchangeable decree, and therefore had more power to change than God had to enforce. Is any one prepared to assume such a position as this? The reader will please note the extent of the doctrine in controversy. It is not that God has from all eternity ordained, but that he has unchangeably ordained; not some things, but whatsoever cometh to pass—every thing. Surely, the ordinances or decrees of God are broken every day. He has ordained that men shall not kill, yet they do kill. He has ordained that they shall not steal, yet they do steal. He has ordained that they shall not bear false witness, yet they swear falsely every day. God compels no man to keep His ordinances, but He will visit upon him merited punishment if he does not keep them. Paul tells us that "the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation." Rom. xiii: 1, 2. How can any one successfully resist that which God has unchangeably ordained? God said, "Yet overthrow." Josh iii: 1. Here

was a positive decree or ordinance of God that did not come to pass for "God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not." Ver. 10. Was not this decree changeable? God said to Hezekiah, "Set thy house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live." 2 Kings xx: 1. Here was another positive ordinance which was changeable, for Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed, after which God said to him: "I have heard thy prayer; I have seen thy tears; behold, I will heal thee: on the third day thou shalt go up unto the house of the Lord, and I will add unto thy days fifteen years." Vers. 5, 6. Here was a decree concerning Hezekiah's death which was changed, and his life prolonged fifteen years, and the change induced by his prayers and tears.

When David was at Keilah, he inquired of the Lord, saying: "Will Saul come down as thy servant hath heard? O Lord God of Israel, I beseech thee, tell thy servant. And the Lord said, He will come down. Then said David, Will the men of Keilah deliver me and my men into the hand of Saul? And the Lord said, They will deliver thee up. Then David and his men, which were about six hundred, arose and departed out of Keilah, and went whithersoever they could go. And it was told Saul that David was escaped from Keilah, and he forbore to go forth." 1 Sam. i: xxiii: 11-13. When David left Keilah, Saul turned his pursuit in the direction of David's flight, and did not go to Keilah at all. Had God decreed, from all eternity, whatsoever comes to pass, it occurs to us that He would have answered David differently; perhaps something after the following style: "No, David, Saul will not come to Keilah, nor will the men of Keilah deliver you into his hands, for I have unchangeably ordained that you shall leave Keilah, and Saul will turn his pursuit in the direction to which you go." This was what did come to pass, and certainly God did not tell David what he had fore-ordained to be untrue. Had David remained at Keilah, Saul would have gone there; hence circumstances, and not immutable decrees, controlled this event, even as they do most others. Other examples might be given, but these are enough to show that God has issued decrees that never have come to pass, nor never will come to pass. Now, if it is true that God fore-ordained every thing that comes to pass, then it follows that He fore-ordained the reformation of the Ninevites, the prayers of Hezekiah, and the flight of David from Keilah; hence when He said, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown," He had fore-ordained, before time began, that it should not be overthrown. When He told Hezekiah to set his house in order, for he should die and not live, He had fore-ordained that he should live a fifteen years longer. And when He told David that Saul would come to Keilah, and that the men of Keilah would de-

liver him and his men to Saul, was it not telling him that events should happen which He had unchangeably ordained to be otherwise? How such a theory is to be harmonized with the word of the Lord, we know not.

By the mouth of his prophet, the Lord said (Jer. xviii: 7-10): "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; if that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them." Here we see the same law obtains as to nations that we have seen applied to cities and individuals. If they, having done evil, turn from the evil, then the Lord proposes to turn from the evil which He purposes doing to them; on the contrary, if they persist in disobedience, they will suffer the consequences, even to extermination. Hence circumstances have ever varied God's dealing with man.

Again: "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that he had made man on earth, and it grieved him at his heart." Gen. vi: 5, 6. Now, if the Lord fore-ordained every thing that comes to pass, He fore-ordained every thing the antediluvians did: why, then, should He grieve over their wickedness, when every act was but the consummation of His own immutable and eternal decree? Really, it would seem like God grieving over His own folly.

The Lord said that the children of Judah had "built again the high places of Tophet, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire; which I commanded them not, neither came it into my heart." Jer. vii: 31. "They have built also the high places of Baal, to burn their sons with fire for burnt offerings unto Baal, which I commanded not, nor spake it, neither came it into my mind." Jer. xix: 5. If God fore-ordained every thing, He fore-ordained these things, for they came to pass; yet He says He did not command them, nor speak them, neither came they into his mind. Will the advocates of the doctrine please to enlighten the world as to how God fore-ordained things which never entered His mind? But we will not press the argument further. If the doctrine be true, the whole theory of sin, accountability, rewards, and punishments in harmony with justice and mercy, is to us utterly incomprehensible. Every act of man is but carrying out the immutable purposes of Jehovah; and when He gives a man a law, He does it expressly that he may violate it, so as to furnish a pretext for the punishment previously ordained for him.

Take the sin of Adam as an example: God made him and placed him under law. It came to pass that he violated this law. He ate of the fruit whereof God commanded him not to eat. If God fore-ordained whatsoever comes to pass, then of course He fore-ordained that he should eat. Hence Adam was in a strait between the law and the unchangeable ordination or decree. It came to pass that he ate; therefore God ordained that he should eat. The law said he should not eat. One or the other must be broken. He must eat, and violate the law; or not eat, and change God's unchangeable decree. This was impossible; hence to eat and violate the law was a necessity; and yet God would punish him for it!!! Surely, such a theory is at war with the Bible—with all reason and common sense—as well as a reproach upon the character of our Heavenly Father. But able and learned men have taught it, good and true men believe it; therefore we must treat it respectfully, yet examine it fairly, patiently, and thoroughly.—T. W. BRUNTS, in Gospel Plan of Salvation.

In the controversy on baptism it is wise to keep before the public the statements of learned and orthodox men, especially when they speak in opposition to the received practices of their own churches. There is not a living man in Great Britain with higher reputation for Biblical learning than J. K. Lightfoot, recently made bishop of Durham. I do not recollect to have seen in the papers his remarks on Col. ii: 12. Here is the introductory paragraph: "Baptism is the grave of the old man, and the birth of the new. As he sinks beneath the baptismal waters, the believer buries there all his corrupt affections and past sins; as he emerges thence, he arises regenerate, quickened to new hopes and a new life. This it is, because it is not only the crowning act of his own faith but also the seal of God's adoption and the earnest of God's spirit. Thus, baptism is an image of his participation both in the death and in the resurrection of Christ." If you have not the book, cut this out and keep it. Seldom will you find more truth uttered in the same space, in both the action and the design of this ordinance. J. W. McCANNEY, in Guide.

If a Christian shudder at the sight of a poor old east wretch, then let him shudder at the rock on which he wrecked his bark. In other words, let those who lament the drunkard's estate and denounce the business which makes drunkards.

While a sinful life engenders suffering, and a sorrow is always hidden at the bottom of a forbidden joy; on the contrary, enjoyment and unvarying contentment are the results of a life of purity.

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.