

When there are no more elect to come out of it, the world will be brought to an end. The world was founded to prepare for the elect a kingdom (Matt. xxv. 34). St. Paul *endured all things for the sake of the elect* (2 Tim. II, 10). For their sake the evil days of the last great trial shall be shortened (Matt. xxiv. 22). Christ shall come at the last day to *gather his elect* (Matt. xxiv. 31). None but the elect shall enter heaven.

*God wills all men to be saved* (1 Tim. II. 4). Christ *died for all* (2 Cor. v 14). He is *the Saviour of all men* (1 Tim. IV. 10). He is *the propitiation for the sins of the whole world* (1 John II. 2). Yet not all men are saved. There are *sheep and goats* (Matt. xxv. 33), elect and reprobate. The elect, the *chosen* are *few* (Matt. xxii. 14), which, whatever else it means, certainly means that they are not all even of those who are *called* and come to the faith. How many the elect are as compared with the reprobate, we do not know, what living men are of the number of the elect, we can but conjecture. We are no. certain of ourselves. How the number of the elect is filled in, is the greatest mystery of God's providence. We know that men come to belong to that number by the grace of God and their own co-operation, by faith and good works, by avoiding sin and repenting of sin committed, by perseverance in prayer, by almsdeeds and works of mercy, by the exercise of faith, hope and charity, by keeping of commandments and reception of sacraments. But all this comes to naught unless the man dies well. And who die well? Generally those who have lived well. But some sinners die well. Some have been saved, who have committed more sins, done fewer good works, received sacraments more seldom, attained to a lower degree of grace, and altogether have been more careless of their salvation, than others who have been lost. Election and final perseverance is a great mystery. In presence of it we must humble ourselves before God and pray, and ever *work out our salvation with fear and trembling* (Phil. II. 12).