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NO SCRIPTURAL AUTHORITY FOR A BELIEF OF THE ANNIHILATION OR UTTER DESTRUCTION OF THE WICKED.

In commencing a discussion on this subject, it seems proper to give, from standard Scriptures, the meaning of the words *Destroy*, *Destruction*, *Death*, and *Annihilation*. Johnson and Mauder give the following meanings of the above-mentioned words:—"*Destroy*, to take a city to lay waste; to make desolate; to kill; to put an end to. *Destruction*, the act of destroying; waste; murder; the state of being destroyed; a destroyer. [*In theology*]—eternal death; also demerition; ruin. *Death*, the extinction of life; mortality; destruction; state of the dead. [*In theology*]—Damnation; Eternal torments. *Annihilate*, To reduce to nothing; to destroy; to annihilate. Neither the word *annihilate* nor *annihilation* is in any part of the Sacred Scriptures.

The persons who hold the belief of the annihilation, or utter extinction of the soul and body of the finally unrepentant and wicked, pretend, of course, to do so on the authority of the Scriptures. The words *destroy* and *destruction* are indeed contained in very numerous passages of the sacred volume, but never convey the sense or meaning of any annihilation or end of the being of any of the human race. Several passages from different books of Scripture will now be given, in which the words *destroy* and *destruction* are used; and it will be seen that not one of them can be made to bear the semblance of any annihilation or extinction of being; nor is there, the writer confidently asserts, any other word in the Scriptures having such meaning as to any human being.—Gen. vii. 19, 20. "And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth, and all the high hills that were under the whole heaven were covered. . . . And the mountains were covered. . . . And the living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven, and they were destroyed from the earth." It is perfectly evident that here the word *destroyed* cannot be thought to mean annihilation of the bodies or souls of men, but simply taking away natural life, as well as that of all other creatures, by the waters of the deluge.

The writer considers it a religious duty to make here a short digression to expose and refute the error, not only of real or pretended scientists (who, in reality, are infidels or semi-infidels as to Divine revelation), but also of those professed believers in that revelation, who avow the opinion that the whole of our globe was covered by that deluge, but only a certain portion of it in the eastern hemisphere. That such infidels should be ignorant of even the letter of Scripture and its meaning is not at all surprising; and it is so with many of the whole of them, for several reasons which need not be mentioned. But that there should be professed theologians, and others claiming to be acquainted with the Scriptures, who hold that opinion, shows not only a blameworthy ignorance of the plain letter of revelation on the point, but very great culpability in thus giving their sanction to the objections of the infidel class. Will any of them in their pretended superior wisdom inform us what high hills or other parts of this globe of earth are not at all times under the whole heaven?—meaning the visible heavenly firmament which so evidently surrounds our globe, and is constantly beheld by all. Of course, they will not venture a denial of this universally-evident fact, as it would expose their ignorance of one of the first and plainest truths of astronomy. Every individual knows that fact during the whole of the 24 hours of his daily existence on the earth, by constantly seeing that heavenly firmament above him, as evidently at mid-night as at noon-day. It would seem as if the Divine Spirit, to prevent the cavils or frustrate the objections of infidels, and to show more emphatically and clearly the universality of the deluge, employed the two similar and pointed expressions, "all the high hills that were under the whole heaven were covered," and "all the mountains were covered," and all flesh died that moved upon the earth, as if the true believer in the Sacred Scriptures would not merely excuse the digression on this very important subject, but will think the writer for it.

Levit. xiii. 30. "And whatsoever soul it be that death any work in that same day, the same soul will I destroy from among his people." The word *soul* here is synonymous with the soul, or spiritual being, but only by the bodily powers. It is also evident that the words, "cut off from among his people," fix the word "destroy" to mean merely taken away by death; for in the sense of annihilation, or utter extinction of the soul, those words, "cut off," &c., would be quite superfluous and absurd.

Deut. ix. 26, 27. "Ye shall soon utterly perish from off the land whither ye go over Jordan to possess it; ye shall not prolong your days upon it, but shall utterly be destroyed. And the Lord shall scatter you among the nations." No annihilation here, either of soul or body; but death of some and dispersion of others. According to this Divine prediction, they (the Israelites) have for many ages to this day been scattered but distinct people.

Job v. 21, 22. "Neither shall thou be afraid of destruction when it cometh. At destruction and famine thou shalt laugh. . . . Here *destruction* or other affliction is meant, not annihilation.

Job xvi. 6. "He is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering." The future punishment of the wicked, and in place, are evidently meant. It would be absurd to say that annihilation or non-existence "hath no covering."

1 Cor. iii. 17. "If any man defile the temple of God, his God shall destroy him. Here also *destroy*, has the same meaning, namely, punishment in the future state, as in Mark x., previously cited, and the other passages connectedly mentioned.

It was literally fulfilled in the instance of Haman and Mordecai, recorded in the book of Esther. Ps. lii. 6. "God shall likewise destroy thee forever, he shall take thee away, and pluck thee out of thy dwelling place, and root thee out of the land of the living. The righteous also shall see and fear, and shall laugh at him." If this text had ended with the words, "God shall likewise destroy thee for ever," the *Destructionists* would certainly have considered it as one of the very strongest authorities in their favour; as those words, standing alone might have seemed to afford their theory some semblance, if not validity, at least of supposition or possibility. Unquestioned and unexplained, it would have seemed, beyond all other Scriptural passages, to have given some slight countenance to the heterodox opinion, but the succeeding words of the verse most clearly show that the words, "destroy thee for ever," as in many similar passages, only mean taking away from this world by death. The whole text is most conclusive against this unscriptural theory of destruction of being, and is of itself quite sufficient to utterly destroy it.

Ps. lxxv. 23. "But thou, O God, shalt bring them down into the pit of destruction: bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days." Here is evidently meant an early death, and commencement of future punishment. "Pit" of "annihilation" would be absurd.

Ps. xc. 30. "Thou trustest man to destruction, and sayest, Return, ye children of men." Here, evidently, the death and dissolution of the body, and its resurrection, are meant by the words *destruction* and *return*.

Ps. cvii. 20. "He sent his word and healed them, and delivered them from their destruction." From their distresses or afflictions, not annihilation.

Ps. lxxv. 27, 28. "And your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer." "Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way." Here is evidently meant not annihilation, but extreme afflictions, and a refusal of any relief or deliverance.

Ps. lxxv. 31. "He that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction." "Shall have trouble or affliction—not annihilation." "Hell and destruction are before the Lord."

Hades, the place of separate spirits, and Abaddon, the place of torment, are constantly used in Scripture, in relation to the destruction, or extinction of being, could not be constantly before him.

Ps. lxxv. 31. "Hell and destruction are never full." "They will not be until the end of time. It would be absurd to say that annihilation, or the final end of being, is "never full."

Isai. li. 19. "These two things are come upon thee; who shalt be sorry for thee? desolation and destruction, and the famine and the sword." Here, evidently, destruction does not mean annihilation, but temporal afflictions.

Jer. xvi. 18. "Bring upon them the day of evil, and destroy them with double destruction." Desolation and death are evidently meant. Double annihilation would be absurd.

Ezek. ix. 9. "I will stretch out my hand upon him, and destroy him from the midst of my people Israel." Here, evidently, death is meant.

Ros. iv. 6. "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge." Are distressed or afflicted, not annihilated.

Ros. vii. 13. "Destruction unto them because they have transgressed me." "I will stretch out my hand upon them, and destroy them from the midst of my people Israel." "They shall be their derision in the land of Egypt."

Severe affliction, as punishment, is evidently meant here.

Matthew x. 28. "But rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." Here the word *destroy* plainly means, no hope of pardon or relief from the punishment in the future state, but *utter misery*, called in Scripture, "Second Death." It cannot mean annihilation or utter extinction of being, for if this were meant, the word "hell," the place of the punishment of the wicked, would be superfluous and absurd; for annihilation there could be no suffering in hell, or elsewhere.

The text is the utterance of the Lord Jesus Christ himself; and his meaning, by his own words also, is readily seen from his own words also, in Mark ix. 43-44, concerning the wicked, namely,—"To go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched; where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." These same expressions are twice repeated in immediately following verses; and the same meaning of the word *destroy*, is further shown in the following words of our Lord, concerning all the wicked at the final judgment of all mankind, "as it is written in Matthew xiv. 41. 'Then shall I say unto them, depart from me, ye who do these things, shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.' All these passages are in perfect agreement, and they entirely exclude any idea or thought of annihilation, or extinction of existence, being meant by the word *destroy*, mentioned in the same text. They are all the utterances of our divine Lord himself, and they relate to and comprehend all the finally impenitent and wicked. He could never contradict himself, or utter opposite or conflicting opinions on any subject.

Romans xiv. 15. "Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died." Here the word *destroy*, must have a meaning similar to the same word in the first of the preceding passages, and not that of annihilation, for one human being cannot annihilate another.

1 Cor. x. 9-10. "Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer." The first event here referred to, is thus mentioned in Numbers xxi. 6. "The Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and much people of Israel died." The instance of the murmuring, is thus mentioned in Numbers xvi. 49. "Now they that died of the plague were four thousand seven hundred. No annihilation is meant in either instance of destruction, but sudden death, as punishment.

1 Thess. i. 7-9. "When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and the glory of his power." Here, the *everlasting destruction* evidently means banishment from God, were the finally impenitent and wicked will forever suffer the vengeance of "eternal fire," as declared in several other passages of Scripture, some of which have been previously cited. Under the meaning of annihilation, the word *everlasting* in the text, would be altogether superfluous and absurd, as annihilation could not be progressive, and continue to advance forever, but must be instantaneous, or limited in its time of execution. As regards the wicked mentioned in the text, and all others who are assigned to the regions of future punishment, there will be the utter destruction of all expectation or hope of release from their prison and misery.

There have now been cited, no less than twenty-four passages of Scripture, in which the words *destroy*, *destruction* and *destruction* are used; and not one of them affords the least semblance to the meaning of annihilation, or the utter extinction of the existence of any human being. Very many more texts contain the same words, but not one of them can possibly be made to bear that meaning. Neither is there any other word in Scripture, from which it can be inferred or supposed.

As to additional, and most conclusive proof, directly opposed to any such annihilation, there are numerous passages of Scripture expressly declaring the future punishment of all the finally impenitent and wicked, and the utter extinction of that punishment. The following are a few of them.—Mark ix. 43-44. "It is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands, to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched, where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." Two repetitions of the same awful and continued punishments immediately follow.

Luke xvi. 23-24. "And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torment, and saw afar off Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, and he cried, saying, 'I beseech thee, remember that I was with thee in thy life-time; and thou hast not had compassion on me, when I cried unto thee.' And he answered and said unto him, 'Between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that they which would pass from you to us, cannot; neither can we come to you, to tell you of these things.' These were the words of Abraham to the earthly rich man, then, and now, in everlasting torment. Matthew xxi. 41-42. "The Son of Man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Rev. xix. 15. "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the lake of fire." "But the fearful and the unbelieveing, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

Matthew xxv. 41-46. "Then shall he say also unto them on his left hand, depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire. . . . And these shall go away into everlasting punishment. . . . These last avails were the utterances of the Lord Jesus Christ himself, the infallible and final Judge, and they relate to, and comprehend all the finally impenitent and wicked who have ever lived on this earth; and whose punishment is so plainly declared to be everlasting. These being the decisive and unchangeable truths on the subject, and who are the human beings, who are to be annihilated, or utterly put out of existence. There can be none, as all the wicked will be everlastingly punished; and certainly there will be no annihilation of the righteous, for it is said by the Lord, that they shall go "into life eternal."

The plain truth is, that so far from there being a single word in Scripture to give any countenance to this theory of annihilation, the letter and spirit of the Scriptures are directly opposed to it. The believers in this destructive doctrine, are but rarely among the vast body of those who have taken this life, with its various desires, profits and sensual qualifications, as their satisfying portion; and neither care, or give themselves the trouble to search for, or think about doctrines or differences in religious profession, steadily or occasionally shown, by attendance on public worship, and reading on the sacred day of rest, a limited portion of the Scriptures. The chief inventors and supporters of the ruinous theory, are persons whose minds are in some degree occasionally exercised on religion, and the result and events of futurity, but who are living in sensuality, vanity, levity and carelessness, or other modes or forms of evil, contrary to the convictions of conscience and reason, and under partial and very inadequate views of the requisites of revealed truth. Being at times uneasy in their minds, as to eternal consequences, and not willing to relinquish their betting lusts and vanities, they endeavor to torture the words *destroy* and *destruction*, or other modes or forms of evil, to the same word, to mean annihilation; which they would gladly receive, rather than incur the risk of being condemned to the dreadful and enduring punishments denounced against the finally unrepentant and unholly; and those who have neglected the salvation of the self-deceiving and holy Christianity, required and enjoined in the sacred Scriptures.

JOHN G. MARSHALL.

CUYLER ON BEECHER.

There are thousands of readers of the *Evangelist* who were delighted with that noble speech of Parkes Godwin, at the dinner given to Prof. Tyndall. The speech of Prof. R. D. Hitchcock, on that occasion, though briefer, was not less manly. Only a fragment of it appeared in the daily papers; but that like a bit of marble from one of the friezes of Phidias. The theme was "Religion and Science"; and nobly did he vindicate that Gospel, whose aim and end he is, when turning to the chairman, Mr. Evans, he said, "Sir, I came too late into the world to meet your honored father; but with the tradition of his fine and saintly character, I should be quite ashamed to apologize for being one of those 'Presbyterians' whose pulse our great has quickened a little here. It seems sometimes as though Science and Religion had met in a very narrow path, on a very dizzy ridge, and were interlocking their anthers in a struggle that must be fatal to one or the other. If it must come to this, I think history suggests that Religion, but Science, must give down the cliff; for mankind at large manage to get along very well without much science, but mankind at large have never managed to get along without Religion. (Applause.) Skepticism may endure for a day, but with the sunset and the star-light comes either religion or its disease, superstition; and superstition is the vengeance of Providence on skepticism, sure to come. (Applause.) But there is no need of any such issues; the path is broad enough both for science and religion; and those scientists are greatly mistaken who suspect, on our part either distrust, or jealousy, or fear."

It was well that our Presbyterian Professor was on the spot to host again that standard of the true faith which Mr. Beecher had, a few moments before, so ingloriously lowered. General Dix's famous motto might well have been put into a scroll, and hung over the altar of the great meeting, and rarely has a great man been set for the defence of the Gospel of Christ, and yet behaved with more pusillanimity than did my old friend and neighbor of "Plymouth Church" on that occasion.

To Prof. Tyndall, as a brilliant physicist, that banquet was a well earned tribute of respect. It was not the place for any ill-considered remarks, or for the least intimation, for any of his utterances on Prayer and Providence in past years. But it was the place, and the time, for a Christian minister to speak out a few clear, ringing words for the supernatural religion of the Bible. Henry Ward Beecher has rarely had a finer opportunity to win the gratitude of all evangelical Christians, and to give his own views on a revival, and to set his own seal to it.

He began his speech with an humble apology for being a minister of the Gospel. "He had not chosen his profession; but his father had chosen it for him." What a pity that the glorious old man had not chosen his son a theology, as well as his profession! If the Lyman Beecher of Litchfield and Boston had stood at the altar, instead of the junior Beecher, that assembly would have heard "thunder all around the horizon." The clear-eyed old athlete would have gained the physical laws which with God governs the material world; but he would have "contended earnestly" for those sublime spiritual truths which are "revealed," and which are as clearly defined and as unchangeable as any law of optics. For that, he would have been as ready as the preacher who has charge of the meetings, how can they expect the Spirit of God will be poured out upon them? If they are divided among themselves, or neglectful of duty, or half-hearted, how can they expect sinners to have much confidence in them? When the pentecostal Spirit was poured out, the disciples were all agreed to seek a revival, and to seek it now. This cannot be too strongly impressed upon the mind of all who would have God powerfully work among them. And in a working unity there must be a head. Evidently the preacher must be the leader. The preacher should be so humble, meek, and condescending to God, that the Holy Spirit will dwell in him, and he will be able to call, and any church member should come out to church, and take hold of the work with him. When he says talk, sing, or pray, or come to the altar to pray and work there, the church should move into the work with zeal and promptitude. When he says, go out and visit from house to house, there should be no hesitating to go, and to be as ready as the preacher who has charge of the meetings, how can they expect the Spirit of God will be poured out upon them? 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