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THE GOSPEL MESSENGER,

OR UNIVERSALIST ADVOCATE.

["AND THE ANGEL SAID UNTO THEM, FEAR NOT, FOR BEHOLD I BRING YOU GOOD TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY WHICH SHALL BE UNTO ALL PEOPLE."—Luko 2. 10.]

VOL. 1. LONDON, CANADA WEST, DECEMBER, 1849. NO. 12.

Review of Hall on Universalism.

1st. ALL MEN SHALL BE DRAWN TO CHRIST; And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. Jno. 12. 32. [No. 22—p. 58.]

Our author thinks that before we can make this text favor our doctrine, we must prove the following points:

1. That the *drawing* here referred to is compulsory; 2. That it is to be accomplished in eternity, and not in time; 3. That the lifting up of Christ from the earth, here referred to, has not yet been accomplished, and will not be till the resurrection of the dead; 4. That *all men* means the whole human family; and 5. That "*will draw*" is unconditional.

To which I reply—If by "compulsatory" he means *compulsory*—that is, that men are to be "drawn" *contrary to their wills*. I shall not attempt to prove it, for I do not believe it. Men, all men, may be drawn to Christ, and there be nothing *compulsory* about it—that is, without being *forced* in opposition to their wills. It is not necessary to say that this must be done in eternity; it matters not when or where it is done, whether in time or in eternity, so it is done within, or during the reign of Christ. The third proposition we do not believe, and therefore I shall not attempt to prove it. Christ was lifted up from the earth, when he was *nailed to the cross*—and thus was fulfilled the "*if*"—the only *condition* in the declaration. It is just as evident that *all men* means the *whole human family*, as that the *whole human family* means *all men*!—consequently it is not necessary to prove the fourth proposition. The fifth will stand as true until proved to be otherwise.—It is not customary, I believe, to have *two* conditions in a simple declaration like the text. The condition is, *If I be lifted up*—which has been fulfilled, as before stated; we have, therefore, the best assurance in the world that the declaration will be fulfilled also—that all men will be *drawn to Christ*. It is by no means necessary that we prove these points, as our author supposes, in order to make this text support Universalism; some of them are self-evident—the others we do not believe, and of course do not wish them to be true.

The word *draw* is used in the sense of *invite*, and hence cannot be compulsory.

"Cannot be compulsory?" Wonder where he found this word *compulsatory*?—As he is a man of undoubted genius, I suppose we may safely consider it a word of his own invention! But the word *draw* means *invite*, does it? Let us then read the text in that way: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will *invite* all men unto me!" Need there be anything said in order to refute this ridiculous idea? or does it not sufficiently refute itself? And what authority does he give us for this? None but that of Alexander Hall!

All men does not necessarily mean the whole human family. Universalists cannot prove that it has this meaning in any passage in the Bible, except when it speaks of God as creator of *all men*.—p. 59.

I am aware that the phrase does not always mean an entire whole—it never does when used in a historical sense, as where it is said "*All men* counted John, that he was a prophet." (Mark 11: 32)—but let it be understood that when it is used in reference to a *point of doctrine* it means *all*—the whole human family." And if it be true, as our author admits, that it means *ALL* when it is said that God is the Creator of *all men*—that he will have *all men* to be saved—that Christ died for *all men*—that he rose from

the dead for *all men*—that in him *all men* shall be made alive—and, as in the text, when it is said he will draw *all men* unto him. It is just as easily proved that *all men* means the entire human family in each and all of these declarations, as it is to prove that it has that meaning when it is said God is the Creator of *all men*. This every rational and honest man will admit. The phrase in all of these places is used in a *doctrinal* sense, and must, according to the rule before laid down, mean the entire whole.

"*Will*" is frequently used conditionally; and so it undoubtedly is in this case, "I will draw all men unto me"—i. e. if they will come.—p. 60.

I challenge Mr. Hall, or any other man, to find an instance where "*will*" is "used conditionally" in a declaration which has a condition *expressed*, as in the text under consideration. It is impossible to conceive of *two* conditions in a declaration like the text. The condition—*If I be lifted up*—has been fulfilled as before stated; and it was upon the fulfillment of this condition that the balance of the declaration depended—I *will draw* all men unto me. To say that "*will*" is here "used conditionally" is the very height of absurdity, and sets common sense at perfect defiance!

But suppose we should admit that Christ will be lifted up at the general resurrection; &c.—p. 60.

But suppose you don't "admit" it until you are asked to do so! Where in all the world did you ever hear of a Universalist who said that Christ would be lifted up at the "general resurrection"—and that he would then draw all men unto him?—Such imposition and barefaced deception deserves the unqualified contempt of every honorable and high minded man, let his religious sentiments be what they may! No Universalist ever asked you to admit such a preposterous idea;—or, so far as I know, ever contended for such a thing! All the remainder of your paragraph, based upon this irrational and never-before-heard-of hypothesis, may go for what it is worth. It is only calculated to excite the contempt of every Universalist who sees it!

In conclusion I would remark upon this text, that there can be no question as to the absolute character of the phrase *will draw*; we have seen that from the very nature of the declaration there can be no *condition* attached to it, that being expressed in the fore part of the expression *all men*, would be as absurd to deny the universality of the phrase in Tim.—where it is said God "*will have all men to be saved*"—or in Heb. 2. "He tasted death for *every man*"—or in 1 Jno. 2, "He is the propitiation for the sins of the *whole world*"—or in 1 Tim. 2, 6, "He gave himself a ransom for *all*." These all, except the first refer to the one offering on the Cross, as well as the text; and if there is universality in one, there is in all, for all refer to the same thing. The passage then in review is a promise, rendered *absolute* by the fulfillment of the condition—"*if I be lifted up*"—and embraces *ALL*. It may therefore be numbered with the promises in Christ Jesus, all of which are *YEA*, and in him, *AMEN*.

2d. ETERNAL LIFE THE GIFT OF GOD: The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Rom. 6: 23.—(No. 27—p. 73.)

Here we have a specimen of profound erudition and abstruse reasoning, such as are not often to be met with.

Does it follow, because eternal life is a gift, that therefore it is unconditional? Not

at all, but quite the reverse, as you shall now show. The word *gift* presupposes a *giver*; and the word *giver* presupposes a *receiver*; and the word *receiver* presupposes *reception*, which to all intents and purposes is a *condition*. There can be no *gift* without a *giver*; and there can be no *giver* without a *receiver*; neither can there be a *gift* possessed or enjoyed by the *receiver*, without the condition of *reception*. Hence *eternal life* being a gift, is the very strongest argument imaginable in favor of its conditionality.—p. 73.

Well, well, if *this* is the condition, we have no objection to it—we will admit it. This is very conclusive, and reminds me very much of another splendid argument perpetrated by our author, which I saw some time ago. It will be recollected that when giving an exposition of the Promise to Abraham, I maintained that it was *unconditional* (on our part), adding at the same time that the *condition* was fulfilled by Abraham. No sooner does Mr. Hall see this, than he comes out on me in his "Proclamation," and boasts very loudly that I have admitted just what he contended for, viz: that the Promise was *conditional*, for I had admitted as much in saying that Abraham *fulfilled* the condition! I considered this quibble entirely unworthy of notice at the time I saw it; and I should not refer to it now, were it not that it is so very similar to the one just quoted, and I thought that I might as well preserve the two together, while I was about it, as rare specimens of logic for future reference! It makes no difference to him in what way or sense a promise or a gift is conditional, so that it is *conditional*! Although the Promise to Abraham is absolute and unconditional on the part of mankind, yet as Abraham fulfilled the condition, the Promise is in reality *conditional*, some how or other, and Mr. Hall has gained his point! And in order to have a *gift*, there must be a *giver*, and a *receiver*, and the thing must be *received*: therefore, a gift is *conditional*—some how or other—no matter *how*—but it is *conditional*, and this is all he cares for!

Now, he is perfectly welcome to all this argument claims for him. If this is the way he understands the *conditionality* of a promise and a gift, why we will admit it, if such admission will do him any good—for in reality there is not much difference between us, and I think he might just as well have no condition—for it all amounts to the same thing at last! I have no doubt the reader will laugh at the desperate efforts of our author in endeavoring to show how a *gift* is *conditional*—and be forcibly reminded of the drowning man catching at straws! The gift of eternal life is *conditional*! Very well; have it so, but recollect, "the word *gift* presupposes a *giver*; and the word *giver* presupposes a *receiver*; and the word *receiver*, in connexion with *giver*, presupposes *reception*, which to all intents and purposes is" *ABSOLUTE* and *UNCONDITIONAL*. "As certain as *eternal life* is a *gift* to men, just so certain must they *accept* it, or never have it." yes, and I will add, as certain as *eternal life* is a gift to men, just so certain *will they accept it*—for "there can be no *gift* without a *giver*, and there can be no *giver* without a *receiver*," consequently, *eternal life* being a *gift*, it will be *received*—or Mr. Hall's fine spun argument is good for nothing! You are welcome to the *condition*, so the thing is done; you can take the *shadow*, while we have the *reality*.

God sometimes gives men certain things which they never possess, from the fact that they will not have them. As an example of this kind we refer to the fact of God giving the land of Canaan to the children of Israel, for their disobedience. He never let them pos-

sess it. Thus testifies the Lord by the mouth of the prophet: "Yet also I lifted up my hand unto them in the wilderness, that I would not bring them into the land which I had given them." Ezek. 30: 15.—p. 75.

The difficulty here will vanish when it is recollected that this "land" was not, at that time, *given*, but only *promised*; besides, you must recollect, also, that "there can be no *gift* without a *giver*, and there can be no *giver* without a *receiver*"—consequently the land of Canaan was not a *gift*, until it was received and possessed. This is the gentleman's own argument, and I hope he will not recede from it!

The phrase "*through Jesus Christ our Lord*," we claim as diametrically opposed to the Universalist assumption of unconditionality. The meaning is the same as if he had said, "The gift of God is eternal life, in *obedience* to Jesus Christ our Lord." When Paul says, "*through this man* is preached to you the forgiveness of sins," (Acts 13: 38,) does he not mean to be understood the same as if he had said, "*In obeying this man* is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins?"

I answer No. Paul was not so great a fool as that! The *forgiveness of sins* was obtained "in *obedience* to this man," but the *preaching of forgiveness* had nothing to do with "obedience." This any one with a grain of sense can see. Paul might, and often did, preach forgiveness "*through Jesus Christ*," without his hearers *obeying* his preaching, and consequently, without their receiving the *forgiveness*—still, the *preaching of forgiveness* was *through Jesus Christ*.—What a miserable perversion of language, and of common sense! and what may we not expect of a man who could be guilty of the like? "I feel to pity his conscientiousness, as well as his sense of honor."

"The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life, through our Lord, Jesus Christ." How beautifully this corresponds with the passage in 1 Jno. 5: 10—"and this the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son;" and with the promise to Abraham, that *in or through Christ* "all nations, families, and kindreds of the earth should be blessed;" and with the declaration that "as in Adam all die, even so, *in or through Christ*, shall all be made alive."—They all refer to the same glorious result, and I will only add in the language of the apostle, (1 Jno. 5: 10,) "He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself; he that believeth not God, hath made him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son."

3rd. THE ANNUNCIATION; And the angel said unto them; Fear not, for behold I bring you glad tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people; for unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. Luko 2: 10, 11.—(No. 18, p. 50.)

Our author here sets out by remarking that "it is one thing to bring good tidings of great joy to a man, and another thing for him to accept them." He then proceeds to illustrate the matter by supposing twelve men to be sentenced to the penitentiary for life—but after a few years the Governor pardons them.—A messenger bears the good news to the unhappy convicts, and tells them they are pardoned.—"Six of them gladly receive his word, obey the call, and come out of the prison," but the other six refuse to go out—saying the governor is too good a man to see us die here, he will come and carry us out.—So they remain in their cells "till they die"—and thus "never enjoy the benefit of the glad tidings which were brought to them from the governor." So he says it is in relation to

gospel. "The Apostles were sent forth to bear the good tidings to all people—but who ever," says he, "heard of them telling men that these 'good tidings' which they preached would benefit them without them being accepted?" By this I suppose he means that none will ever enjoy the blessings revealed by the 'good tidings,' but those who believe or accept the 'good tidings,' &c.

Now, who does not see the lameness of this illustration? It is unnatural, unreasonable—is neither a *supposable* nor a *parallel* case.—Where can you find six men possessed of a grain of sense, who would act as he supposes those six to act, who refuse to go out of the prison? They are supposed to be *sensible* men—they are supposed to believe the news, that the governor has pardoned them, and that they are at perfect liberty to quit their confinement, and go out again into the world, free men. But no, they refuse to go—relying upon the condescending *goodness* of the governor to come and carry them out!—and thus they remain there, the doors of their prison all the while open, day after day, until they die! Who, I say, ever heard of the like? And where, except in the oranium of our author, can there be found a mind sufficiently imaginative to conceive such an idea? Men, I affirm, to act thus would have to be *idiots*; their conduct would be *prima facie* evidence of their *insanity*, consequently they would not be subjects of punishment! And instead of allowing them to remain there, the governor, or some other proper authority, would see to it, and have them conveyed to some hospital or Lunatic asylum;—they would not be left to die in their cells! We cannot, we dare not suppose such a case upon any other ground than that of *insanity*! The illustration, therefore, not being a supposable case, is inadmissible.

But our profound author greatly mistakes the whole matter. "It is not the 'good tidings' which shall be to 'all people,' but the *joy*. The 'tidings,' like the 'gospel' and the 'Promise,' are for man in this life; but the *joy*, like the *blessings revealed* by the gospel, and that indicated in the Promise, is for a man in the future life—and shall be to *all people*. Thus said the angel, "I bring you good tidings of GREAT JOY, which JOY, (and not which tidings,) shall be to ALL PEOPLE."

Now, instead of "all people" being benefited by these "glad tidings," it is very probable that a large portion of mankind will die without ever hearing of them—much less be blessed by them; for as they are but the *news* of the great blessing which awaits us in the future, those who die without receiving "tidings," will know nothing but THE JOY!

But are Universalists certain that *all people* means the whole human family?—p. 51.

Just as certain as we are that "the whole human family" means "all people!"

Our author in order to set aside the universality of the text, refers again to *historical* declarations—such as Deut. 28: 64, "And the Lord shall scatter thee among *all people*."—He should bear in mind that such phrases as these, when spoken in reference to a *historical* fact, are always limited in their signification; when used in reference to any doctrine of the gospel they are universal and unlimited. But no; as I have before remarked—to him, a word is a word, and a phrase is a phrase—no matter where found, nor what may be the connection in which it is used! Such a reckless course with the Scriptures betrays either great ignorance, or want of candor and honesty on the part of our author; and must operate seriously against him with all the honorable, high-minded and better class of readers!

I cannot dismiss this text without indulging in a few reflections. It is now generally admitted by the advocates for endless punishment, that that doctrine was not taught by the Old Testament writers; but that it was first revealed by Christ in the gospel. Consequent-

ly, it must have been a part of the "glad tidings of great joy," announced by the angel at the birth of the Savior! But how could the announcement of such a horrid doctrine be called "glad tidings of great joy?" It might be good news and great joy to devils and fiends in hell! but it could not be called good news to all people, nor even to any people!—Such a doctrine was not revealed in the Old Testament; and the fact that the advent of the Savior, and the ushering in of the gospel era, were announced as "glad tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people," is evidence conclusive that no such a doctrine is revealed in the New Testament. There are no "glad tidings of great joy" in the intelligence that a part of mankind, perhaps our friends, or ourselves, will have to suffer cruel torture in an endless hell; and that we all are exposed to it! The cruel doctrine then must be false! The language of the angel forever stands as evidence against it. The birth of the Saviour was proclaimed as **GLAD TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY; and ALL PEOPLE shall eventually partake of that JOY.** "Glory to God in the highest; on earth, peace and good will towards men!"

A Scrap.

The windings of the river Delaware, separating Pennsylvania from New Jersey, look the former State into Sussex County in the latter, by what a carpenter would call a *dove's tail*. A crystal brook meanders among picturesque hills, through the northwest of this country, beside the Delaware, into whose bosom it pours its glassy tide, opposite the peninsula just named. While spending a few months among the delightful scenes of this section, I was made to realize—as I believe every tyro in the work of influencing others is—the varieties of minds; that there are some "coarse," some "fine," and some "superficial." One sunny Saturday morning, with a book of *so*, I followed a difficult road up an eminence, that I rightly imagined, afforded an entrancing landscape. Satisfying my love of Nature's beauties, I bent my course toward the home of Br. E., who then lived near the dove's tail, but now in spirit land. A little before reaching the descent, a voice from an adjacent field cried,

"Ho! there, what kind o' books you got to sell?"

"None, sir."

"You a school teacher?"

"No, sir."

"Do you live in Wallpack?"

"Northern part of it, sir."

"Do you know B.?"

"Yes, sir, I board with him."

"I thought you were a *print*!"

Having at the time, no appetite for ridicule, I walked slowly away, but was soon called back, with the assurance that a Methodist minister wanted to speak seriously with me. On returning, I beheld a huge, mammoth creature astride the fence, holding in his bloated hands a rake. By the field side of the fence stood a group of half a dozen men, leaning on their various agricultural implements, and thirsting for fun like parched desert travelers for water. The tooth of the animal on the fence parted, and out leaped the following "reptiles":—

"You a preacher?"

"I preach sometimes?"

"What do you preach?"

"The Gospel, sir, as well as I understand it."

Provoked by what seemed to him evasiveness, he exclaimed,—

"You're a Universalist, ar'n't ye?"

"A Universalist, yes, sir."

"Well I've got a *pig pen* over yonder, full of hogs. I'll set the trough up on end, and you can put your pamphlet on that, and pour fourth your moral poison day and night, if you have a mind to. Our Savior cast devils into swine, and thine's where you ought to empty

the devil's doctrine. You'd be better employed than you are now, scattering your soul-damning heresies among God's people!"

"This may be the language of a Methodist minister," replied I, "but not the language of a Christian. Notwithstanding your unkind manner, I am willing to be instructed by you. Convince me that what I advocate is the 'devil's' and 'soul-damning,' and I will not expose myself even to the fleas of your sty.—Until I am so convinced I shall still preach what I have among God's people, though in consequence I am occasionally bitten by a flea in human form. Now, seriously, sir, I wish you to show that the doctrine stated by Paul thus: God "will have all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth," is the devil's and soul-damning."

Trembling with excitement, he now uttered words too bad to record, which drew from the listeners the ejaculations, "Don't, A.!" "It's too bad to talk so!" &c. Mental grossness, as it came in masses from the lips of that human being, was felt as it never before had been. I subsequently learned that he was a Methodist "exhorter,"—excessively pious during a season of revival,—whose ill conduct had cast and kept him out of the pale of his Church.

On a visit to another part of the same country, I met a very different kind of mind.—One, beginning to bend under the burden of years, told the cheer given his heart by our loved faith, with lips quivering with emotion. Once he sat beside his companion, his gleeful little ones around him, and everything bidding him be happy except his religion. That threw a dark shadow over the scene. It did not hang above, protecting from the chill and storm, and admitting heaven's resplendent light. It was itself a black tempest, beneath which dwelt the deepest night. Will not, thought he, these spirits that seem now to gaze joyfully from out their beautiful tabernacles, at some future time curse me as the instrument of their being? Yes, if I am ever conscious that they are the recipients of pain as intense and long during as the infinite God can make it, shall I not curse myself? Every fountain of social and domestic bliss was congealed by these and kindred agonizing thoughts! Now, he finds himself possessed of a faith which, though bringing him persecution because of his zeal, enabled him to view his wife and children, and thank God for the anticipated felicity of the time when there shall be—

"No wanderer lost,
A family in heaven!"

His frosty hair and furrowed features, his affectionate, impassioned tones kindled, the feelings of the child for the parent in me; and, inspiring me with fresh courage, spurred me on in duty. I could not but contrast the purity and delicacy of the language with which kindness expressed itself in this instance, with the vulgarity and coarseness of that to which anger gave utterance in the other. G. H. D.

A Safe Doctrine.

It is a common saying that it is much safer to believe in an endless hell, than in universal salvation. It seems to us that the question ought to be with every ingenuous mind, what is *true*? not what is *safe*? If Paul had consulted safety, he would have remained a Pharisee. If Galileo had been influenced by this lower order of motives, he might have yielded to the Pagan priests, and said, yes the earth is an extended flat plane; it is neither round, nor does it turn round, it is better to believe a *safe* lie than an *unsafe* truth. But he had too much greatness and magnanimity of soul to ask what is safe? Every Christian should have courage enough to act and think in the same way. "What is truth?" is the grand question. Let us believe this, and follow where it guides, whatever the consequences.

Has the belief of the doctrine of endless misery a security above that of a belief in the salvation of the world? If so, where is it and what is it? Do you tell me that it is always safe to lead a holy life, and that the faith in a hell of interminable misery produce this effect? But what kind of goodness is that which is practiced from the low and selfish consideration of being secure from some terrible calamity? What would you think of your neighbor who should tell you he will not burn your house nor steal your goods, for it would be bad policy, it would be very unsafe? You are not a Christian—you will not own that you are a servant of Jesus Christ, because you desire to be safe from his torments. You rather say, you love God because he is good and altogether worthy of your supreme affection; and you do right because you love it, and repudiate the wrong

He is on the safe side, we grant, who love God and his neighbor, but that this love is the legitimate effect of a faith in the doctrine of endless wrath and suffering, we deny. This faith never did and never can produce love in the heart, therefore, it is useless to contend for its safety on the ground of its reformator and purifying nature. It is said that there can be no danger in believing the doctrine of endless misery, if Universalism should prove to be true? We answer, this very concession is implied doubt, and skepticism as to what is truth, must be dangerous to the peace and security of the soul. It is saying in effect, will believe anything or nothing, just as circumstances, caprice, or policy may dictate. For if at last I am wrong, and have been wrong, Universalism will save me. Is doubt safety? Is faith in what may possibly may take place a sure and comfortable faith? Let there be no boasting of the safe side, and twitches, by those who do not pretend to know what is true, or what is false in relation to human destiny, the subject of whose faith begins with an *if* and ends in the fog of possibility. Solomon says, "Whoso trusteth in the Lord shall be safe," and David say "Blessed is he that trusteth in the Lord." Here then is the safe doctrine; a belief in the unchanging goodness and the illimitable love of our heavenly Father. We feel safe trusting ourselves for time and eternity to his parental and gracious disposal. Blessed happy is he, that with filial confidence and holy trust can say, "The Lord is our King, the Lord is our Judge and our Saviour, and will save us." There is neither peace, quiet nor safety in doubts, surprises, and contingencies, in regard to our immortal welfare.—That is the "safe side" which recognizes God as the Universal Father, and Christ the first fruits of an immortal blessedness, designed for universal humanity.—N. Y. *Christian Messenger*.

The Great Exemplar.

BY REV. E. H. CHAPEN.

"Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith."—Heb. xii. 2.

This is the Christian's aim and model.—This is the object that, beyond all the rest, set for his fixed regard and study. Life experiences are various, but this must be seen through them all. In the season of prosperity and peace, still to this must we look. In the darker hours, in the garden of anguish, still must we look to Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith; not alone for the sake of learning the great lesson of endurance, but, beholding the light that streams from the open sepulchre, we shall find that he has consolations too, that the world can neither give nor take away. In the battle of temptation, under the burden of sin, through the night of sorrow, in all the soul's wants and disciplines, look unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith!

The great object of life is the discipline and perfecting of the soul. Let not this come to us as a dull truism, having no interest, if an