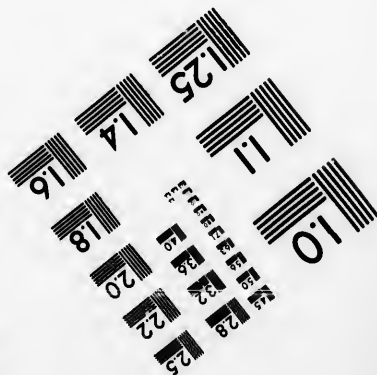
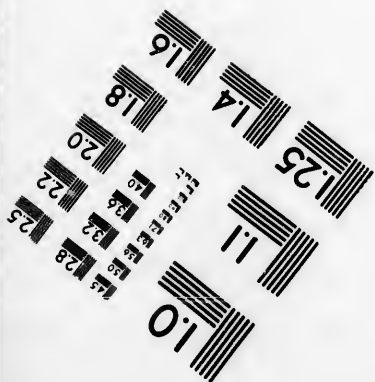
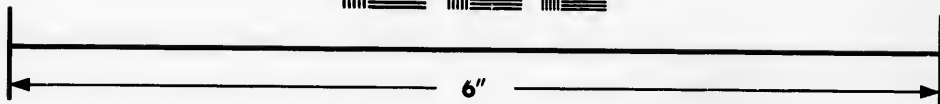
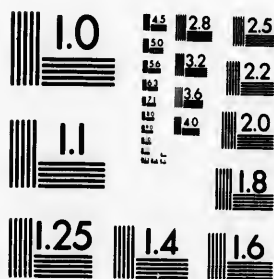


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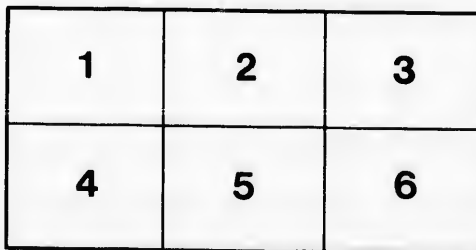
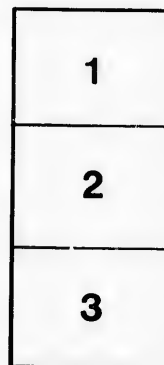
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What will become of the Wicked?

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AN ADDRESS

BY

J. M. CRAMP, D. D.

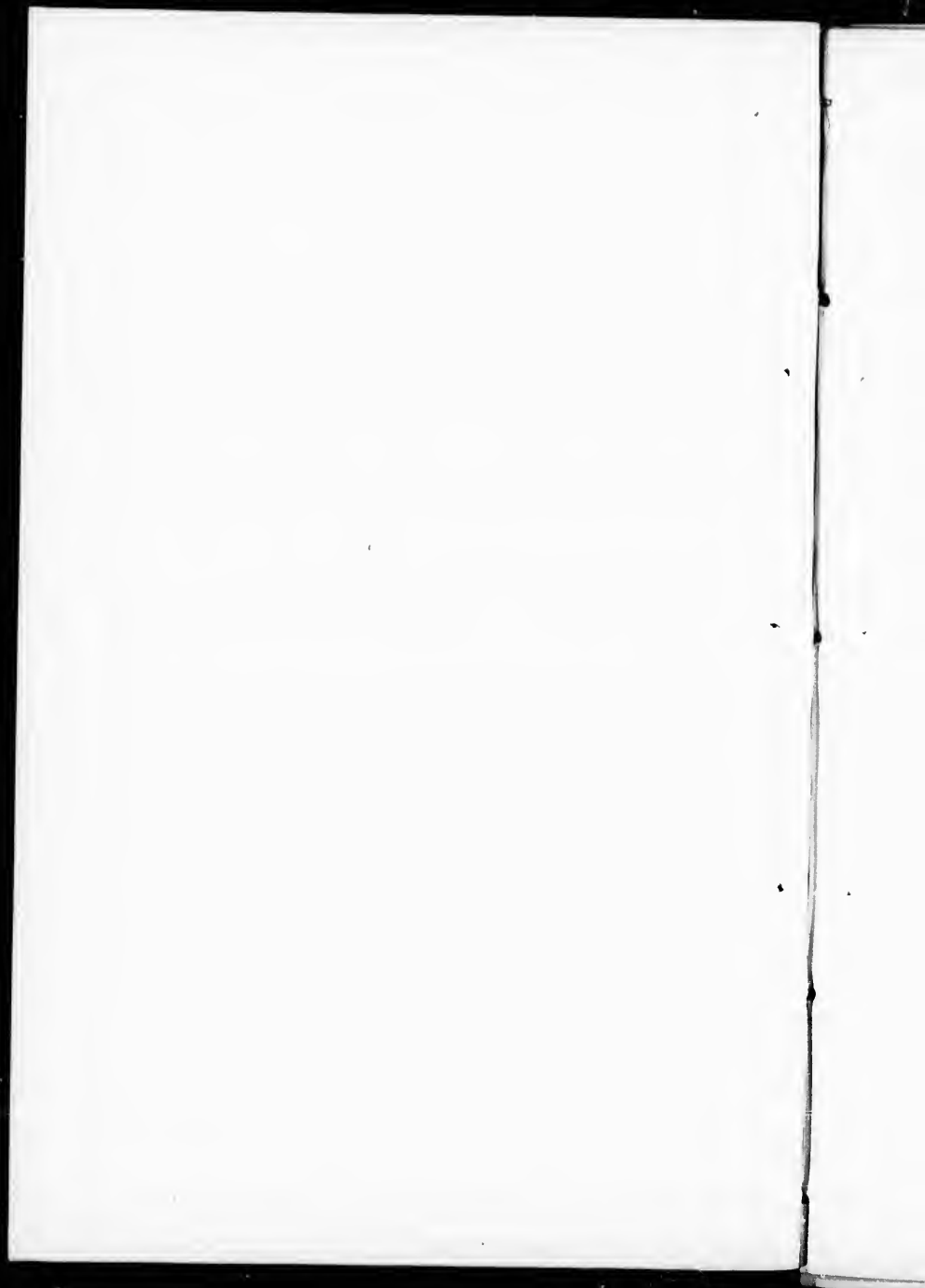
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## What will become of the Wicked ?

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MEN AND BRETHREN :—

This is a very solemn question, and it ought to be discussed with great seriousness and earnest desire to know the truth. We may be mistaken on some points and suffer little or no harm ; but a mistake here may have terrible consequences. It may ruin us forever. Give me, therefore, your serious attention.

WHAT WILL BECOME OF THE WICKED ?

Brethren—No one but God himself can answer this question, for he only knows. He *has* answered it. We find his answer in the Bible. He tells us there, that if sinners repent of their wickedness and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ they will be saved. They will then be no longer wicked. The believing sinner becomes a saint, lives a holy life, and is trained for heaven.

But if they live and die in their sins—*what then ?*—what will become of them ? I say again that this is a very serious inquiry, and that we should engage in it with prayerful solemnity. May the Lord direct us aright !

Let me remark in the outset that the reply to the question before us must be derived mainly from the New Testament, for the revelations of truth given in the New Testament are God's last announcements to man. They contain all that can be known on the point now to be considered. The whole matter is " brought to light," and no further development is to be expected. I hold it preferable, therefore, in pursuing the investigation on which we have now entered, to appeal for the most part to the authority of the New Testament. Illustrations may be gathered from other

portions of the Word of God, but the clear and decisive statements by which the controversy is to be settled, must necessarily be sought for in the book of the new dispensation. By adopting this course, we shall be spared the trouble of correcting the numerous misapprehensions that prevail respecting the meaning of certain passages in the Psalms and the Prophets, which are commonly adduced by the advocates of error. Let us place ourselves at the feet of the Lord Jesus and listen to his words, and to the words of His servants who wrote under the inspiration of the promised Spirit.

Suppose, now, that some individual, unacquainted with the disputes that have arisen among christians, were to take up the New Testament with a view to ascertain the purposes of God with regard to the final destiny of mankind. To what conclusion would he come? Would he not infer, naturally and necessarily, that there is no hope for those who die in a state of ungodliness? However unwilling he might be to entertain the thought, and however repugnant it might be to his benevolent feelings, would he not be compelled to confess that it is the obvious teaching of our Lord and His apostles? Would such a reader dream of anything else? Could he imagine that the awful words of the holy volume can bear any interpretation, differing materially from that which is found to prevail among the vast majority of christians? Would it occur to him even to guess that "everlasting punishment" means either the infliction of pain for a short period, or the annihilation of the criminal, whereby he would escape punishment altogether? Surely, thoughts of this kind would be far from him. He would see no escape for an impenitent transgressor. He might wish it were not so, but stern impartiality would forbid any different conclusion. In fact, nobody thinks at first, of explaining the New Testament otherwise than in agreement with the generally received doctrine.

And here let me offer a remark to which, in my opinion, considerable importance is to be attached. It is to be carefully noted that God's book is a plain book. It is indeed "high as



heaven" and "deep as hell," and contains representations which the mightiest minds cannot comprehend; but in reference to those truths, the right knowledge of which is essential to our happiness or safety, it may be affirmed, without fear of contradiction, that the sayings of the Bible are clear and easy to be understood. Among these are the declarations of the inspired writers respecting the doom of the ungodly. Is it not, now, passing strange, that ninety-nine out of a hundred of the readers of the sacred volume—that very plain book—understand it as teaching the remediless woe of the wicked, if all the while no such doctrine is there?

For what are the facts of the case? They are briefly these. Christendom has been broken into sects, divisions, parties and denominations; and opinions the most diverse from each other, and even of opposite character, have been maintained by them. But on some topics there has always been a substantial and undisturbed unity. One of them is the state of the wicked, dying impenitent. That *they* shall "go away into everlasting punishment" has been held with undeviating uniformity, by persons of all classes and persuasions:—by the Eastern and the Greek Churches—by Roman Catholics and Protestants—by Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and the various Congregational bodies—by Calvinists and Arminians. However differing from one another on other subjects, there is *here* a marvellous agreement. We trace it in christian writings all down the stream of time, from the earliest period to the present day. Now, this is a moral argument in favour of the truth of the doctrine. It is a legitimate application of the celebrated maxim of Vincent of Lerins (a christian writer of the fifth century), which so notoriously fails in regard to the points at issue between Protestants and Roman Catholics. With exceptions, too inconsiderable to deserve more than a passing notice, the irremediable doom of the impenitent transgressor has been taught "everywhere, always, and by all."

It may not be amiss to observe, too, that the final punishment of the wicked found a place even in Pagan systems. In some

form or other it is interwoven with them all. This might be abundantly proved by quotations from the best authorities. And it is not unreasonable to suppose, that like the doctrine of sin, and of the necessity of atonement, it has been handed down from generation to generation, as a relic of primeval truth, though grievously distorted and disfigured. Enoch, "the seventh from Adam," proclaimed it (Jude 14, 15), and whence was it obtained by him, unless by revelation from heaven, or by communication from our first parent, to whom it had been revealed?

There is another consideration which is particularly deserving your notice. Among the minority of professing christians, by whom the everlasting punishment of the wicked is in the present age denied, there is a singular diversity of opinion. Some hold that death is extinction of being, and therefore that the wicked will be annihilated when they die. Others maintain that they will be raised again at the last day, receive sentence at the final judgment, and then be annihilated. Others teach that annihilation will be preceded by punishment, varying in intensity and length, according to the degree of crime. Others venture to assert that after sufficient purifying by pain they will be restored. These varieties, and the frequent change of sentiment among those who maintain them, exhibit a striking contrast to the uniform doctrine of the Church in general.

All this is introductory. I will now adduce the statements of the Word of God. It is declared in that Word that the wicked shall be "cast into hell," Mark ix. 45; into the "damnation of hell," Matt. xxiii. 33; into "everlasting fire," Matt. xxv. 41; that in that state there will be "weeping and gnashing of teeth," Matt. xxii. 13; for "the worm dieth not," and "the fire is not quenched," Mark ix. 46; that there they shall "perish," Luke xiii. 5; that the wrath of God will "abide" upon them, John iii. 36; that they shall endure "indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish," Rom. ii. 9; "everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord," 2 Thess. i. 9; the "blackness of darkness for ever," Jude 13; and that they shall

have "their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death," where they shall be "tormented day and night for ever and ever," Rev. xx. 10; xxi. 8.

These expressions assure us that inconceivable misery will follow a life of disobedience to God; that the misery will commence immediately after death; and that there will be no escape from it. And they are the words of our Lord and His apostles which "cannot pass away."

But objectors assert in opposition to those conclusions, that the sentiments contained in them are not taught in the Word of God. They tell us that the words "life" and "death," as used in the Scriptures, are always to be understood literally; and that as "life" means "existence," "death" means "ceasing to exist." They say further, that as man has forfeited life by sin, it can only be restored by Christ; that it is so restored to those who believe in him, and that, consequently, "eternal life" is "living for ever," which means the gift of immortality to believers, while the ungodly will die, that is, cease to exist, or, in other words, be annihilated.

In order to meet these and other objections, it will be necessary, in the first place, to inquire into the meaning of certain words and phrases, used by the sacred writers.

#### "SOUL" — "SPIRIT."

I may remind you, that a great many words are used in different senses, according to the various intentions of the speakers or writers, which are generally seen in the connections in which the words are employed, or may be easily gathered from the scope of the discourse. Thus, the word "table" ordinarily means an article of furniture; but the "tables" which Moses threw down as he descended from the mount, were slabs of stone, on which the law was written by the finger of God; and genealogical "tables" are lists of persons belonging to successive generations of families. Other instances will readily occur to your minds.

So in the case before us. The word usually translated "soul" sometimes means "life," and is so rendered in our authorized version. "They are dead which sought the young child's *life*," Matt. ii. 20. "Take no thought for your *life*," Matt. vi. 25. "He that findeth his *life* shall lose it," Matt. x. 39. "I will lay down my *life* for thy sake," John xiii. 37. In all these texts the Greek word used is that which is commonly and properly translated "soul."

Sometimes it means "person." "The same day there were added unto them about three thousand *souls*," Acts ii. 41. "We were in all in the ship about two hundred three score and sixteen *souls*," Acts xxvii. 37.

Sometimes the word rendered "spirit" is used for "wind." "The *wind* bloweth where it listeth," John iii. 8. Sometimes for disposition. "Ye know not what manner of *spirit* ye are of," Luke ix. 55. The Greek word is the same in both texts.

But both these words are customarily employed by the inspired writers, to designate the superior part of man's nature, as distinguished from his body. They teach us that man has not only an animal nature, like other organized beings, but also a rational, intellectual, or spiritual nature, entirely distinct therefrom, though necessarily united with it, here on earth. This is sometimes termed "soul," sometimes "spirit."

It is sometimes termed "soul." "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul," Matt. x. 29. "Ye shall find rest to your souls," Matt. xi. 29. "In your patience possess ye your souls," Luke xxi. 19. "They watch for your souls," Heb. xiii. 17. "Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls"; "Seeing ye have purified your souls," 1 Peter i. 9, 22. "Abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul"; "The Shepherd and Bishop of your souls," 1 Peter ii. 11, 25. "I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth," 3 John ii.

It is sometimes termed "spirit." "The spirit indeed is wil-

ling, but the flesh is weak." Matt. xxvi. 41. "And her spirit came again." Luke viii. 55. "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." Luke xxiii. 46. "A spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." Luke xxiv. 39. "Lord, Jesus, receive my spirit." Acts vii. 59. "The body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness"; "The spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit." Rom. viii. 10, 16. "No man knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of man which is in him." 1 Cor. ii. 11. "Glorify God in your body and in your spirit." 1 Cor. vi. 20. "That she may be holy both in body and in spirit." 1 Cor. vii. 34. "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit." Philemon 25.

In one passage both words are employed. "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour." Luke i. 46, 47. This is a case of Hebrew parallelism; the "soul" in the first limb of the parallelism answers to the "spirit" in the second.

We can now take another step. The soul or spirit of man exists after death. Man's power cannot touch it. He can kill the body, but the soul is out of his reach. So our Lord expressly declares: "Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do." Matt. x. 28. Luke xii. 4. In full accordance with this declaration are the words of the apostles. "Ye are come — to the spirits of just men made perfect." Heb. xii. 22, 23. "The spirits in prison." 1 Peter iii. 19. Referring to the antediluvian transgressors who were swept away by the flood, and whose "spirits" are still in prison, waiting for the judgment. "I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the Word of God." Rev. vi. 9. "I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus." Rev. xx. 4. Their *bodies* had mingled with the dust, or sunk in the sea—in some cases they had been burned, and their ashes scattered to the winds; but their *souls* were "under the altar," safe with God.

All this is illustrated by the course of human thought on this

subject, in all ages, and among all nations. Although they were unable to *prove* the immortality of the soul, the wise men of ancient times argued for it in a very satisfactory manner. They held that the soul is a spiritual substance, distinct and different from the body. They expatiated on its capacity for knowledge and continued improvement, and justly inferred that the existence of a being so distinguished, would not be limited to the few years allotted to man upon the earth. They were impressed with the fact, that the retributions of virtue and vice in this world are very unequal, inasmuch as good men are often overwhelmed by calamities, while bad men prosper. They concluded, therefore, that there must be another state of existence, in which these seeming irregularities will be rectified, and all men receive their due deserts. Their sentiments have been clearly expressed by Addison, in his "Cato."

"It must be so: Plato, thou reason'st well,  
Else whence this pleasing hope, this fond desire,  
This longing after immortality?  
Or whence this secret dread, and inward horror  
Of falling into naught? Why shrinks the soul  
Back on herself, and startles at destruction?  
'Tis the divinity that stirs within us;  
'Tis heaven itself that points out an hereafter,  
And intimates eternity to man.

\* \* \* \* \*

"The soul, scoured in her existence, smiles  
At the drawn dagger, and defies its point.  
The stars shall fade away, the sun himself  
Grow dim with age, and nature sink in years.  
But thou shalt flourish in immortal youth,  
Unhurt amidst the wars of elements,  
The wrecks of matter, and the crush of worlds."

But this related to the soul only, and was probable conjecture, not certainty. Of the resurrection of the body, the ancient heathen had no thought. It was out of the range of possibility, in their estimation. When adverted to by Paul at Athens, it was

scouted with derision by some, while others coldly intimated their desire to hear him further on the matter, as a novel theory, about which they might be willing to know more.

The Lord Jesus Christ has "brought life and immortality to light." He has made that clear which was obscure before. He has given us "a sure and certain hope." He has plainly told us that the soul survives the body. It is not corruptible. It is not mortal. It is capable of everlasting existence, and will exist for ever, unless Almighty God shall see fit to blot it out of being. But there is no announcement of such intention.

In exact agreement with these statements are the numerous references to a future state in our Saviour's discourses and parables. He sets before us, in the most vivid point of view, the difference between the righteous and the wicked. Of the unfaithful servant he says, that "the Lord of that servant will come in a day that he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him asunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers." Luke xii. 46. Lazarus, immediately after death, is conveyed to "Abraham's bosom." Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are expressly declared to be "living," though their bodies are still in the sepulchre; and this is said in reply to Sadducean objectors, who held that there is "no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit." Matt. xxii. 23, 33; Acts xxiii. 8. The rich man had no sooner died, than "in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments." Luke xvi. 23. Nor can it be fairly objected that this is a parable, for the truth taught is not affected by the dress in which it appears. The Saviour doubtless intended to assure us that at death the soul passes at once to a state of bliss or woe. The body dies, but the soul lives. So also wrote the Apostle Paul: "We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens;" "Willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord;" "Having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ." 2 Cor. v. 1, 8; Phil. i. 23.

At the last day the body will be raised, and each body will have its own spirit again. Ere man is summoned to the judgment seat, he will be restored to his completeness. He was composed of body and soul on earth, and, so constituted, served God or sinned against him. Body and soul will be re-united at the resurrection. The very men who served God or sinned against him will "appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." 2 Cor. v. 10. "The Son of Man shall send forth his angels, and 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. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." Matt. xiii. 41, 43.

#### "LIFE"—"DEATH"—"ETERNAL LIFE."

What is life? That man really lives, in whom the union between soul and body is preserved. The body may be half deadened by paralysis, or deprived of its limbs; but as long as the vital functions are performed—as long as the blood pursues its course through the system, conveying and diffusing new vigour, there is physical life. The blood itself is often termed the "life," because its healthy flow is essential to existence. The breath is spoken of in like manner. It is "the breath of life." Again: the powers of the soul may be enfeebled, or may have fallen into a state of derangement, eclipse, or apparent suspension, through some disorder in the bodily organization; but so long as the soul retains its connection with the body, the man lives. What, then, is *death*? Popularly speaking, it is the cessation of the bodily functions—the stoppage of the machinery of life—the change of the animate into the inanimate; but it may be more properly defined as the separation of the soul from the body, in consequence of the above-mentioned cessation. Then the soul enters into the state, happy or miserable, for which



it has been prepared, and the body becomes the prey of corruption, awaiting the "trumpet-blowing time" (to adopt an epithet used by one of the converts in an island of the Pacific), when "all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of man, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." John v. 29.

But this is not all. Inasmuch as all enjoyment is the gift of the ever-living and infinitely blessed God, and inasmuch as his anger is the greatest calamity that can befall a rational being, the words "life" and "death" came to be used as expressive descriptions of divine favor and blessing, on the one hand, and on the other, of the righteous displeasure of the Most High, and of the misery thence accruing. There were Hebrew modes of thought and expression, which the writers of divine books, being Jews, naturally adopted. The following passages illustrate these statements: "I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil." "I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing." Dent. xxx. 15, 19. "Thou hast granted me life and favor." Job x. 12. "Thou wilt show me the path of life; in thy presence is fulness of joy." Psalm xvi. 11. "In thy favor is life." Psalm xxx. 5. "So shall they be life unto thy soul, and grace to thy neck." "They" (the "words") "are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh." "Reproofs of instruction are the way of life." "Whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favor of the Lord." "In the way of righteousness is life, and in the pathway thereof there is no death." "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick, but when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life." "The law of the wise is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death." "The light of the King's countenance is life, and his favour is as a cloud of the latter rain." "Understanding is a well-spring of life to him that hath it." Prov. iii. 22; iv. 22; vi. 23; viii. 35; xii. 28; xiii. 12, 14; xiv. 27; xvi. 15, 22. "Wisdom giveth life to him that hath it." Eccles. vii. 12. "O Lord, by these

things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit." Isa. xxxviii. 16. "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." John vi. 63.

There is another class of passages, in which the words "life" and "death" are used to designate opposite spiritual conditions, "life" importing the state of the renewed soul, "death" that of the unregenerate. The ungodly are said to be "dead in trespasses and sins," Ephes. ii. 1. "She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth." 1 Tim. v. 6. "Follow me, and let the dead bury their dead." Matt. viii. 22; that is, let those who are spiritually dead bury those who are literally and physically dead. But the believer in Jesus "is passed from death unto life." John v. 24; 1 John iii. 14. He is "quickened together with Christ." Ephes. ii. 5. He "yields himself unto God as one that is alive from the dead;" and he finds that "to be spiritually minded is life and peace." Rom. vi. 12; viii. 6.

We are now prepared to consider the meaning of the phrase, "eternal life." Some suppose that it imports living for ever, or immortality, and nothing more. But that is a great mistake. "Eternal life" is an emphatic expression. Here, in this world, he only lives, in the true and exalted sense of the word, who lives for God. The Apostle Paul said, "For me to live is Christ." Phil. i. 21. Now, "eternal life" is living everlastingly for God, in the exercise of the holy celebrations and the experience of the holy enjoyments of heaven—being "with Christ"—"for ever with the Lord"—having a perpetual abiding place in the "mansions" which the Saviour has prepared for his people. It is not merely immortality; all men are immortal; it is an immortality of bliss and holiness.

You will see that this is the right view of the subject, if you consider the manner in which "life," or "eternal life," is sometimes contrasted with its opposite. Look at Rom. ii. 6—9: "Who will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory, and honor, and immortality, eternal life; but unto them that are

contentions, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish." Here, you see, on the one side, "eternal life," and on the other, not "ceasing to be," but "indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish." What does this show us, but that as the "life" consists in the favor of God and the happiness thence resulting, so the want of it is God's righteous indignation? Again: "He that believeth in the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." John iii. 36. Here, also, the opposite to "life" is "the wrath of God;" and it is expressly declared that it "abideth" on the transgressor. There is not the slightest hint of its removal.

I may further remind you that the limited view of "eternal life" which is held by some persons does not harmonise with the well-known sentiments of the Jews, the sect of the Sadducees excepted. They already believed in the immortality of the soul. To be told that if they received Christ they would live for ever, would have been no gospel to them. The "eternal life" which they expected was something far more glorious than mere immortality. It was that enjoyment of God which can only be realized by a pure and emancipated spirit. It was the full salvation. When the young ruler approached the Saviour, and said, "What good thing shall I do, that I may inherit eternal life?" his question implied that he knew of eternal life, and looked for it, but desired to be informed by what means he might attain the blessing—how he might gain or deserve it. His inquiry was not, "Shall I live for ever?" but, "What shall I do to secure a place in the homes of the blessed?"

#### "PERISH"—"DESTROY."

You are aware that much importance is attached to these words. It has been assumed that whatever perishes or is destroyed is absolutely put out of existence; and that, therefore, when the soul is said to "perish," its entire destruction is taught.

We cannot destroy anything. We can only change the mode of existence, or separate a substance into parts, break it to fragments, reduce it to its elementary forms, or render it unfit for the purpose which it was intended to serve, and thus destroy it as far as that purpose is concerned. Nothing more is in our power. It is for God only to cause anything to perish. "He can create, and He destroy." Whether he has actually destroyed any being or substance, cannot be proved. I find the following observations in a discourse by a lively writer of the last century: "A prophet says the Creator *weighed* the dust and *measured* the water when he made the world. He calculated to a nicety; and so much water, so much air, and so on, went to make up such a world as this. The first quantity is here still; and though man can gather and scatter, move, mix and unmix, yet he can destroy nothing; the putrefaction of one thing is a preparation for the being, and the bloom, and the beauty of another. Thus a tree gathers nourishment from its own fallen leaves, when they decay. Something gathers up all fragments, and nothing is lost." (Robinson's Village Sermons, p. 422.)

You have, no doubt, observed that the words in question are used in various senses by the inspired writers—all falling short of annihilation. I will adduce some passages.

Sometimes the reference is to death. "Herod will seek the young child to destroy it." Matt. ii. 13. "The flood came and destroyed them all." Luke xvii. 27. "He also perished." Acts v. 37. Now, we have already seen that death is not destruction. The man who dies does not literally perish. His soul lives on. His body falls a prey to corruption, but it will live again.

Sometimes a thing is said to perish when it is rendered permanently unfit for its accustomed use. So it is affirmed of the bottles that "burst" and are "marred," that they "perish." Matt. ix. 17; Mark ii. 22; Luke v. 37.

Sometimes the idea of defeat is presented, as when a man is baffled or overcome. "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise," 1 Cor. i. 19.

Sometimes the word imports danger, loss, injury, ruin. "Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died," Rom. xiv. 15. "Through thy knowledge shall thy weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?" 1 Cor. viii. 11. That "weak" christian was grieved and stumbled, not annihilated, when he was "destroyed" by the inconsiderate conduct of his brother. The "destruction of the flesh" to which the incestuous man was sentenced (1 Cor. v. 5), was certainly not annihilation, but the infliction of pain—punishment. The "destruction and perdition" threatened to those who "will be rich" (1 Tim. vi. 9), refer to the state of ruin—spiritual, and sometimes temporal—into which such men often fall, even in this life. "The world that then was," says Peter (2 Epist. iii. 6), "being overflowed with water, perished;" but it was not annihilated.

What, then, is the destruction of the soul? What takes place when the sinner "perishes?" Does he cease to exist? Is he annihilated? Far from it. "Eternal life," as has been sufficiently proved, is the everlasting enjoyment of God's favour in the world of purity—the holy happiness of the never-dying soul. It is promised to the believer that he shall not "perish," but have "everlasting life." To "perish" is the opposite to that "everlasting life," that is, it is the experience of the righteous anger of God against sin, in the unutterable miseries of the world of punishment. The phrase "everlasting destruction," used in 2 Thess. i. 9, is obviously equivalent to "indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish," with the addition of the idea of endlessness.

Once more. You cannot but have remarked, that the inspired writers always speak of future punishment in terms that indicate the most poignant distress—intolerable pain. Whatever figures are employed, whatever representations are given, that punishment is something that will be *felt*. What else can be the meaning of such expressions as "weeping and gnashing of teeth"—"tribulation and anguish"—"torment?" Who does not see that they are totally inconsistent with the notion of annihilation?

In short, we are driven to adopt one of these alternatives, either the words of the Bible, descriptive of the future misery of the ungodly, are to be understood in their plain and common acceptation, or else that book sorely deceives us by threatening us with pain and punishment which will never be inflicted. Which of these alternatives will you accept? I think I hear you say, "Let God be true, but every man a liar." And every man *is* a liar, who tells us that the Almighty, all-holy God wants either the power or the will to punish rebels against him, and therefore, merely puts them out of the way—or, that he does not mean what he says.

And now, what is the word of the Lord respecting sin and its consequences?

Thus writes the apostle Paul:—"By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin." Rom. v. 12. "In Adam all die." 1 Cor. xv. 22. The sin of the first man has involved all his posterity. We must all die, because Adam sinned. But if, as some maintain, death is ceasing to be, or annihilation, then the wicked, according to them, are not punished at all; for, as Adam's children, they *must* die; and if there be no existence after death, there is no account taken of their sins, and no punishment can be inflicted. How contrary this is to the oft-repeated threatenings and statements of the Bible, I need not stop to prove.

"Sin entered." What followed? Adam's children—all of them—have trod in his steps,—have made his sin their own,—are spiritually dead, as he was, the moment he transgressed; and are liable to everlasting death, the penalty of sin—even the outpouring of the direful curse, the righteous anger of the Most High—the perpetual banishment from his presence. "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Rom. iii. 23. "The Scripture hath concluded all under sin." Gal. iii. 22.

The Lord Jesus Christ has "suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us unto God." 1 Pet. iv. 18. His glorious work has a two-fold aspect—as it affects all men, and as it affects believers.

It affects all men, inasmuch as the atonement was sufficient for the sins of the whole world; inasmuch as the message of reconciliation is sent to the whole race, and will in due time be actually communicated to all nations; and inasmuch as the original sentence of death on account of Adam's sin will be visibly reversed at the last day. Then, "in Christ shall all be made alive," (1 Cor. xv. 22), for "all that are in the graves shall hear his voice" (John v. 29), and "there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust." Acts xxiv. 15.

It affects believers. The death of Christ is their life, for "being justified by faith, they have peace with God," who "hath made him to be sin for them, who knew no sin, that they might be made the righteousness of God in him." Rom. v. 1; 2 Cor. v. 21. As "joint heirs" with the Redeemer, they share in all the spiritual blessings which he has procured, and will at length be raised to the glory in which he dwells, to be happy in perfect holiness for ever and ever.

The redemption process is going on every day, and in all parts of the world. Souls are continually delivered from the curse and the bondage; the "dead in trespasses and sins" are quickened by divine power, "according to the riches of his grace;" and pardoned rebels become the sons and the servants of God Almighty. As the term of their service expires, they are transferred to his palace, and there they will live in ineffable bliss till the mystery of God is finished. Then there will be a general gathering of all the generations of mankind from the beginning of the world. The Redeemer-king will ascend the throne of judgment. He will say "unto them on his right hand, 'Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.'" He will say "unto them on his left hand, 'Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.'" Execution will immediately follow. "These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal." Matt. xxv. 31, 46.

"Not so," say some, boldly daring to contradict the Lord; "when man dies, he sleeps. The wicked wake no more. They have sunk into oblivion and nothingness. The righteous will be roused at the resurrection."

I know that they "that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." Dan. xii. 2. But what is it that sleeps? Is it the soul or the body?

You are aware that it is a common usage of speech to apply to a compound being or thing such epithets as, strictly speaking, belong only to the several parts of which it is composed—because those parts, though separable, are ordinarily found in union, and, so united, constitute the complete body or thing. I eat and drink, or work with my hands; or, I take a walk in the fields;—these are bodily actions only, yet they are ascribed to the whole man. I meditate, I am sorry, or I am glad;—these are the doings or emotions of the mind only, but they also are ascribed to the whole man. We say of the man that he eats, drinks, works, or walks, when we refer only to his body; or that he thinks, or is glad or sorry, when we refer only to his mind. Every one understands this mode of speaking, and nobody is deceived by it.

So, in all ages and in all countries, it has been customary to speak of death as sleep, and dead friends are said to sleep in their graves. The figure (for it is nothing but a figure of speech) is manifestly derived from the appearance of the corpse, so similar to that of a person who has fallen into a deep sleep. But I ask again, *what sleeps?* The body, and the body only,—and that only in a figure. It *seems* to sleep. The spirit, meanwhile, is far, far away.

“Lord Jesus,” said the dying Stephen, “receive my spirit.” The historian records his dying prayer for his enemies, and adds, “And when he had said this, he fell asleep.” Acts vii. 59, 60. But it was not his spirit that “fell asleep;” the Saviour to whom he prayed had received his spirit; the body only slumbered, or seemed to slumber, in death. And it is a beautiful thought. There will be an awaking. The sleeping one is not annihilated. The sleep may be long, but the waking-time will come. The christian cemetery, as the world imports, (*koinetion*), is a *sleeping-place*. And when we deposit the remains of a christian brother in the tomb, we may say:

“Grave, the guardian of his dust—  
Grave, the treasury of the skies :  
Every atom of thy trust,  
Rests in hope again to rise.

“Hark ! the judgment trumpet calls—  
Soul ! rebuild thy house of clay ;  
Immortality thy walls,  
And eternity thy day.”



The remarks already made will suffice, I think, to show you that the soul of the christian does not sleep, but enters immediately into joy. No other meaning can be fairly given to the passages which have been quoted.\* The Apostle Paul expected that as soon as he should depart he would be with Christ, which, he said, was "far better;" and he desired to be "absent from the body," that he might be "present with the Lord," evidently believing that as soon as he died he would be in that presence. Phil. i. 23; 2 Cor. v. 6, 8. The converted thief was not bidden to look for a sleep of ages; but "to-day," said the loving Redeemer, whose words could not "pass away"—"to-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." Luke xxiii. 43.

I pass on to another view of the subject. The advocates of the annihilation scheme differ among themselves with regard to the time of the annihilation.

Some maintain that it takes place at death—that when a wicked man dies, he literally comes to his end. If so, that man, of course, undergoes no punishment. He may have spent a long life in disobedience to all the laws of the Almighty, and revelled in all manner of vice, without restraint; and now, God has simply let him go. According to the theory of these persons, that wicked man will never feel or know anything of the anger of God against sin. He has lived in defiance of Jehovah to the last moment of his existence, and has dropped out of being untouched by the hand of justice. How far this is consistent with the Scripture declarations of the righteousness of the Most High, and of his abhorrence of iniquity, I leave you to judge.

Others are shocked at this kind of annihilation. They see that it is opposed to the Apostolic declaration: "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb. ix. 28); and they have therefore devised another expedient. They tell us that the wicked will be raised again at the last day, brought to judgment, sentenced, and then annihilated. They affirm that

\* The reader will probably remember a passage in the Old Testament: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." Eccles. xii. 7.

The Apostle Peter says: "As long as I am in this tabernacle;" "Shortly I must put off this my tabernacle." 2 Peter i. 13, 14. Who was the "I" that was "in the tabernacle," and expected soon to "put it off?" Can there be any doubt that the Apostle referred to his *soul*, or *spirit*, and that the "tabernacle" was his *body*?

this will be the "everlasting punishment" of the ungodly. *Straw* punishment! Why, it is as if God should say to them: "Miserable sinners, go away; you shall lie for ever under my wrath, but *you will never feel it!*" I will only ask, is this worthy of God?

There is yet a third variety of these annihilationists. They see clearly that the positions held by the other two are untenable, and they think to remove the difficulty by asserting that the wicked will be raised from the dead, and that after the judgment they will be punished; but that though the punishment will be inflicted for a long time, how long no one knows; it will at length cease, and then they will be annihilated. I cannot think it necessary to spend much time in exposing this theory. It is nothing but "the baseless fabric of a vision." Where, in the New Testament, do the Apostles tell us that the punishment of the wicked will be temporary? Point out, if you can, the passages in which it is declared that there is hope for a man who has died in his sin. No!—the blessedness and the misery will be co-extensive. Our Lord used the same word in describing both. The "punishment" of the wicked will last as long as the "life" of the righteous. If the one may come to an end so may the other. But divine truth declares that both will be "everlasting." Matt. xxv. 46.\*

Look at it, too, in another point of view. The ungodly man is sent away to punishment. He is sent away *as he is*, in his ungodliness—and he is sent *to be punished*. It is punishment, and nothing more. It does not soften his heart. It is neither adapted or designed to produce that effect. He goes into the prison an ungodly man; he sins all the time; and he will come out in a worse state than he went in—a more ungodly man than ever. If he owed ten thousand talents at the beginning (to borrow the phraseology of one of the parables), and if it were possible to pay off the debt by punishment—which it is not—he will owe ten thousand more when the term is ended, and that debt, according to the theory, will never be paid at all, for the criminal will be put out of existence. But I will not go on—the absurdity of the notion now adverted to, must be manifest to every honest thinker.

\* Two words are used in the authorized version. The *punishment* is said to be "everlasting" and the *life* "eternal." But the Greek word, *aionion*, is used in both instances, and the same English word should have been employed in both. "Everlasting life" should be substituted for "life eternal."

We must come, then, to the conclusion, that when the wicked is "driven away in his wickedness" he enters into a state of endless woe. It is his own doing, and the consciousness that it is so, strikes daggers into his soul. Men of God strove to pluck him "as a brand from the burning," but he refused their help and rushed on to destruction. We may weep over the ruin, and be stirred up to more earnest effort for the deliverance of others; but we may not sympathize with those who shrink from the truth of scripture on this subject, because of its supposed inconsistency with the goodness and mercy of God. It is not befitting or reverent to indulge in objections founded on presumed benevolent feelings. It is not genuine benevolence which murmurs at the divine justice, or would hinder its exercise. "A God all mercy is a God unjust." Our views of the evil of sin are vastly imperfect. We are utterly unable to conceive of its deserts, and we ought to shudder at the thought of charging God with harshness for punishing impenitent offenders, or thinking of him as cruel because he suffers them to continue in their misery. In such a case, pity or benevolence is out of place. We have no right to look with tenderness on those whom God's law has righteously condemned for their rebellion, nor to harbour thoughts which would tend to a subversion of his throne. His justice must be vindicated. He is "a God of truth and without iniquity." Deut. xxxii. 4. It is ours to bow with submission to his holy will, and to exclaim, with the patriarch Abraham, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"—and with the redeemed in glory, "Even so Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments." Rev. xvi. 7.

One more consideration claims your notice. What is the moral tendency of the annihilation theory? If you tell sinners that if they do not repent of their sins they will cease to exist when they die, will it reclaim them? Will it stop one man in his rebellious career? How can it be expected? It will be just telling him that there will be no hereafter—the very thing he wished for, but scarcely dared to believe. Assure men of the fact, that death, to the wicked, is annihilation, and they will exclaim, "A short life and a merry one"—"Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." "I affirm," says Justin Martyr, a christian writer of the second century, "that no soul perishes entirely, or is annihilated, for that would really be *good and joyful news to the wicked.*" The history of the French revolution furnishes a horrible comment on the dogma. "My abode will soon be in an-

niliation," said Danton, one of the chief actors in that dreadful tragedy. Steeled and stupified by the thought he sat calmly on the bench as minister of mis-called justice, and doomed hundreds to death without feeling a pang of remorse. "Death," they said in those days, "is an eternal sleep," and then they went to their plunderings, their debaucheries, and their massacres, with glee infernal. What wonder? Did not the tree produce its natural fruit?

Men and brethren! I have endeavored to place before you the "true sayings of God" on this important subject. It is at our peril that we "add to his words," or "take away" from them. "Be not deceived, God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." Gal. vi. 7, 8.



