

THE
SABBATH SCHOOL EXPOSITOR:

BEING A

COMPEND OF THE DOCTRINES

HELD BY THE

UNIVERSALIST DENOMINATION.

DESIGNED FOR THE USE OF

TEACHERS, BIBLE CLASSES, AND THE OLDER
PUPILS IN SABBATH SCHOOLS.

BY J. M. AUSTIN,

AUTHOR OF THE "CATECHISM ON THE PARABLES," "VOICE TO YOUTH,"
"ARGUMENTS FROM THE ATTRIBUTES," ETC. ETC.

"I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in the
truth."—3 JOHN.

BOSTON:
TOMPKINS & COMPANY,
SABBATH SCHOOL DEPOSITORY, 25 CORNHILL,

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1850, by
ABEL TOMPKINS,
In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of Massachusetts.

Stereotyped by
HOWART & ROBBINS;
New England Type and Stereotype Foundry,
BOSTON.

PREFACE.

THE design of this book, as intimated in the title-page, is to present a brief exposition of the prominent sentiments entertained by the denomination of Universalists. The author is not aware of any volume in our Sabbath Schools, that lays before the learner, in a single and connected series, the doctrines which distinguish us as a sect. It is not unknown to those interested in the rising generation, that many scholars depart from the Sabbath School, after having passed through all its classes, with an understanding quite indefinite in regard to not a few fundamental points which distinguish us from other denominations. There seemed to be needed a class-book, which should gather up for pupils, as they are about to leave the school, all the various points of doctrine in which they may have been more or less instructed, and so present them in consecutive order, as to afford a clear view of them as a whole, harmoniously knit together, in a well-digested system. To supply this want, is the object of this volume.

Fully aware that, on a few minor points, a difference of opinion prevails among Universalists, the author has endeavored to present each conflicting view in a clear light, as held by its adherents. If he has given more prominence to one class of these opinions than another, in some cases, it has been from a conviction that its practical influence demanded it, rather than from any

disposition to bestow an undue importance upon either view.

It has been the effort to present the subject of each lesson in a form easy to be comprehended and retained by the pupil. While striving to avoid, as far as possible, a formal routine of argumentation, it has nevertheless been deemed desirable to lead the minds of the pupils through plain and simple processes of reasoning, to obvious conclusions, that they may see the connection between premises and their results, and learn to trace the links by which they are connected. Although the volume is prepared for children, yet, as it is designed for children of advanced years, whose minds are rapidly maturing, the author has endeavored to place before them the different topics in such a manner as to call into exercise their mental capacities — enable them to understand for themselves the grounds of our faith — and thus prepare them to “be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh a reason of the hope that is in them.” It is hoped, also, that Sabbath School teachers, and inquirers after truth of every age, may gain some light from this production, to assist them in obtaining a matured and satisfactory system of faith.

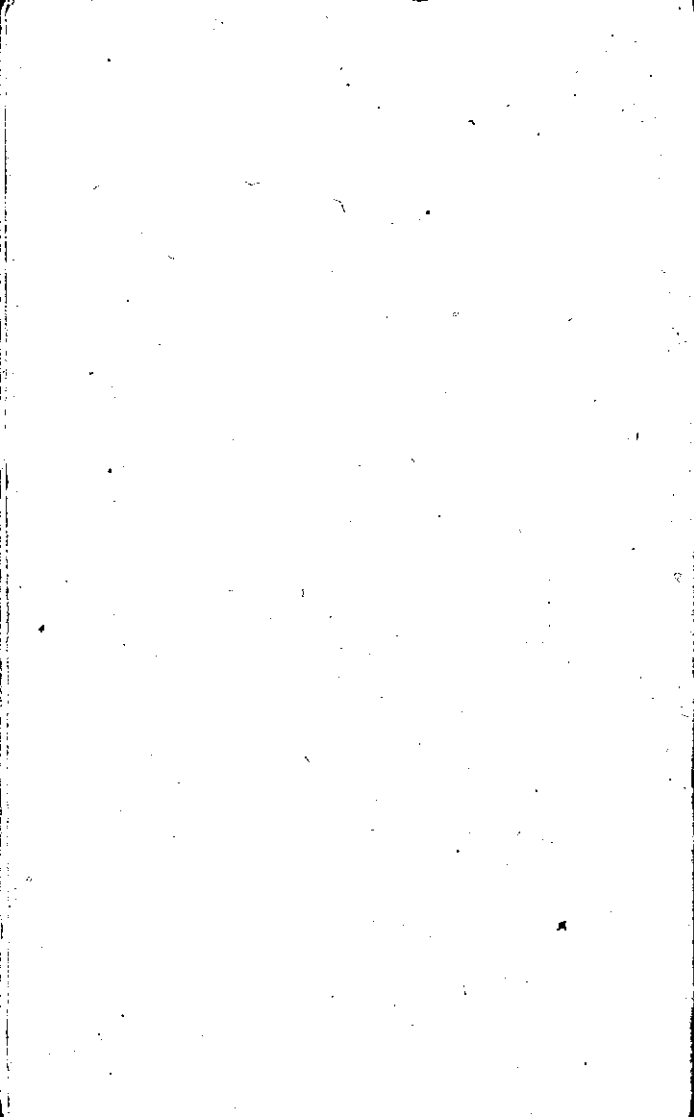
That the “Head of the Church” may bless this little volume, and make it instrumental in bringing thousands of youthful spirits to a correct understanding of God, his character and government — of Christ, his mission and claims — of man, his duties and his destiny — is the sincere and hopeful prayer of

THE AUTHOR.

AUBURN, March, 1850.

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PART FIRST.

OF GOD.

LESSON I.

THE EXISTENCE OF GOD.

1. At the head of the Universe there lives and reigns a God of infinite intelligence. This truth outranks all others in importance and value. It is the basis of every reasonable conception of the origin of creation, and the source of our own being. In its light, a thousand enigmas in Nature and Providence receive a consistent solution. Deprived of its instruction, all things are involved in inexplicable confusion, in a fathomless chaos of contradiction, and impossibilities.

2. The evidences of the existence of a Deity of ineffable perfections are found in every department of nature. Nor need the process by which these evidences are made to utter their conclusions, be of an intricate or difficult nature. It consists in the simplest deductions of reason, without resort to subtle metaphysics. Every effect must have a cause—every design pre-supposes a design—

er — every work, a workman. These positions are among the primary elements of genuine logic, and are the intuitive assertions of man's reason. They lead the mind, unerringly, to a clear conviction of the existence of God. Around, a universe, vast in its proportions, majestic in its structure, brilliant with light and glory, presents itself to the contemplation of the human eye. Within, Man feels himself in possession of a conscious existence. He thinks, reasons, judges, decides. He is in possession of a body endowed with varied and astonishing capacities. These are facts, self-evident in their nature. Equally self-evident is it, that these complicated and wonderful creations could not have existed without the agency of a Creator entirely competent to their production.

3. What is denominated Chance, is but the absence of design, forethought, intelligence. It is the fortuitous combination of circumstances, without rule or order, which would not occur twice alike, with any certainty, in countless millions of ages. The presence of perceptible Design, conclusively proves the absence of Chance. To suppose that an evidently matured plan — that a plain continuity of plans, where link connects with link, and wheel involves with wheel, to produce a given result — may be attributed to blind Chance, is to do violence to the spontaneous convictions of

all right reason. The structure of the heavenly bodies — the splendor of their appearance — and the rapidity, harmony and precision, with which they revolve in their vast orbits ; the formation of the earth — the regular gradation through which it has evidently passed, from a state of chaos to its present finished condition, fitted for the habitation of sentient creatures ; the existence and operation of numerous classes of natural laws, each operating in harmony with every other, and all wisely and beneficently adapted to give fruitfulness to the soil, to furnish the light of the sun, the rains of heaven, the dews of evening, the mutations of the seasons, the alternations of day and night, periods for activity and for rest — these all show the agency and the presence of a Mind to originate, a Wisdom to contrive, a Power to execute, and a Goodness to bless. In fine, these are unmistakable evidences of the existence of an infinitely perfect Divinity.

4. An effect cannot exceed its cause ; nor can it possess a property of which its cause is destitute. Mere blind, inert matter, contains no quality of sensation, no power of thought, intelligence, wisdom. Hence it can impart none of these capacities. But in man they all exist in full activity. He feels, he reflects, contrives, weighs qualities, determines, executes. These powers could not

have been bestowed by senseless matter, being itself totally destitute of them. They must have come from a higher source, where they previously existed in fulness and perfection. Therefore man is the workmanship of an intelligent Deity. To a created being, possessing capabilities beyond the power of matter to communicate, his own existence affords conclusive evidence of a supreme Creator. The argument can be summed up in a single sentence — "I could not have been created by myself. I could not have been formed and endowed by unconscious matter. Yet I live, and think, in conscious being. Therefore I must be the workmanship of a God who lives and thinks in conscious being."

5. "The Idea of the Supreme Being has this peculiar property: that, as it admits of no substitute, so, from the first moment that it is formed, it is capable of continual growth and enlargement. God himself is immutable; but our conception of his character is continually receiving fresh accessions, is continually growing more extended and refulgent, by having transferred to it new elements of beauty and goodness; by attracting to itself, as a centre, whatever bears the impress of dignity, order, or happiness. It borrows splendor from all that is fair, subordinates to itself all that is great,

and SITS ENTHRONED ON THE RICHES OF THE UNIVERSE." (1)

QUESTIONS ON LESSON I.

1. What is the first and most important of all truths? Of what is it the basis? What is the effect of its light? What is the consequence of being deprived of its instruction?

2. Where are the evidences of the existence of Deity found? Are their conclusions difficult to be arrived at? In what does the process consist? What must be said of every effect, work, design? What is the nature of these positions? To what do they lead the mind? What is there around us? Of what does man feel himself possessed? What was necessary to give these creations existence?

3. What is chance? What does evident design prove? What is it that does violence to the convictions of reason? What is shown by the structure of the heavenly bodies, and the operation of the laws of nature? Of what are they evidences?

4, 5. What is said of an effect? What of blind matter? What capacities exist in man? From whence did they originate? What do they prove? How can the argument be summed up? What peculiar property has the idea of the Supremé Being? What is said of God? What of our conception of Him? What does it do?

(1) Robert Hall.

LESSON II.

THE UNITY OF GOD.

1. THERE is but one God. This fact forms the foundation of all enlightened and true religion. It is one of the leading tenets which distinguishes Christianity from the false theories of Heathenism. The doctrine of a plurality of gods, whether in the gross form in which it exists among Pagan nations, or as it is found in the modified theory of a trinity of persons in the Godhead, alike conflicts with the deductions of Reason, and the teachings of Nature and Revelation.

2. Could it be possible for two or more independent Supreme Beings to exist, equal in station and power, there would be a liability to conflict and confusion in the works and laws of Nature. But there is no dissonance of this description to be perceived. Throughout creation—in every department of the Almighty's works, whether celestial or terrestrial; in earth, water, air, fire; in the animal, vegetable and mineral kingdoms—unity, concord, peace, universal, prevail. The laws and movements in these several divisions

not only blend and coöperate together in their separate spheres, but the arrangements, the processes, in each department, act in beautiful harmony with those in others, and all thus interweaving in the most admirable unity; make up a grand, harmonious whole, luminous with the wisdom and beneficence of the great Originator. This boundless harmony, perfect to the minutest shade, running throughout the universe, attests with convincing emphasis that all things are the production of One Indivisible Mind.

3. In the nature of things, there can exist but one Infinite Being. If all things, all space, all time, and eternity itself, are possessed and filled by Him who is revealed as the Father of Spirits, then, by no possibility, can another being exist, having the same qualities, and occupying the like position. However exalted Christ, angels or spirits, may be; however high the stations they fill; however great and glorious the works they perform; however they deserve the praise and homage of man; yet they cannot possess the property of infinity. Far above them all, and overshadowing them, as does the outstretched heavens a grain of sand, exists and reigns in light and majesty the One uncreated and incomprehensible God.

4. The Scriptures, in language most emphatic, declare the strict unity of the Creator: "Hear, O

Israel: the Lord our God is One Lord.”⁽¹⁾ “I am God, and there is none else. I am God, and there is none like me. Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times, the things that are not yet done; saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.”⁽²⁾ “Have we not all One Father? Hath not One God created us?”⁽³⁾ “One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”⁽⁴⁾ “To us there is but One God, the Father.”⁽⁵⁾ “There is One God, and one Mediator between God and men; the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.”⁽⁶⁾

5. To assert the Deity of Jesus Christ — that he is coequal with the Father in power and glory; that he is, in fact, God himself — is to advance a proposition which carries a self-contradiction on its surface. The entire current of Bible testimony declares that Christ is the Son of God. The Almighty himself asserts this fact. “And a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.”⁽⁷⁾ “While he yet spake, behold a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well

(1) Deut. vi. 4. (2) Isa. xlv. 9, 10. (3) Mal. ii. 10. (4) Eph. iv. 6. (5) 1 Cor. viii. 6. (6) 1 Tim. ii. 5, 6. (7) Luke iii. 22.

pleased; hear ye him.”⁽¹⁾ The Saviour acknowledged God to be his Father. “Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.”⁽²⁾ The apostles believed in God as the Father, and in Christ as the Son. “The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is blessed forevermore.”⁽³⁾ “For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”⁽⁴⁾ Thus God being Father, and Jesus his Son, they are two separate and distinct beings. The Father cannot be the Son, nor the Son the Father. Neither is it possible for them to be One in person. To affirm this, confounds all natural sense, and prostrates Reason at the footstool of Absurdity.

6. The Saviour, in two or three instances, declared that he and his Father were one. The *oneness* to which he alluded was manifestly a unity of purpose, and harmony of spirit, and not a unity of person. This is evident from the fact, that Christ prays the Father that his disciples may be One with them, in the same sense that he and his Father are one. “That they all may be One: as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us.”⁽⁵⁾ The Jews, in the days of the Saviour, understood him in the

(1) Mat. xvii. 5. (2) John xx. 17. (3) 2 Cor. xi. 31.
(4) Eph. iii. 14. (5) John xvii. 21.

declaration that he and his Father were one, in the same sense that some do at the present time, that they were one in person. On this construction, they charged him with blasphemy ; insisting that he made himself equal with God, or, in other words, that he made himself to be God. Jesus emphatically repudiated this interpretation of his language, and declared that in its use he should be understood only as asserting that he was the Son of God. He claimed no nearer connection with the Father than this.⁽¹⁾

7. That God and Christ are distinct beings, is evident also from the significant fact, that in all representations of their visible appearance in heaven, they are described as existing in separate personality. The Saviour is always seen as existing distinct from God, and subordinate to him. "And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I, saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the Throne, AND unto the Lamb, for ever and ever."⁽²⁾ "But he [Stephen,] being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said,

(1) John x. 29—36. (2) Rev. v. 13.

Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God.”⁽¹⁾
 “The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand, to be a Prince and Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are his witnesses of these things.”⁽²⁾

QUESTIONS ON LESSON II.

1. Is there more than one God? Of what does this fact form the foundation? From what does it distinguish Christianity? With what does the doctrine of a plurality of Gods conflict?

2, 3. What would produce conflict and confusion in the works of nature? What is seen throughout creation? What is said of the laws and movements in the several departments of God's works? With what is the whole luminous? What does the harmony of all attest? Can there exist more than one Infinite Being? If the Father of Spirits possesses and fills all things, what conclusion follows? What is said of Christ, angels and spirits? What is there far above them?

4. What do the Scriptures declare? What is said in the book of Deuteronomy? What in Isaiah? In Malachi? In Ephesians? In 1st Corinthians? In 1st Timothy?

5. What is the effect of asserting the Deity of Christ? What does the current of Bible testimony declare? What does the Almighty assert? What is said, in Matthew, on this subject? What did the Saviour acknowledge? How did the Apostles believe?

(1) Acts vii. 55, 56. (2) Acts v. 30—32.

Repeat their language. What is said of the Father and the Son? What is the consequence of affirming that they are one in person?

6. What did the Saviour declare, in two or three instances? How is this oneness to be understood? How is it evident that it was a unity in spirit? Repeat the prayer of Christ. How did the Jews understand the declaration that Christ and the Father are one? With what did they charge the Redeemer? What did he say in reply to this charge? How did he explain his meaning?

7. From what additional fact is it evident that God and Christ are distinct beings? What is asserted in the book of Revelations? What did Stephen see, and what were his last words? Repeat the quotation from Acts.

LESSON III.

THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.

1. THE Attributes of God may be classed under two heads, Natural and Moral. His Natural attributes are his Omnipotence, Omniscience, Infinity, Eternity, and other like qualities. His Moral attributes are his Truth, Faithfulness, Goodness, Justice, Mercy, &c. The former are sometimes denominated his incommunicable, and the latter his communicable, attributes. The one class are never possessed by created beings; but of the other, he imparts certain degrees to his creatures.

2. The Love of God, perhaps, strictly speaking, would not properly be classed with his attributes. It composes the entire essence of his Moral Nature. "God is Love."⁽¹⁾ "In the words 'God is Love,' we have a perfect portrait of the eternal and incomprehensible Jehovah, drawn by his own unerring hand. The mode of expression here adopted differs materially from that usually employed by the inspired writers, in speaking of the Divine perfections. They say, God is merciful, God is just, God is holy. But never do they say,

(1) John iv. 16.

God is mercy, God is justice, God is holiness. In this instance, on the contrary, the Apostle, instead of saying God is *loving*, or *good*, says, God is LOVE—LOVE itself. By this expression we must understand that God is all pure, unmixed LOVE, and that the other moral perfections of his character are only so many modifications of his love. Thus, his justice, his mercy, his truth, his faithfulness, are but so many different names of his love or goodness. As the light which proceeds from the sun may be easily separated into many different colors, so the holy love of God, which is the light and glory of his nature, may be separated into a variety of moral attributes and perfections. But, though separated, they are still LOVE. His whole nature and essence is LOVE. His will, his word and his works, are LOVE. He is nothing, can do nothing, but LOVE."⁽¹⁾ "It has been well observed, that, although God is holy, just, righteous, &c., he is never called holiness, justice, in the abstract, as he is here called LOVE. This seems to be the essence of the Divine Nature, and all other attributes to be only modifications of this."⁽²⁾

3. While Love thus composes the essence or substratum of God's nature, and all his moral at-

(1) Dr. Edward Payson. (2) Dr. Adam Clarke on 1 John iv. 8.

tributes are but different developments of this precious quality, it is not to be supposed any opposite principle exists in the Divine character. In no actual sense can it be admitted that any of man's frailties, or evil passions, pertain to the Most High, or influence him in his doings. The Scriptures, it is true, in some instances, attribute anger, wrath, hatred, jealousy, &c., to the Creator. These, however, in no sense, should be understood literally. They were used by the divine writers, in conformity with the highly metaphorical style of composition in ancient times; and, according to all enlightened biblical interpretation, should be viewed merely as figurative representations of God's disapprobation of sin, and his purpose to punish the guilty.

4. It is important to understand clearly that there is no conflict between the attributes of Jehovah. All act in a unity and harmony the most perfect and beautiful. In an especial manner this fact should be recognized in respect to his Justice and Mercy. In some religious theories these attributes are placed in attitudes antagonistic to each other, in their claims upon the guilty. Justice is supposed to demand a punishment which conflicts with, and denies, the yearnings of Mercy. Were this true, discord would necessarily exist in the Councils of Heaven. But this is an error to be

studiously avoided. When properly understood, it will be seen, that, in demanding the punishment of the guilty, Justice requires nothing that Mercy is not willing to grant.

5. Why does Justice rigidly and strictly insist that the sinful shall be punished? 1. To vindicate the integrity and vitality of God's government. 2. To present an example which shall deter others from the commission of sinful deeds. 3. To promote the good of the guilty themselves, in turning them from the practice of wickedness into the paths of wisdom and righteousness, where alone they can find true peace and happiness.⁽¹⁾ These beneficent objects of punishment are entirely sanctioned by Mercy. It forbids nothing the good of the erring demands. Hence it does not object that Justice should inflict upon each sinner such amount of punishment as his degrees of guilt require, and as the above objects render necessary. Where, then, is there opportunity for an exercise of Mercy? The enduring of the full amount of punishment which he deserves does but balance the account between Justice and the sinner. It in no way entitles him to the high blessings of God, as a reward. But, having thus suffered according to his demerits, and been brought to repent-

(1) See Heb. xii. 5—11.

ance of his sins, Mercy then presents and advocates his case, as one needing the care and assistance of the heavenly Father; and God, who "delighteth in mercy," pours out the full streams of his grace and goodness upon him forever!

6. In creating the human race, God has endowed them with a portion of his own attributes. It is from this source that they have received their intellectual and moral capacities. Consequently, in determining the influence which the attributes of the Deity exert upon his character and proceedings, we must judge by the influence which similar qualities exercise on men. The only idea to be formed of God's justice, is by an understanding of the nature of this principle, as it is exercised in the ordinary affairs of life. Our conceptions of the love and goodness of the Creator, and of their effect upon him in his dealings with his creatures, must necessarily be drawn from the nature and influence of similar qualities, when resting in the hearts of benevolent and conscientious men. There is no other possible method of approximating any tangible understanding of the nature of the Almighty's perfections. If love, kindness, mercy, do not influence God in a manner similar to the effect they produce on man, we can attain to no intelligible idea of the operation of these attributes in the Divine Nature.

7. A clear apprehension of the attributes of God is one of the most important essentials to an enlightened and satisfactory understanding of the ultimate destiny of mankind. As Deity is an intelligent being, it is not to be supposed he deliberately acts, in any given case, without aiming to accomplish some definite object. Hence, in creating mankind, he must have formed each soul for some distinct and final condition, into which he designed ultimately to bring them. The nature of that condition can be determined by the character of God. As his nature is love — as goodness, beneficence, mercy, are attributes belonging to him, and influencing him — the ultimate state for which he made his creatures, must be one which accords with these perfections. In other words, it must be one fully securing the final holiness and happiness of all the souls he has formed.

8. Having created for this worthy and beneficent purpose, his infinite wisdom enabled him to mature a well-digested and perfect plan of operations for its successful and triumphant accomplishment. However complicated or inadequate this plan may appear to our limited capacities — however numerous the processes it involves, and the agencies it employs — however protracted and numerous the stages through which it carries the souls whose ultimate good it is operating to se-

cure — yet, it being God's plan, formed in the light of a wisdom which cannot err, it must be fully and perfectly adequate to accomplish the end for which it was devised. And the power of the Almighty being omnipotent and irresistible, both physically and morally, he is enabled to carry forward his wisely arranged plan, for the final happiness of all his creatures, to a victorious and infinitely perfect completion. To the same degree that men have enlightened conceptions of the attributes of the Holy One, will their confidence increase, that a destiny, so honorable to God, and so hopeful to man, awaits all the offspring he has been pleased to usher into existence.

QUESTIONS ON LESSON III.

1. How may God's attributes be classified? What are his Natural attributes? What are his Moral attributes? What are they sometimes denominated? Which does he communicate to his creatures?

2. Can the love of God be classed with his attributes? What does it compose? How does John describe God? What have we in the words "God is love"? Does this mode of expression differ from that usually employed by the divine writers? How do they usually speak of God? In what manner does the Apostle express himself? What are we to understand by this language? What are God's justice, mercy, truth, &c.? How is the love of God described in comparison with light? What are his will, his word

and his works? What is he, and what can he do? What are all the other attributes?

3. Can any principle opposite to love exist in the Creator? Do man's frailties or passions pertain to God? What do the Scriptures, in some instances, attribute to God? Should these expressions be understood in a literal sense? How were they used by the divine writers? In what light should they be viewed?

4. Do the attributes of Jehovah conflict with each other? How do they act? Is this especially the case with Justice and Mercy? In what attitudes are these attributes placed, in some theories? What is Justice supposed to demand? What would be the result of such a demand? What does Justice require?

5. Does Justice rigidly insist that the sinful shall be punished? What is the first reason for it? What the second? The third? Does Mercy sanction these objects of punishment? To what does Mercy not object? In what position does the enduring of all the punishment he justly deserves leave the sinner? Does it entitle him to the blessings of God, as a reward? What does Mercy then do for him? What effect does its advocacy of the repenting sinner's case have upon God?

6. With what has the Creator endowed the human race? How can the influence which God's attributes exert upon him be determined? How can we form any idea of the nature of his Justice? From what can we form our conceptions of the manner in which he is influenced by his love and goodness? If no conception of the influence of God's attributes on him can be conceived by the effect of similar principles in the hearts of men, how are we left?

7. What is essential to an enlightened understanding of the destiny of mankind? Is it to be supposed Deity acts without a definite object? Why not? For what must he have formed each human soul? How can the nature of that condition be determined? With

what must their ultimate condition accord? What must that condition be?

8. What did God's wisdom enable him to do, in regard to man's final condition? May some parts of this plan appear to us complicated and protracted? Yet what must be its nature? What is the character of God's power? What does it enable him to do? In what degree do we have confidence in the ultimate holiness and happiness of all men?

LESSON IV.

THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD.

1. HAVING created man in his own image, and made him dependent for life and all things, God exercises a supervision or government over him. In its true acceptation, government is but another word for order, harmony and protection. The government of God is simply the enforcing a class of rules and regulations upon intelligent beings, for the purpose of promoting the highest good of all who are called to obey. All legitimate government — all genuine authority to exercise dominion and demand obedience — rests on the protection, the safeguard, the benefits it extends to those who are required to yield compliance with its mandates. A government which fails to protect its subjects, or to promote their highest interests, is an illegal usurpation of power — a tyranny, against which rebellion would be justifiable and commendable.

2. Every human government professes to admit these principles; and all good governments scrupulously base their acts upon them. They recognize their subjects as possessing "certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty,

and the pursuit of happiness." They guarantee them the exercise of these rights — protect their lives and property, and promote their welfare in a great variety of ways. On this ground solely, of favors bestowed, and benefits imparted, do governments rightfully demand obedience; and on this ground alone can they legitimately inflict punishment. Nor do these obligations of government cease when its subjects become deserving of punishment through disobedience. Although, in becoming guilty, they have temporarily forfeited a large class of their privileges, yet government recognizes them as still possessing certain rights intimately connected with their good. Even while incarcerating them in prison, as a penalty for their crimes, the government feels under obligation to feed, and clothe, and shelter them — to protect them against assault and cruelty — and to provide them healing cordials and kind attendance, when sickness preys upon them.

3. These principles in earthly governments are emanations from the Divine government. It is because the Creator, in his moral government, his laws, commandments and precepts, designs solely to promote the permanent and highest good of every human being, that he demands the implicit obedience of all. It is on the same ground that he inflicts his punishments on the disobedient.

Punishment on any other principle than the emendation and benefit of the punished, as well as the salutary influence it exercises on those who witness it, would be the sheerest revenge and the basest cruelty. Were the Supreme Sovereign to place a dependent creature, whether for punishment or any other cause, in a condition where he would be removed beyond the reach of his support and his blessing—where the protection, the benefit, for which government is established, would be denied—such a creature would be absolved from allegiance to God, and from all obligation to obey him. To continue punishing, under such circumstances, would be an arbitrary and tyrannical exercise of brute power. When the protection and benefit, for which government is established, ceases in regard to any being, then all obligation to obey, and all right to punish, must also cease. In the fact, therefore, that Deity will forever exercise a just government over all mankind, and require them to obey its laws, is found the most perfect assurance that all men will forever receive protection, support, and the most important benefits, at his hands.

4. The Creator having established his moral government for the purpose of permanently securing the highest good of every being called to obey, it is not to be supposed he would incorporate in it

a principle or process which would defeat this great primal object, in regard to any of his creatures. Hence it cannot be possible that he enacted an endless penalty to be administered for a violation of his statutes. Such a penalty could assuredly be of no benefit to those who endure it. Were it to be inflicted on countless millions, whom God designed to protect and bless by his government, the operations of that very government would prove an infinite evil. It is not to be admitted that a clear-sighted and wise God would act in so blind a manner. Designing his government for the good of all, so far from adopting any process which he foresaw would defeat that design, he would be especially cautious to have every measure connected with it, or growing out of it, of such a nature as would aid to the attainment of the end aimed at.

5. All government for the control of imperfect creatures, must necessarily have incorporated within it, a system of Rewards and Punishments, to give efficacy to its enactments. Such a system pertains to the government of God. Each human being receives, in the operation of that government, an ample reward, without failure, for all the good deeds he performs. And with equal certainty he is justly punished for every sinful act, word or thought, of which he is the author. A limited

punishment, inflicted with unfailing certainty, must be much more efficacious and restraining, than the *threatening* of an endless punishment, with an abundant opportunity for *escape*. The former is the penalty which God has established for a violation of his laws.

6. That his punishments are certain, he has assured us through his revealed word. — “ Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished.”⁽¹⁾ The evidence that his punishments are limited, is equally emphatic, as furnished in the language of his inspired prophet. — “ For a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment ; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer.”⁽²⁾ “ I will not contend forever, neither will I be always wroth : for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls which I have made.”⁽³⁾ That his punishments are emendatory, resulting in the reformation and restoration of those who endure them, we have the testimony of St. Paul. — “ For they [earthly parents] verily, for a few days, chastened us after their own pleasure ; but he, for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now, no chastening,

(1) Prov. xi. 21. (2) Isa. liv. 7, 8. (3) Isa. lvii. 16. See also Lam. iii. 31—33.

for the present, seemeth to be joyous, but grievous ; nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." (1) Punishment administered without any reference to the good of the guilty, and without the slightest view to their reformation, would be but sheer retaliation. This base passion cannot be supposed to actuate the holy Father of spirits in his dealings with his offspring. He has forbidden man the exercise of such emotions. Has the Deity established for himself a principle of action *below* that which he has enjoined on his creatures ?

7. There are certain passages of Scripture, where the words "everlasting," "eternal," "forever," &c., are applied to punishment, which are construed by some religionists to teach the literal endlessness of God's chastisements. This construction arises from the want of discrimination in understanding these words. The Greek words *aionion* and *aionios*, from which everlasting, eternal, &c., are translated, when applied to God and his attributes, signify endless duration. But it is also well known that the same words, when applied to anything not having in itself the property of endlessness, may, and often do, have a

(1) Heb. xii. 10, 11.

limited meaning. The Bible abounds with instances of this description. It speaks of certain individuals being bondmen *forever*.⁽¹⁾ Of the Passover being an ordinance *forever*.⁽²⁾ Of the *everlasting* hills.⁽³⁾ An *everlasting* priesthood.⁽⁴⁾ An *everlasting* statute,⁽⁵⁾ &c. In these, and many other cases, the words everlasting and forever, are used in a limited sense. In one instance, "forever" is used to signify but *three days*.⁽⁶⁾ Punishment being in its nature emendatory and limited, these words, and all other forms of expression, when applied to it, are to be received as signifying a limited time.⁽⁷⁾

8. There is a difference of opinion among Universalists in regard to the duration of punishment. United in the distinctive and sublime doctrine of the final purification and happiness of all souls, there is the utmost freedom of opinion among them on minor points. All Universalists believe that God's punishments are administered for holy and beneficent purposes — that they commence the moment sin is committed, or a wicked purpose conceived — and that they will result in the reformation and restoration of those who endure them. One class, however, believe that

(1) Lev. xxv. 46. (2) Ex. xii. 14. (3) Gen. xlix. 26. (4) Ex. xl. 15. (5) Lev. xvi. 34. (6) Jonah ii. 6. (7) See Balfour's Second Inquiry, Forbes' Universalist's Assistant, Whittemore's Guide to Universalism, Paige's Selections.

punishment accomplishes its work in this life; another class believe it extends to a future state of existence. It forms no part of the faith of the former class, that any man will enter heaven until he has been punished for all his sins, and is fully prepared for that high abode. But it is believed that the scenes of the resurrection will effect a transforming work on all who arise from the dead; purifying their hearts, enlightening their understandings, and fitting them, in all respects, for the happiness of heaven.

9. The latter class entertain the belief that the consequences of men's deeds in this life, both good and evil, will be extended to another world. They are not prepared to admit that a good man and a depraved wretch, on entering a higher existence, will be in a condition, either mentally or morally, immediately to mingle in the same scenes, and participate in the same enjoyments. It is not their opinion that physical stripes, or any gross and brutal tortures, will be inflicted hereafter. But they believe that all men will be subjected to a salutary, enlightening, purifying discipline, as their moral condition may require when they leave the earth — through the influence of which they will be elevated from one degree of light, holiness and happiness, to another, until all, at length, attain to the full development and exercise of the moral,

religious and intellectual capacities with which they have been endowed by their Creator. This will be the summit of happiness — Heaven!

QUESTIONS ON LESSON IV.

1. What does God exercise over man? What is government? What is the government of God? On what does all legitimate government rest? What is the character of a government which fails to promote the interests of its subjects? What would be justifiable against such a government?

2. What do good earthly governments profess? What do they recognize their subjects as possessing? What do they guarantee them? On what ground do they demand obedience and inflict punishment? Do the obligations of government cease, on account of disobedience? In becoming guilty, what have the disobedient temporarily forfeited? What does government recognize them as still possessing? What does it do for them while incarcerating them in prison?

3. From what are these principles in earthly government emanations? On what principle does God demand the obedience of men? On what ground does he inflict punishment? What would punishment be, on any other principle? What would absolve a creature from all obligation to obey God? What would it be to continue punishing, under any such circumstances? When does the obligation to obey, and the right to punish, cease? What is found in the fact that Deity will forever exercise a just government over all men?

4. For what has God established his moral government? What would not the Creator incorporate in his government? Has he enacted an endless penalty? Could such a penalty be any benefit to those who endured it? What would be the effect of its infliction?

Is it to be admitted God would act in such a manner? Why not? What measures would he be cautious to adopt?

5. What must all governments necessarily have incorporated within them? For what purpose are rewards and punishments? Does such a system pertain to God's government? What does each human being receive in the operation of that government? How does the threatening of a certain limited punishment compare in efficacy with that of an uncertain endless punishment? Which has God established as the penalty for a violation of his laws?

6. What has God assured us, through his revealed word? Repeat the quotation from Proverbs. Is there equal evidence that his punishments are limited? What is the language of Isaiah? Repeat the passage in Lamentations. To what does St. Paul testify? What are his words? What is said of punishments administered without reference to the benefit and amendment of the guilty? Can such a passion actuate God? What has he forbidden man? What question is asked in reference to the Deity? What do you reply?

7. What words are found in certain passages of Scripture? How are they construed by some religionists? From what does this construction arise? What do *aionion* and *aionios* signify when applied to God and his attributes? What is their signification when applied to anything not having in itself the property of endlessness? What specimens does the Bible furnish of the meaning of forever and everlasting? How are these words used in the cases cited? What length of time does "forever" signify in Jonah? What is the nature of punishment? Does it contain in its nature any property of endlessness? What duration should be given to the words everlasting, forever, and eternal, when applied to punishment?

8. On what subject is there a difference of opinion among Universalists? In what are they united? In regard to what do they allow freedom of opinion?

What do all Universalists believe? What is the belief of one class in regard to the duration of punishment? What is the belief of another class? What is it that forms no part of the faith of the former class? What do they believe of the resurrection? What belief is entertained by the latter class? What are they not prepared to admit? What is their opinion in regard to gross and brutal tortures? What kind of discipline do they believe all men will be subjected to hereafter? What will be its influence upon them? To what will all at length attain? What will this be to them?

PART SECOND. OF CHRIST.

LESSON V.

HIS PRE-EXISTENCE AND EXALTATION.

1. A BELIEF in the preëxistence of Christ, is not necessarily involved in the faith of a Universalist. There is a diversity of views prevailing in the denomination on this subject. Some are of the opinion that his being commenced at his birth in the manger at Bethlehem. There are others, however, who believe that he had a previous existence. According to their views, Jesus was the first created of all beings formed by the Almighty. Long ages before his advent on earth.—before our world was formed—he existed in glory with his Father, and engaged as his agent in the execution of vast works of wisdom and beneficence. This view exhibits the love and the merit of Christ in the clearest possible light—in that he was willing to leave his high position amid light and glory, and take upon himself the form of man,

and suffer and die, to proclaim and establish his gospel on earth.

2. The Scriptures afford strong confirmation of this theory. They describe Jesus as "the beginning of the creation of God."⁽¹⁾ As the agent by which the Father makes and supports worlds, and all things within them. "God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers, by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things; by whom, also, he made the worlds. Who, being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."⁽²⁾ "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man, which is in heaven."⁽³⁾ "This is one of the many passages in which it seems plainly taught, that Jesus was, by nature, more than man, and that he existed in glory before he appeared on earth."⁽⁴⁾ "Verily, verily, I say unto you, before Abraham was, I am."⁽⁵⁾ "That is, my existence has its origin from a period before Abraham was born. This testimony seems

(1) Rev. iii. 14. (2) Heb. i. 1—3. (3) John iii. 13.
 (4) Paige's Commentary. (5) John viii. 58.

conclusive that our Lord existed before he appeared in the flesh. He does not assert that he had existed from eternity; nor does he here, or elsewhere, as some have wrongly understood, assert himself to be the supreme God of the universe. But I confess myself utterly unable to interpret this declaration in any fair manner, so that it shall be consistent with the fancy that he was a mere man, born as others, and that he had no conscious existence until nearly two thousand years after Abraham was born and gathered again to his fathers. Certainly, the most natural interpretation is, that he existed before Abraham."⁽¹⁾

3. "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world. Again, I leave the world and go to the Father. His disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb. Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee. By this we believe that thou camest forth from God."⁽²⁾ "In this verse I understand our Lord distinctly to assert his preëxistence. . . . The meaning may be expressed thus: I came from heaven, the place where the Divine presence is peculiarly manifested, into this world, or to the earth; again, I depart from the earth, and return

(1) Paige's Commentary. (2) John xvi. 28-30.

to heaven.”⁽¹⁾ “And, now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.”⁽²⁾ “I know not how the preëxistence of our Lord could be more forcibly asserted, nor how this passage can be explained consistently with his simple humanity. Taken in connection with John xvi. 28, this passage seems to afford conclusive proof that Jesus came forth from the Father, from a state of glory, when he came into this world; and as he was about to leave the world, he prays that he might be reinstated in his former glory, in the presence of the Father.”⁽¹⁾

4. The position occupied by the Redeemer is of the most exalted degree. Under God it is impossible to assign him a place too high. Far above man—above principalities and powers—above cherubim and seraphim, angels and archangels—he stands next in rank to the Almighty himself. The Scriptures assert this truth in the most emphatic manner. They represent him as being at the right hand of God, the most distinguished post of honor in the universe—the highest mark of respect Jehovah can bestow. “According to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and

(1) Paige's Commentary. (2) John xvii. 5.

set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places; far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.”⁽¹⁾ The Scriptures declare him to be “the Lord of glory”⁽²⁾ — the “Lord of all”⁽³⁾ — and “over all, God blessed, forever.”⁽⁴⁾ He has been clothed with all power [i. e., abundance of power] in heaven and earth;⁽⁵⁾ and will reign over men, until everything at enmity with their spiritual good shall be removed — until all shall bow in willing and cheerful submission, and become the happy subjects of his gospel kingdom.⁽⁶⁾

5. Receiving these exalted honors at the hand of God, and in view of all the services he has already rendered, and will yet render the human race, it is but reasonable that men should render divine homage to the Captain of their Salvation. While ascribing glory to God in the *highest* — while making the Father the supreme object of worship, as the first great Cause of all good — adoration and thanksgiving, in a secondary degree, should

(1) Eph. i. 19—23. (2) 1 Cor. ii. 8. (3) Acts x. 36.
 (4) Rom. ix. 5. (5) Matt. xxviii. 18. (6) 1 Cor. xv. 27, 28.

most assuredly be given to Jesus Christ. As the instrument, chosen and anointed of God, through whom he sends our most prized and cherished blessings — as the faithful Shepherd who died for the flock — as the Mediator by whom we are brought into reconciliation with the Father — Jesus has the strongest claims on our remembrance and gratitude, and vocal praise should ascend to him from every human tongue.

6. Nor need there be a doubt as to the propriety or legitimacy of divine homage rendered to Christ. The New Testament warrants such an homage, and abounds with examples. "Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever. Amen."⁽¹⁾ The angels of God were commanded to worship him. "Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said he, at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son? And again, when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him."⁽²⁾ Shall man neglect to praise him whom

(1) 2 Pet. iii. 18. (2) Heb. i. 4—6.

angels worship? The Apostle declares that ultimately every intelligent being in heaven and earth shall engage in acts of homage to Christ, as Lord, and which shall be, at the same time, to the glory of God. "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."⁽¹⁾ We shall all bow before Christ in higher worlds, and confess him and worship him as Lord, to the glory of the Father; and why should we not do so in the present life?

7. The name of Christ is associated with that of God in numerous places in the New Testament, in invoking blessings, and ascribing praise and worship. "Grace to you, and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ."⁽²⁾ "Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ."⁽³⁾ "To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ, forever. Amen."⁽⁴⁾ The martyr, Stephen, when put to death, expired, "calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."⁽⁵⁾ "And

(1) Phil. ii. 9—11. (2) Rom. i. 7. (3) Eph. vi. 23.
(4) Rom. xvi. 27. (5) Acts vii. 59.

I beheld, and heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders. And the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying, with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever." (1)

QUESTIONS ON LESSON V.

1. Is a belief in the preëxistence of Christ necessarily involved in Universalism? Is there a diversity of views on this subject? What opinion is entertained by some? What do others believe? According to their views, when was Jesus created? When did he exist with his Father? In what did he engage, as his agent? What does this view exhibit? What was Christ willing to do?

2. Do the Scriptures afford confirmation of this theory? How do they describe him? Do they speak of him as an agent of God, and for what? What does St. Paul say of him in Hebrews? What is said in John? What seems plainly taught in this passage? What did Jesus say of his existence before Abraham?

(1) Rev. v. 11—13.

What do you understand by this language? Did he assert that he existed from eternity, or that he is God? What is said of a fair interpretation of this language? What is the most natural interpretation?

3. From whence did Jesus declare he came when he entered the world? What did his disciples say in reply? What should Christ be understood as meaning? What prayer did the Saviour put up to his Father? What does this passage prove? In what did he pray he might be reinstated?

4. What is the position occupied by the Redeemer? Under whom is it impossible to assign him a place too high? What is his rank, in comparison with men and angels? Do the Scriptures maintain this view? How do they represent Christ? What is the highest mark of respect God can bestow on his Son? How is the exaltation of Jesus described in Ephesians? What is he styled in 1st Corinthians? In Acts? In Romans? What does he say of his power in Matthew? How does St. Paul describe his reign in 1st Corinthians?

5. In view of the honors Christ receives at the hand of God, and of his services in our behalf, what should we render to him? Who should be made the supreme object of worship? To whom should adoration and thanksgiving be given in a secondary degree? For what has Jesus the strongest claims on our remembrance and gratitude?

6. Need there be any doubt as to the propriety of rendering divine homage to Christ? What does the New Testament warrant? What ascription is made to Jesus in 2d Peter? What were the angels commanded to do? Repeat the language of the Apostle in Hebrews. What effect should the examples of the angels have upon us? What does St. Paul declare every intelligent being shall ultimately do? Repeat the quotation from Philipians. Ought we not to render the same homage to the Son of God in this world that we expect to hereafter?

7. How is the name of Christ frequently associated with that of God in the New Testament? What form of ascription is quoted from Romans? What from Ephesians? What from Romans again? To whom did the martyr Stephen commend his spirit? Repeat the quotation from Revelations.

LESSON VI.

THE MISSION OF CHRIST.

1. THE originating and prosecuting of clearly defined plans, is one of the chief characteristics of intelligent beings. The brute creation act from instinct, they know not why. The proceedings of creatures endowed with intellectual and moral capacities are in accordance with designs previously matured, and aiming at the accomplishment of some definite purpose. In all important transactions, their proceedings are but the filling up of an outline, already sketched in the mind, and kept constantly in view, as the work progresses.

2. It may safely be assumed, on principles involved in the foregoing reflections, that Jesus Christ, in taking upon himself the office of Mediator between God and men, designed to effect some distinct object; some clearly defined purpose. It may also be assumed that, in prosecuting his work, he acted according to a wise and perfect plan, which had been previously matured in the counsels of heaven. To deny, or doubt these positions — to imagine the Redeemer entered upon his mission without a well-digested and efficient

plan of operations, or without a knowledge of the extent to which he could prosecute it, or in ignorance of the degree of success that would attend him — would be to charge him, virtually, with a less amount of intelligence and foresight than is ordinarily possessed by man.

3. What was the nature of Christ's mission? What work did he undertake to accomplish? He came not to destroy, but to save. Luke ix. 56. This is indicated by his name, *Jesus*; i. e., a *Saviour*. The object of his mission was to save sinners. A being who is not a sinner stands in no need of salvation, being already saved. The work of the Redeemer is thus confined to one class — the sinful. The declarations of Christ, and the Apostle Paul, are positive and conclusive on this point. "When Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."⁽¹⁾ "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."⁽²⁾ To insist that Jesus will not save the sinful, at any time, in any world where sinners may exist, or under any circumstances, on their repentance, is to charge him with refusing or failing to do the

(1) Mark ii. 17. (2) 1 Tim. i. 15.

work he came to accomplish. To contend that the sinful, in any state of existence, will be placed, by the fiat of God, beyond the reach of salvation, or forced into a condition where repentance and reformation will be out of their power, is to attribute to Him the folly of thwarting the great and benevolent undertaking he had empowered his Son to complete.

4. From what was Christ commissioned to save mankind? Not from punishment justly due for sins committed. The Scriptures present no such view of salvation. Punishment should not be confounded with revenge. It is not an infliction of torture on the guilty, simply because they have done wrong. This would be the basest retaliation. The punishments of the Almighty are administered on a higher and holier principle. The primary object is to bring men to repentance, reformation, and holiness. Heb. xii. 5—11. While effecting this object, it is designed also to operate as an example, to deter those who witness it from giving way to temptation and sin. Such being the purpose for which punishment is inflicted on the sinful, to save them from it, would be to their manifest injury, rather than their benefit. It would be like saving the sick from partaking of medicine, vitally essential to their restoration to health, or from a painful surgical operation neces-

sary to preserve life. From the fact that punishment is designed for the reformation of the wicked, God has allowed no possible escape from its infliction. Prov. xi. 21. Col. iii. 25. Isa. iii. 11. Any system of theology which teaches that Christ came to save from deserved punishment—thus virtually instructing men that they can sin with impunity to any extent, and still escape all the penalty denounced against it—must necessarily be defective, both theoretically and practically. It not only contradicts the plainest assertions of God's word, but acts as a direct and positive encouragement to sinful practices.

5. The salvation which Jesus came to effect for men, is from *sin*. "Thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins."⁽¹⁾ It is from wickedness itself—from that darkened, ignorant, alienated state of mind and heart, in which men fall into sin—that the Redeemer saves them. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!"⁽²⁾ "It is to be observed that John does not say he 'taketh away the *punishment* which men deserve,' but he 'taketh away the *sin* of the world.' It would be comparatively a light and trivial blessing, to remit punishment, and yet leave men in a state of sinfulness. But to eradicate evil from

(1) Matt. i. 21. (2) John i. 29.

their hearts, to purify them from sin, to make them holy, to make them partakers of the Divine nature and children of God in spirit—this is a blessing worthy of Him who imparts it, and deserving the everlasting gratitude of those who receive it.”⁽¹⁾

6. How many of the human race was the Redeemer sent to save? There can be no better source of information on this point than the word of the Most High. The information which this affords is of the most explicit and satisfactory character. “God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.”⁽²⁾ “I came not to judge the world, but to save the world.”⁽³⁾ “We have seen and do testify, that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.”⁽⁴⁾ “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!”⁽⁵⁾ These quotations establish the fact that the entire world, the whole human race, are included in the number whom Christ came to save. This truth is confirmed by a great variety of other passages. St. Paul asserts that “He died for all.”⁽⁶⁾ He tasted “death for every man.”⁽⁷⁾ He “gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in

(1) Paige's Commentary. (2) John iii. 17. (3) John xii. 47. (4) 1 John iv. 14. (5) John i. 29. (6) 2 Cor. v. 15. (7) Heb. ii. 9.

due time.”⁽¹⁾ “And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.”⁽²⁾

7. The Son of God was sent to save all men. This position is established, beyond controversy, in the mind of every individual who will yield to the decision of the Scriptures. This is the most exalted view that can be taken of the work of Christ. It presents his mission in a light calculated to excite the highest admiration and joy in men and angels.

8. Will the Redeemer succeed in this greatest and best of works? A firm and enlightened faith in Jesus necessarily leads to a belief that he will. To doubt his success, is to be involved in the unbelief and faithlessness which the Bible so pointedly condemns. In order to be a believer in the Son of God, in the gospel sense of that duty, it is necessary to believe not only that he is able and willing to save us individually, but that he is able, and willing, and faithful to complete the work His Father sent Him to do — i. e., to save all mankind.

To fall short of this belief, is to exercise a weak, and unscriptural faith in the Saviour. If the Redeemer does not succeed in saving the world, his expectations will be forever frustrated and

(1) 1 Tim. ii. 6. (2) 1 John ii. 2.

overthrown. For he would not undertake such a work unless he confidently believed he should be able to accomplish it. Moreover, should he fail, we must believe God himself would be disappointed. In sending his Son to save all men, he must have entertained an expectation that he would succeed. Would he direct his "first begotten" to accomplish a work which he knew could not be done?

9. There can be no legitimate reason assigned against the success of Christ, in his mission to save all mankind. It cannot be urged that he has not a sufficiency of power. "He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him. The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hands."⁽¹⁾ "Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."⁽²⁾ "It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell."⁽³⁾ If any more testimony is needed on this point, it is found in the declaration of St. Paul, in which he asserts that God himself is coöperating with his Son in completing this work — "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them."⁽⁴⁾ Neither can it

(1) John iii. 34, 35. (2) Matt. xxviii. 18. (3) Col. i. 19
(4) 2 Cor. v. 19.

be urged that Christ will not succeed in saving all, because some are not willing to be saved. This unwillingness proceeds from their ignorance and blindness to their own highest welfare. To remove such ignorance and blindness from the minds of the sinful, is precisely the work Jesus was commissioned to execute. Hence, to insist that he cannot save men because they are not willing to be saved, is but asserting that he cannot do his work, because it needs to be done. The Scriptures instruct us, that man's will shall present no obstacle to the ultimate success of the Redeemer. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power."⁽¹⁾

10. The word of God affords the most positive evidence of the ultimate success of Christ in completing his work of Universal Salvation. "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied."⁽²⁾ "My meat [purpose, pleasure] is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work."⁽³⁾ What was the work God sent him to do? "The Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world."⁽⁴⁾ Can Christ *finish* this work unless the world is finally saved? Jesus came to do the will of Him that sent him. What is God's will? God "will have all men to be

(1) Ps. cx. 3. (2) Isa. lili. 11. (3) John iv. 34. (4) 1 John iv. 14.

saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth."⁽¹⁾ How can the Redeemer do the will of God without saving all men?

11. The triumphant success of the Son of God, in bringing all men into willing and joyful subjection to his reign, is explicitly asserted in the following passages: "Wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."⁽²⁾ "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power. For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. [Until he hath overcome everything at enmity with man's reformation and reconciliation.] The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. * * * And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."⁽³⁾ Here is a sublime description of the final condition of all mankind. God shall, event-

(1) 1 Tim. ii. 4. (2) Phil. ii. 9—11. (3) 1 Cor. xv. 24—28.

ually, through the reign of Christ, become "all" in all souls!

QUESTIONS ON LESSON VI.

1. What is one of the chief characteristics of intelligent beings? How do the brute creation act? With what are the proceedings of intellectual creatures in accordance? What are their proceedings in all important transactions?

2. What may be assumed of Christ in taking the office of Mediator? How may it also be assumed that he acted? What would be the effect of denying these propositions? Can it be supposed Jesus would commence his mission without a well-digested plan of operations; or in ignorance of the success that would attend him?

3. Did Christ come to destroy? What was the nature of his work? What does his name, "Jesus," signify? Whom did he design to save? Do those who are not sinful need salvation? What is their condition? To what class is the work of the Redeemer confined? What is said of the declarations of Christ and St. Paul? What is the language of Jesus in Mark? What did the Apostle declare to be a faithful saying? What did St. Paul style himself? What did Jesus come into the world to do? What is the effect of insisting that Christ will not save sinners in any world, or under any circumstances, on their repentance? What would be attributing to God the folly of thwarting the undertaking he had empowered his Son to complete?

4. Was the Redeemer commissioned to save mankind from punishment? Do the Scriptures present such a view of salvation? With what should not punishment be confounded? Is it simply an infliction of

torture on the guilty? What would this be? On what principle are the punishments of the Almighty administered? What is the primary object of his punishments? What is the passage referred to in Hebrews? What other object has God in his punishments? What would be the effect of saving the guilty from punishment? What would it be like? Does God allow any escape from punishment? What are the passages referred to in Proverbs, Colossians and Isaiah? Why is no escape from punishment permitted? What must be the nature of any system of theology which teaches that Christ came to save from deserved punishment? What does such a system virtually instruct men? What does it contradict? How does it act?

5. What does Jesus save men from? What is the passage quoted from Matthew? In what other words is the nature of salvation described? In what language did John the Baptist speak of the Saviour? What did he not say? What did he say? What would be comparatively a light blessing? What would be a blessing worthy of him who imparts it, and of the gratitude of those who receive it?

6. What is the best source of information as to the number the Redeemer was sent to save? Does God's word afford explicit information on this subject? What are the passages quoted from the gospel of John? What did the apostles see, and to what did they testify? What do these passages establish? Is the same truth confirmed by other passages of Scripture? Repeat them.

7. How many do we thus learn Christ came to save? In whose minds must this position be established? What kind of view is this of the work of Christ? How does it present his mission?

8. To what belief will an enlightened faith in Jesus lead? What is the effect of doubting his success? Does the Bible condemn a lack of faith in Christ? What is necessary to be a believer in the Son of God?

in a Gospel sense? What kind of faith have those who fall short of this belief? Would Jesus undertake to save the world unless he believed he would succeed? If he does not succeed, what effect will it have on his expectations? If the Redeemer should fail to save the world, what effect must we believe it would have on God? Why? What question is asked of the sending of God's "first begotten"? How should it be answered?

9. Can any legitimate reason be assigned why Christ will not succeed in saving all mankind? Has he not a sufficiency of power? Repeat the passage from John. What did Jesus say of the power given him? What is the assertion in Colossians on this point? Where can more testimony be found? What does St. Paul assert, in the passage from 2d Corinthians? Can it be urged that Christ will not succeed because some are not willing to be saved? From what does such unwillingness proceed? What did Christ come to do in regard to this ignorance and blindness? What would it be asserting to insist that he cannot save men because they are not willing to be saved? What do the Scriptures instruct us in respect to man's will? Repeat the passage from Psalms.

10. Of what does the word of God afford the most positive evidence? What did Isaiah prophesy of Christ? What did Jesus say it was his meat to do? What is to be understood by the word "meat"? What did the Father send the Son to do? How can Christ "finish" his work? What was the will of God that Jesus came to do? How can he do or complete that will?

11. What is explicitly asserted in the Scriptures? What is the passage quoted from Philippians? What does St. Paul say in 1st Corinthians? What is to be understood by Christ's putting all things under his feet? What kind of a description is this of the final condition of mankind? What shall be the ultimate destiny of all souls?

LESSON VII.

THE MIRACLES OF CHRIST.

1. JESUS of Nazareth having entered the world for the purpose of introducing and establishing a new system of religion, with an avowed design that it should overturn all other doctrines, it became necessary that he should show authority from God to engage in a work so momentous. This was essential, inasmuch as mankind cannot consistently be expected to believe sentiments in relation to God, his nature and character, his government and purposes, without they are sustained by some manifestation of authority, some indication of approval, from on high. This exhibition of Divine approval was especially necessary in Judea, where Christ commenced his ministry. The Jews were in possession of a religion which they had enjoyed for more than a thousand years. They believed it to be sanctioned by God. Jesus called upon them to abandon it; to turn from the forms and ceremonies of their fathers, and embrace the new faith he was engaged in propagating. He declared he was sent by their God—the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—to annul the

Levitical dispensation, to pronounce its rites void, and invite them to embrace the doctrines of the Gospel which he was then establishing.

2. It was not to be supposed the Jews would be influenced by these declarations, or that they would receive Christ as sent of God on such an errand, without some convincing manifestation of divine power. To announce himself as the Son of God, was not enough to carry conviction to their minds of the legitimacy of his mission. A deceiver could easily put forth such a claim. This high pretence would but make them look upon him with greater suspicion, without convincing proofs of a corresponding character. The Redeemer acknowledged the justness of this demand for evidence that God had sent him to prosecute his work. And for the purpose of meeting it, and convincing the most sceptical of the divine authority with which he had been clothed by his Father, he performed his wonderful Miracles.

3. "When Jesus Christ came into the world, nature had failed to communicate instructions to men, in which, as intelligent beings, they had the deepest concern, and on which the full development of their highest faculties essentially depended. We affirm, that there was no prospect of relief from nature ; so that an exigence had occurred, in

which additional communications, supernatural lights, might rationally be expected from the Father of spirits. . . . They were demanded by the state of the world which preceded them, and they have left deep traces on all subsequent ages. In fact, the history of the whole civilized world, since their alleged occurrence, has been swayed and colored by them, and is wholly inexplicable without them. Now such miracles are not to be met and disposed of by general reasonings, which apply only to insulated, unimportant, uninfluential prodigies.”⁽¹⁾

4. That Jesus Christ worked the miracles ascribed to him in the New Testament, there is no reasonable ground for doubt. Evidence of this fact, sufficient to satisfy the most bitter and prejudiced of his opponents who witnessed them, should convince us, in our day, of the genuineness of his miracles. They were of a nature which precluded all possibility of deception. Had they been mere acts of sleight-of-hand, connected with some trivial game, by which a cunning trickster could, for an instant, bewilder the spectators, but little confidence could be placed in them.

5. This was not the character of the Saviour's miracles. They were all events of the utmost

(1) Dr. Channing.

importance, and of the most astonishing description. They were events, too, of which there could not be a doubt, in regard to their miraculous nature, in the minds of those who witnessed them. He restored the blind to sight — he healed, instantaneously, the sick, the maimed, the halt — he raised the dead, at a word. These things were not done in the dark, or in private, or in the presence of only a few interested followers, who might possibly have been deluded. They were transacted in open day, and in the presence of crowds of his opposers, under circumstances where deception was out of the question. He was watched closely and eagerly, by his enemies — watched with all the intensity and sharpness that unrelenting hatred could impart to his most sagacious opposers. Had Jesus attempted the slightest deception — had he not actually done all he professed to do — he would have been detected and instantly exposed on the spot. But his miracles were such that malignity itself could not deny them. Men that were known by the multitude to have been blind, and maimed, from birth, were made, in a moment, to see, and to walk in the vigor of health. Those whom they had put into the tomb, dead, and whose bodies had begun to exhibit that putrefaction which is an unmistakable evidence of death, they saw arise

and stand before them, in all the strength and freshness of youth. These miracles were performed before the eyes of the people. They knew that the subjects on whom they were enacted had been blind, or halt, or sick, or dead; and they knew that afterwards they saw, they walked, they were restored to life and health. They could not be deceived in regard to these facts. They were miracles which they witnessed not for a moment only, but which they contemplated for years afterwards, as they daily saw those who had been restored, mingling with them in the pursuits of life, in the healthful enjoyment of all their faculties.

6. Neither the Jews, nor any of the opposers of Christ at that day, denied that he performed the miracles attributed to him. They were anxious to make such a denial, and would not have hesitated a moment, had there been the slightest ground upon which it could rest. They watched intently to detect deception; and had they discovered any reason to suspect it, they would have trumpeted it to the four quarters of Palestine. But they watched in vain. There was no deception. Of this they were perfectly convinced. They well knew it would have been the merest folly to deny the fact of his miracles, when multitudes so numerous had witnessed

them. They freely acknowledged the miracles had actually been accomplished. The people who beheld them could not but believe what they saw. "A great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased."⁽¹⁾ "And many of the people believed on him, and said: When Christ cometh will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done?"⁽²⁾ The Pharisees, the most malignant and unscrupulous of the enemies of Christ, were compelled to admit that his miracles were genuine. This was the case in reference to a man whom they knew to have been blind from birth, and whom Jesus had restored to sight. "They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind. And it was the Sabbath day when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes. Then, again, the Pharisees also asked how he had received his sight. He said unto them, He put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and do see. Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the Sabbath day. Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was a division among them."⁽³⁾ On another occasion, the chief priests and the Pharisees fully acknowledged the genuineness of the Saviour's miracles.

(1) John vi. 2. (2) John vii. 31. (3) John ix. 13—16.

"Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him."⁽¹⁾

7. The Pharisees saw, with regret, that in consequence of the wonderful miracles of Christ, many people were believing on him as the Son of God. They became alarmed for the stability of their own religion, and determined to take steps to counteract the influence his miracles were working. To effect this end, they did not deny that the miracles were actually performed, but they took a course which promised better success. They insisted that his miracles were not worked by the power of God, but by the agency of *evil spirits*. In that age of the world, when a belief in such spirits was very general, it would not be difficult to make many believe Jesus was aided by them in his marvellous works. To what degree they were successful in this attempt, it is impossible to determine. The Saviour, however, confounded them by showing that in those miracles where he cast out what were supposed to be evil spirits, he could not have been aided by evil spirits; for in that case the house of Beelzebub would be divided against itself.

(1) John xi. 47, 48.

8. The Redeemer did not pretend that he performed his miracles by any power of his own. With the utmost candor and frankness, he always acknowledged that his ability in these wonderful acts came directly from God. "Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, the Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do."⁽¹⁾ "If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works; that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in him."⁽²⁾ The apostles also attributed the miracles of Christ to a power which God had bestowed upon him. "Ye men of Israel, hear these words. Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you, by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know."⁽³⁾

9. The process, or means, by which Christ performed his miracles, is a subject in regard to which there has long been a diversity of opinions. It is believed, by some, that in working his miracles, he was enabled by God to call to his aid the agency of some positive and active law in nature, which is beyond the knowledge and the reach of man. By others it is contended that he arrested and suspended the operation of the natural laws which

(1) John v. 19. (2) John x. 37, 38. (3) Acts ii. 22.

govern health, and life, and material substances, and held them in abeyance until the miracle was effected. The latter view is the most common, and undoubtedly the most reasonable. It comes up the nearest to the idea of an actual miracle. But the point is not of the highest moment. In either case, Jesus must have been endowed with miraculous power; by which should be understood a superhuman power—a power altogether above that possessed by man. The material fact is, did Jesus perform the miracles attributed to him? Of this there cannot be a doubt. Equally clear is it that, whatever the process might have been, by which his astonishing works were done, the power was bestowed upon him by God. This was all that Christ claimed. To this he pointed as the great and convincing evidence that he was the Son of God, authorized and sent of the Father on his mission among men.

10. That the Creator has ability to suspend the operation of nature's laws, at any moment, for a specific purpose, or could empower his Son to suspend them, is a fact which does not admit of a reasonable question. Cannot he who originated the physical laws, suspend or annul them at pleasure? Cannot the mechanic arrest for a moment the movement of the machinery he has erected? It is true, the usual operation of

the natural laws is unchangeable and perfect. But this does not place them beyond the control of the Being who gave them existence. If, for the purpose of enabling his Son to convince mankind of the divine authenticity of his mission, God thought best to empower him to suspend, at pleasure, for a moment, the ordinary operation of the physical laws, to heal the sick, restore the blind, or raise the dead, there cannot be a doubt he had power to do so. It is weak incredulity, and not philosophy, that questions this fact. Those things which are miracles to us are no miracles to God. We are constantly surrounded by miracles. To our comprehension the structure and growth of the humblest flower of the valley is as much a miracle as raising the dead. The latter is as easy to the Creator as the former. It can require no more power or skill to restore health to the sick, or life to the dead, than it did to give life and health, in the first place.

11. "Look over the map of the world, and the astonishing fact stares you in the face, that the boundary of Christianity is also the line of demarkation, broad and deep, between civilization and all its blessings, and barbarism with all its curses." Yet Christianity itself stands on the genuineness of the miracles of Christ. If they were not performed, as asserted in the New Testament, then the Christian religion rests on

falsehood. Can it be believed that a system of faith which civilizes, enlightens, elevates and blesses, the individuals, nations and races, who receive it, is based on trickery and deception?

QUESTIONS ON LESSON VII.

1. For what did Jesus enter the world? What design did he avow? What did it become necessary for him to show? Why was this essential? When and where was this exhibition of Divine approval especially necessary? Of what were the Jews in possession? What did they believe of their religion? What did the Saviour call upon them to do? By whom did he declare he was sent, and for what purpose?

2. Would the Jews be convinced that Christ was sent by God, without he manifested some divine power? Was it enough simply to declare he was the Son of God? What could a deceiver do? What effect would his high pretence produce, without convincing proofs? What did the Redeemer acknowledge? For what purpose did he perform his miracles?

3. When Christ came into the world, what had nature failed to communicate? On what did the development of the highest faculties of men essentially depend? Could nature alone communicate such instructions? Was there any prospect of relief from nature? What might rationally be expected from God, in such an exigence? By what were these supernatural lights or miracles demanded? What have they left? What effect have they produced on the history of the civilized world? How are such miracles not to be met and disposed of?

4. Did Jesus work the miracles ascribed to him in the New Testament? Was there evidence of this sufficient to satisfy his opponents? What effect should

such evidence have on us? What was the nature of Christ's miracles? What if they had been mere acts of sleight-of-hand?

5. Was this the character of Christ's miracles? What were they? Of what could there not be a doubt, in respect to these events? What did he do? Where were these things not done? Where, and in whose presence, were they transacted? Was deception possible? By whom, and how, was he watched? Had Jesus attempted deception, what would have been the effect? What were his miracles? Who were made to see and walk? Who did they see arise from the dead? Where were these miracles performed? What did they know of the subjects of them, before the miracles were performed? What did they know afterwards? Could the Jews be deceived in these things? How long did they witness these miracles? In what way did they witness them?

6. Did the Jews deny that Christ actually performed his miracles? Were they anxious to make such a denial? Why did they not? What if they had detected deception? Of what were they perfectly convinced? What did they know? What did they acknowledge? What is said of those who beheld the miracles? Repeat the passages from John. Do not these passages show that the people who witnessed the miracles of Jesus believed they were really performed? What were the Pharisees? What were they compelled to admit? In what particular case did they make such an admission? Describe the transaction with the blind man. Is not here an admission by the Pharisees, that the Saviour performed miracles? In what language did the Pharisees acknowledge the miracles of Christ, on another occasion?

7. What did the Pharisees see with regret? For what did they become alarmed? What did they determine to do? Did they deny the miracles, to effect this end? What course did they take? What was general, at that age? What would it not be difficult

to make many believe? Can it now be determined to what degree they were successful? How did the Saviour confound them?

8. Did Jesus pretend he performed his miracles by his own power? What did he always acknowledge? What was his language in the first passage quoted from John? In the second passage from John? To what did the Apostles attribute the miracles of Christ? What did Peter say to the Jews, in the passage from Acts?

9. What is said of the process by which Christ performed his miracles? How is it believed by some? What do others contend? What of the latter view? Is the point of the highest moment? What is the material fact? What is clear, in either case? Was this all that Christ claimed? To what did he point as the evidence that he was the Son of God, and the sent of the Father?

10. What fact does not admit of a reasonable question? What is asked in respect to him who originated the physical laws? How would you answer the inquiry? How would you reply to the question respecting the mechanic? What is true of the natural laws? Does this place them beyond the control of God? Of what cannot there be a doubt? Is it philosophy that questions this fact? What is it, then? What is said of things which are miracles to us? By what are we continually surrounded? What, to us, is the structure and growth of a flower? What is as easy to the Creator as the making of a flower? What can require no more of power in God than to give life and health?

11. What fact stares us in the face, in looking over the map of the world? On what does Christianity itself stand? If the miracles were not performed as the New Testament asserts, what follows? How would you answer the closing question? Can trickery and deception give birth to civilization? Can they enlighten and bless mankind?

LESSON VIII.

THE RESURRECTION, ASCENSION, AND REIGN OF
CHRIST.

1. JESUS of Nazareth was crucified by the Jews, in the reign of Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor of Judea. This is a fact established by history with more positiveness and certainty than any event of past ages. The conviction of the entire civilized world, for nearly two thousand years, yields an unquestioned corroboration to the declarations of the New Testament on this point. The existence of the Christian religion itself, which is evidently destined, ere long, to fill the whole earth, and the establishment of that religion, amid an opposition of the most formidable and unrelenting character, are substantial realities which grew out of the fact of the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ, and are indisputable proofs of their reality.

2. The death of Jesus on the cross was complete. Life departed totally from the body. There could be no better evidence of this given or required, than the assent of the Jews who were present. In great multitudes they surrounded the

cross, and witnessed the scenes of the crucifixion. With all the keenness the most intense malignity towards Christ could impart, they watched the progress of the execution, and could not have been deceived as to the reality of his death. A critical examination of his body was made by the Roman soldiers, who acted as guards on the occasion, and they pronounced him dead. But to make assurance doubly sure, "one of the soldiers, with a spear, pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and *water*. And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true. And he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe."⁽¹⁾ This simple narration of John, related so artlessly, contains positive evidence of the death of Christ. Physiology instructs us that the heart is surrounded by a thin membrane, denominated the pericardium, which is filled with a colorless, watery fluid. Hence, a spear so far thrust into the side as to cause *water* and blood to flow from the wound, must have pierced the pericardium and the heart. This would have caused instant death in Jesus, had not life already become extinct.

3. The third day after his crucifixion, Jesus Christ arose from the dead. The resurrection of the Redeemer is one of the most important facts

(1) John xix. 34, 35.

of Christianity. It forms the foundation of all faith and hope in Christ. The Jews denied his resurrection; and bribed the guard of Roman soldiers, who had been placed to watch the tomb where the body was deposited, to say that the disciples had stolen the body while they were asleep. This story carries its own refutation. It is not to be supposed that a large company of soldiers would all be so sound asleep that such an act could take place without awaking them. This is the more incredible in view of the fact that the Roman law inflicted death on a soldier guilty of sleeping at his post. Moreover, these soldiers asserted what they could not know to be true. If they were all asleep, how could they know the body of Christ was removed by his disciples, or by any other hands?

4. The followers of Jesus, with every appearance of candor and honesty, declared that he arose from the dead. They insisted that they saw him, listened to him, and conversed with him, on repeated occasions, and that, finally, he ascended from their sight into heaven. They were competent witnesses. They asserted only what they saw with their own eyes. No reasonable motive can be assigned for deception on their part. Their whole after lives attested the sincerity of their belief in the resurrection of their Master. At his

death they were overwhelmed with fear of the Jews, and sought every means to escape the danger which threatened them as the followers of one who had just been executed as a blasphemer and deceiver. But after his resurrection and ascension, a total change came over them. They were bold in proclaiming the Messiahship of Christ. They did not hesitate to charge the Jews openly, before their faces, with having murdered their own Redeemer—the Prince of Peace. They met death, in the most terrific forms, as the test and witness of their belief in Jesus as the risen and ascended Saviour. By what possibility could they thus suddenly have become inspired with dauntless intrepidity, except through an unshaken conviction in the reality of the resurrection and ascension of the Son of God?

5. “They had nothing to gain by testifying to the resurrection of Jesus falsely; for they knew that a life of poverty and suffering awaited them; and they could not expect rewards from heaven for deceiving their brethren. . . . They openly proclaimed the resurrection, within a few days after it occurred, and in Jerusalem, where they would excite most attention, and where the fraud, if there were any, could most easily have been detected. . . . They cheerfully endured afflictions, and death itself, rather than renounce

their testimony. . . . The Apostles [before the resurrection of Christ] had been fearful, timid, adopting even unjustifiable measures to secure their personal safety. In the short space of fifty days afterwards, the same Apostles became so fearless of danger, that nothing could terrify them. They were ready to encounter stripes, imprisonment and death. If they had stolen the body of Jesus, would this have filled them with such courage? Would they have more confidence in a dead body, which they had concealed, than they had previously had in their living Master, when in the hands of his enemies? On the other hand, if they knew he had risen, and promised to be present with them, their boldness was natural."⁽¹⁾

6. It is supposed by many, that Jesus arose from the dead with the same body that was nailed to the cross, and that when he ascended to heaven it was changed to a spiritual body. There are others who believe that his natural body underwent a change in the tomb; and that, at his resurrection, he came forth in possession of a body entirely spiritual. Both of these views have some considerations which seem to favor them. But the point is wholly speculative, and possesses, in fact, no practical importance. No one believes

(1) Paige's Commentary.

Christ's natural body of flesh and blood entered heaven. Whether the moment of change, from a fleshy to a spiritual and incorruptible body, was at the resurrection or the ascension, is a matter of minor consideration. The most important thing is a belief of the great fact that Christ did arise from the dead — that he triumphed over death, and ascended to the honor and glory awaiting him in other scenes of existence.

7. The Son of God, having laid the foundation and prepared the way for the establishment of his gospel on the earth — having suffered death on the cross, in fulfilment of the Scriptures, and in proof of the genuineness of his mission — having arose from the dead, and ascended to his Father — it may be believed he resumed there his reign as Mediator between God and men. That the mediatorial kingdom and reign of Christ extend to the future world, and that he still prosecutes there, as well as here, the work of enlightening, purifying and elevating mankind, and reconciling them to God, is a belief which is sustained by weighty considerations.

8. Large numbers of mankind pass from this life in ignorance and wickedness. Yet they are included among those whom Christ came to save from sin, and reconcile to God. The light of the gospel, and its purifying influences, has failed,

through many causes, to reach them in this world. Hence the discipline, the instruction, the purification of heart, necessary to reconcile them to God, and prepare them for the happiness of a divine life, must necessarily be brought to bear upon them in the future existence. This is precisely the work the Son of God took upon himself to accomplish for all souls. To the same degree the belief is entertained that Christ will be faithful to *complete* the work his Father gave him to do, will be seen the necessity of its prosecution in the world to come. Upon all darkened and alienated hearts which enter the immortal state, Jesus will exercise the instructive, sanctifying, saving influences at his command, until their better capacities are developed, and they advance to the spiritual enjoyments for which they were originally designed.

9. The Scriptures favor the supposition that Jesus exercises his office as Mediator and Saviour in the future world, as well as in this. Christ gave this assurance to his disciples at the moment of his ascension. "All power is given unto me, in heaven and in earth."⁽¹⁾ "Heaven," in this passage, is to be understood as indicating the immortal state at large. Jesus distinctly asserted that he should possess, and of course exercise, in that state

(1) Matt. xxviii. 18.

his sanctifying and saving power. "He [Christ] that descended, is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, [to the highest position of honor and power,] that he might fill [*plerose*—fulfil, accomplish, complete] all things."⁽¹⁾ This passage clearly implies that Jesus, in his exalted station in the heavens, will exercise the resources and influences at his command, to fill up, and complete, his work of salvation. In other words, that he will accomplish all that is lacking, when the spirits of men depart from this world, to qualify them for the progressive scenes of light, truth and improvement, through which he was commissioned to conduct them, to a condition of perfect holiness and happiness. "For it pleased the Father, that in him [Christ] should all fulness dwell; and, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself. By him, I say, whether they be things on earth, or things in heaven;"⁽²⁾—i. e., whether the things, or spirits, to be reconciled, be on the earth, or in the state of immortality.⁽³⁾ Here, evidently, is the assertion of a work of reconciliation to be performed by the Redeemer in the next state of being. And it necessarily must

(1) Eph. iv. 10. (2) Col. i. 19, 20. (3) "All things," in this and similar passages, must necessarily be understood as indicating *all intelligent spirits*,—as no other "things" can be reconciled or unreconciled to God.

be the influence and instruction he will bring to bear on the spirits of those who departed from this life in an ignorant and unreconciled condition. Christ, on his mediatorial throne, will continue to reign over the spirits of men, both here and hereafter, until all are brought into willing subjection, and acknowledge him as their Saviour. Then his work will be completed. And then he will deliver up his gospel kingdom into the hands of the Father, and God will become "all in all." 1 Cor. xv. 28:

QUESTIONS ON LESSON VIII.

1. When was Jesus crucified? How is this fact established? With what positiveness? To what does the conviction of the civilized world yield corroboration? What are substantial realities? From what do they grow? What is the evident destiny of the Christian religion? Under what circumstances was that religion established?

2. What is said of the death of Jesus? What was the best evidence of this? Did they witness the crucifixion, and in what numbers? With what feelings did they watch the execution? Could they have been deceived as to his death? What was done by the Roman guards? What did they pronounce? How did they make assurance doubly sure? What came from his side, when pierced with a spear? To what did John bear record? What did he say of his record? What does this narration of John contain? By what is the heart surrounded? With what is the pericardium filled? What would flow from the wound, if a spear

was thrust through the pericardium, into the heart? What would such a wound cause?

3. When did Christ arise from the dead? What is the resurrection of the Redeemer? Of what does it form the foundation? Who denied his resurrection? What did they bribe the Roman soldiers to say? What does this story carry? What is not to be supposed? What makes this story more incredible? What did these soldiers assert? If they were asleep, what could they not know?

4. What did the followers of Christ declare? What did they insist? Were they competent witnesses? What did they assert? Had they any reason to deceive? What did their after lives attest? What effect did the death of their Master have on them? What did they seek? What came over them after his resurrection and ascension? How did they proclaim the Messiahship of Christ? With what did they charge the Jews? What did they do, as a test of their belief in the resurrection and ascension of the Saviour? What thus suddenly inspired them with intrepidity?

5. What had they to gain by false testimony? What did they know awaited them? For what could they not expect rewards from heaven? What did they openly do? When? Where? What could there most easily have been done? What did they cheerfully endure? How had the Apostles been before the resurrection of Christ? In what respect did they become changed in fifty days? What were they ready to encounter? What effect would have been produced on them, had they stolen away the body of Christ? Would they have had more confidence in a dead body, than in their Master just before his crucifixion, when they all fled? What would make their boldness natural?

6. What is supposed, by many, of Christ's body at his resurrection? What do they believe took place as he ascended to heaven? What do others believe? With what body do they believe he came forth from

the tomb? What is said of both these views? What is the point? What does it not possess? What is not believed? What is a matter of minor consideration? What is the most important thing?

7. What did the Son of God do on the earth? What did he do in fulfilment of the Scriptures, and in proof of the genuineness of his mission? Did he arise from the dead—and where did he go? What may be believed, in view of these facts? What is sustained by weighty considerations? What is Christ still prosecuting in the future world, as well as in this?

8. In what condition do a large number of mankind pass from this life? Among whom are they included? What has failed to reach them in this world? Hence what will be necessary in the future existence? What was the work the Son of God took upon himself to accomplish? To what degree will be seen the necessity of the prosecution of Christ's work in the next world? What will Jesus exercise on all darkened and alienated hearts in the immortal state? Has he an abundance of such influences at his command? How long, and with what result, will he exercise these influences?

9. What do the Scriptures favor? What assurance did Christ give his disciples at the moment of his ascension? Repeat his language. What does the word "heaven" mean in this passage? What did the Redeemer assert he should possess in that state? Does not the declaration that he shall possess such power there show that he will exercise it? For what other reason could he have made such an assertion? What is the language quoted from Ephesians? What is the meaning of the phrase "ascended up far above all heavens"? What is to be understood by the Greek word "plerose," translated "fill"? What does this passage imply? Through what, and to what, was Jesus commissioned to conduct all souls? What is the language of St. Paul, quoted from Colossians? What work is here evidently asserted? Do the words

"all things," in this and similar passages, signify all intelligent spirits? What other "things" are capable of reconciliation or unreconciliation? What is to be understood by "things in earth, or things in heaven"? What must the work referred to necessarily be? What will Christ continue to do, on his mediatorial throne? How long will he reign over the spirits of men? In what condition will his work then be? What will he then do? What will God become? Must not every Christian heart rejoice in the belief of such a termination of the reign of Christ?

PART THIRD.

OF MAN.

LESSON IX.

HIS ORIGIN — NATURE — RESPONSIBILITY.

1. MAN is the creature of God. It is only by the pleasure, and through the wonder-working power, of the Almighty, that he receives the marvellous gift of life. His body is formed of the dust, or substances of the earth. It is dependent on the productions of the soil for the sustenance necessary to support and prolong life. When, by reason of disease, or the necessary decay of age, life departs, the body returns to the earth, and mingles again with the natural elements from which it originated.

2. Had man been endowed with nothing more than a body, with its appetites and instincts, he would be simply a graceful and cunning brute. Like a brute, he would live only to gratify gross propensities; and, like a brute, he would die and sink into oblivion. But the body of man is inhabited by an intelligent spirit, or soul, by which all

its emotions and movements are, or should be, controlled. The spirit should never be confounded with the body, as one and the same thing. They are distinct entities or creations, totally different in their origin, their natures, and their destinies. The spirit dwells in the body for a temporary period only, and makes use of the different organs of the body to bring into development and exercise its own wonderful powers and capacities. It is not the body that sees, hears, feels, thinks, speaks, but the spirit within. As the mechanic makes use of his tools to give a visible construction to the plans formed in the mind, so the spirit uses the brains, the eyes, the ears, the tongue, the nerves, as implements to make outward manifestations of its thoughts and impressions.

3. While the body originated in the earth, the spirit came from God. It is an emanation of his own divine essence, and is endowed, to a high degree, with his wonderful and adorable qualities. The manner in which the spirit unites with the body, and becomes so blended with its various organs as to make them the instruments to do its bidding, is unknown to us. While the method of the unity is not understood, the fact is self-evident. The union, however, is of but temporary duration. The spirit can exist independent.

of this body of flesh and blood. When the body, by sickness or decay, becomes unfitted as a residence for the soul, death ensues, and a separation takes place. Each seeks the source of its origin. The body crumbles to the dust from whence it came; the spirit returns to God who gave it. Eccl. xii. 7. Not that the spirit thenceforth remains in a disembodied state. On leaving its present tabernacle, at death, the Creator clothes it with another body, more capable of developing its wonderful capacities to their full extent, and better fitted to the high scenes of existence it is destined to inhabit.

4. Man, was created in the image of God. Gen. i. 27. This "image" should be sought for, not in the human body, its form, or powers, but in the spirit and its amazing qualities. The "image" of God signifies the likeness of God. As the artist paints a miniature from the full-sized original, so the soul of man is a copy of the glorious lineaments of God's own spirit, differing only in a less degree of perfection. The religious, moral, and intellectual capacities of the soul, constitute the image, or likeness of God, in which man was created. These form the tie which unites the human family in brotherhood with angels and higher grades of being — these the link which connects the Creator and his intelli-

gent creatures together in indissoluble and eternal bonds as Father and children. Although man is the offspring of the Creator by a natural tie which nothing can sever, yet, in the right exercise of his high capacities, he becomes an *imitator* of God, and thus, in a still more intimate and worthy sense, is his child. Such should be understood as the meaning of those passages of Scripture which speak of our becoming the children of God, by obedience. Matt. v. 43—45.

5. In the proper exercise of the divine endowments which constitute the soul, rational creatures find their highest and purest enjoyments. Pleasures derived from the gratification of bodily passions and appetites are fleeting and unsatisfactory, and often degenerate into those brutal excesses which are the prolific source of much of the wretchedness that afflicts humanity. The happiness which flows from the cultivation of the godlike qualities of the soul is delicious, solid and enduring. Like crystal springs, hidden in the deep bosom of the mountain, far removed alike from the frosts of winter and the droughts of summer, these elevated capacities, faithfully exercised, are a fountain of living waters, which send forth pure and perennial streams of pleasure, unaffected by the vicissitudes of fortune and the mutations of life.

6. As he comes from the hands of his Creator, at birth, man is pure and innocent. There is no taint of depravity connected with him; no seeds of sin rest in his soul; no desires for evil rankle in his heart; no unhallowed passions poison his body. Wickedness of disposition and vicious propensities are contaminations contracted in after years by the assaults of temptation, and the first crude attempts at an exercise of that moral freedom which ultimately will become the source of the highest merit and happiness of rational creatures. The purity of the infant is attested by all unbiased and enlightened observation. A due degree of respect for the character of a holy God leads to the belief that he would not usher a soul into existence contaminated with sin and evil. The Redeemer throws the weight of his testimony in behalf of the innocence of childhood. He declared his kingdom to be composed of those who resembled "little children" in purity of heart.⁽¹⁾ He taught also, that without becoming as a little child—that is, in uprightness of intentions and innocence of soul—it was impossible to enter the kingdom of heaven.⁽²⁾

7. Mankind have been endowed by their Maker with moral agency or freedom. The

(1) ● Matt. xix. 14.

(2) Matt. xviii. 3.

power, the privilege of self-control, of governing their own movements and forming and executing their own plans — of choosing between good and evil, between obedience and disobedience of the laws of God — has been bestowed on every human being. However men may reason metaphysically on this subject, they all possess an inward conviction of having such a power, and act upon it in their proceedings during every hour of conscious existence.

8. It is not to be supposed this freedom is unlimited. From the nature and capacities of man, it must necessarily be restricted to a compass measured by his ability and his sphere of action. He is free to *will* any and all things he pleases; but he can *execute* his will only to the extent that he is able to control the circumstances and influences by which he is surrounded. Within certain limits, his freedom is a practical power, which he constantly exercises. Beyond these bounds he has neither liberty nor ability to go. Hence man's agency cannot conflict with God's sovereignty, or with any purposes the Creator may have formed with respect to the career, the progress or the condition, of those upon whom this agency has been bestowed. Jehovah is the lawful Ruler of the Universe. He is abundantly able to accomplish his purposes throughout all his domin-

ions, both in the natural and spiritual worlds. "He doeth his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, what doest thou?"⁽¹⁾ He has willed that all men shall be saved, and come to a knowledge of the truth.⁽²⁾ The agency of those thus to be saved cannot, even if they would have it, conflict with the will of God. It is through the exercise of their agency, under the enlightening instructions and divine influences of the gospel, that he ultimately accomplishes his own will in their salvation. It is in the fulfilment of such a work, in such a manner, that God will manifest, through the reign of Christ, his infinite wisdom and his highest glory.

9. Man's *accountability* rests solely on his moral freedom. He can be held responsible for his actions, only to the degree that he is at liberty to select his own course. If he is not free to choose good or evil, right or wrong, but acts continually under influences he cannot control, then he can neither be praised nor blamed for his proceedings. Whatever good he does, would merit no reward; whatever sin he commits, would deserve no punishment. Indeed, he would be totally incapable of merit or demerit. But, having the

(1) Dan. iv. 35. (2) 1 Tim. ii. 4.

gift of moral freedom — the power to act as he pleases, at least to a good degree — he is justly held responsible for the manner in which he exercises it. For all his good deeds, he is entitled to praise and reward; and, for his evil acts, he equitably receives censure and punishment. Having the power to commit sin, if he practises righteousness he is deserving of reward. Possessing the opportunity and ability to lead a life of virtue and goodness, if he wilfully desecrates his powers to purposes of evil, he justly merits chastisement.

10. The framework of all government, both human and Divine, is constructed on the principle that man possesses freedom of action. If he does not, to an extent involving responsibility, then all censures for wrong have been idle and groundless, and all punishments for guilt, have been sheer acts of tyranny in those who have inflicted them. Moreover, the whole Bible is addressed to man, on the principle that he possesses moral freedom. In all its admonitions, exhortations, counsels and precepts — in all its promises of reward for obedience and threatenings of punishment for disobedience — it assumes that rational beings have been endowed with freedom of action, and hence are accountable to their Creator for their deeds.

11. The subjection of man to the imperfections, temptations, and trials of this life, was not

the choice of the creature, but the act of the Creator. Rom. viii. 20. Nor did he thus determine without a wise and good purpose, having in express view the benefit of man. Constituted as we are, exercise, discipline and trials, are necessary to the development of our highest and best capacities. How could benevolence and sympathy be manifested—how could offices of kindness and charity be shown—how could forbearance, forgiveness and long-suffering, be exhibited, or patience, humility, resignation, be displayed, if we had not been exposed to the cares, the labors, the temptations, the trials, afflictions, and pains, which beset us on earth? These beautiful traits would all have remained unfolded in the human soul, had they not been called into activity by the vicissitudes of such a world as this. It has all been ordered by a wise Providence. The imperfections to which we are subjected in the present existence operate as a healthful discipline to develop the best qualities of the heart, and prepare us to appreciate in an exalted degree, and enjoy with a keen relish, the blessings which a higher world will bestow upon us.

QUESTIONS ON LESSON IX.

1. Of whom is man the creature? How does he receive the gift of life? Of what is his body composed? On what is it dependent for sustenance? When life departs, what becomes of the body?

2. Had man been endowed with nothing but a body, with its instincts, what would he have been? How would he have lived and died? With what is man's body inhabited? What is the office of the spirit? With what should the spirit never be confounded? Are the soul and body distinct creations? How do they differ? Where does the spirit dwell? How long? For what does it make use of the bodily organs? Does the body see, hear, feel, etc.? What does? For what purpose does the mechanic use his tools? What use does the soul make of the brains, eyes, etc.?

3. From whence did the spirit of man come? Of what is it an emanation? With what is it endowed? What is said of the manner in which the spirit unites with the body? What of the method and the fact? How long does this union continue? Can the spirit exist independent of the body? When does a separation take place between spirit and body? What does each seek? Where does the body go? Where the spirit? Repeat the passage in Ecclesiastes. Does the spirit remain afterwards in a disembodied state? With what is it clothed after death? What is the nature of the body?

4. In what was man created? Repeat the passage in Genesis. In what should this image be sought? What does the "image of God" signify? How does the artist paint a miniature? Of what is man's soul a copy? How does it differ from God's spirit? What capacities constitute God's image? What tie do they form? What link? How is man the offspring of the Creator? Can anything sever that tie? How does he

become the child of God, in a more intimate and worthy sense? How should those Scripture passages be understood which speak of our becoming the children of God? Repeat the passage in Matthew.

5. How do rational creatures find their highest and purest enjoyments? What is the nature of pleasures derived from bodily gratifications? Into what do they often degenerate? Of what are these excesses the source? What is the nature of happiness which flows from the cultivation of the qualities of the soul? How is it with springs hidden in the bosom of the mountain? What become a fountain of living waters? What do they send forth?

6. In what condition is man, as he comes from the hands of his Creator? Of what is there no taint connected with him? What is said of sin, desires for evil, and unhallowed passions? When, and how, are wicked dispositions and vicious propensities contracted? What is said of moral freedom? By what is the purity of the infant attested? To what belief should respect for the character of God lead us? In behalf of what does the Redeemer throw the weight of his testimony? Of whom did he declare his kingdom to be composed? Without what did he say it was impossible to enter the kingdom of God?

7. With what have mankind become endowed? What power has been bestowed on every human being? Do men sometimes reason differently on metaphysical principles? Yet what inward conviction do they possess? And how do they act?

8. Is man's freedom unlimited? To what compass must it necessarily be restricted? What is he free to will? How far can he execute his will? What is his freedom, within certain limits? What, beyond these limits? Can man's agency conflict with God's sovereignty? Or with his purposes towards those on whom he has bestowed agency? What is Jehovah? What is he able to accomplish? Repeat the passage from Daniel. What has he willed?

Where is this passage found? Repeat it. Would men knowingly allow their agency to frustrate this will of God? If they would, can they thus frustrate God's will, through their agency? Would the Creator bestow such ability on any being? How will God ultimately accomplish his will in the salvation of all men? How will he manifest his infinite wisdom and highest glory?

9. On what does man's accountability rest? In what degree can he be held responsible for his actions? In what condition could he neither be praised nor blamed? Would he merit any reward for good deeds? Or deserve punishment for sin? Of what would he be incapable? What responsibility grows out of the gift of moral freedom? To what is he entitled for his goodness? To what for his evil acts? When is he deserving reward? When does he merit chastisement?

10. On what is the frame-work of human and Divine governments constructed? If man does not possess moral freedom, then what follows? On what principle is the Bible addressed to man? What does it assume, in its admonitions, its promises of reward, and its threatenings of punishment?

11. Was the subjection of man to the imperfections of this life his own choice? Whose act was it? Repeat the passage in Romans. What did God have in view, in this subjection? What are necessary to the development of our best capacities? If we had not been subjected to the trials and temptations of this life, what traits of character would have been undeveloped? Where would they have remained? How do the imperfections and mutations of the present existence operate? What will they prepare us to appreciate?

LESSON X.

MAN'S DUTIES.

1. MAN is not an isolated being—he stands not alone. On the one hand, he is related to God, to Christ, and to angels. On the other, he is connected with the vast race of humanity, by the intimate and indissoluble bond of brotherhood. These ties, on either hand, confer the highest benefits upon him. It is through them that he receives ability and aid to prosecute the plans and purposes of life. It is through them, too, that he obtains all the enjoyments which make existence a blessing. Were it not for the assistance derived from these sources, he would soon perish.

2. From the relationship man thus holds to other beings, and the advantages flowing from it, there grow out certain duties and obligations which he is bound to fulfil in return. This fact rests on the simple principle of equity. He who receives sympathy, assistance, favors, is under a moral obligation, as a plain matter of justice, to make some corresponding return. This is a clear duty. Man receives from God, his existence, his

capacities, his health, food, raiment, shelter, and the advantages and enjoyments of religion, morality and science. The receiving and partaking of these blessings make it his duty, in return, to venerate the name of his Creator—to yield unto him the adoration and love of the heart, the homage and worship of the soul—to render obedience to all his laws, commandments and admonitions—and to be a faithful, diligent, and cheerful subject of his moral government. Whoever fail of doing this—whoever neglect the worship of the Most High—whoever mingle the sacred name of God with profane oaths, imprecations and vulgarity—whoever neglect and trample upon the precepts and requirements of the great and good Being to whom they owe so much—are guilty of the deepest ingratitude, and become justly the subjects of censure and chastisement.

3. From his fellow-creatures man receives sympathy, assistance, coöperation, in all his pursuits—the advantages of business transactions—the benefits which flow from the prosecution of the various branches of industry in society—the blessings of the many useful human institutions which abound—and the protection of just and salutary laws, which insure to him “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” These advantages are of

incalculable value. He is bound, therefore, by every obligation and sense of duty that can influence a moral being, to yield society some worthy return for the favors it thus bestows upon him. This return he can make,—1. By rendering cheerful obedience to all just and salutary laws, and lending his influence to their support—2. By seeking to be an obedient and useful member of society; being friendly, obliging, and benevolent—3. By striving to promote peace and good will between man and man—4. By aiding in all reformatations and improvements that tend to promote the welfare of community—5. By laboring to extend to every human being the blessings of liberty, equality, and the enjoyment of their inalienable rights—6. And, in fine, by making it the great object of life to countenance and advance whatever tends to purify, enlighten and elevate society, and secure the happiness of the world.

4. These duties, both to God and fellow-beings, are all summed up, by the Saviour, in two commandments. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and

the prophets.”⁽¹⁾ They who thus love God supremely, and their neighbors or fellow-creatures as themselves, will be moved by this love to fulfil every obligation and discharge every duty resting on them as moral and accountable beings. The requirement, “love thy neighbor as thyself,” should not be so construed as to forbid its fulfilment. In the sense in which Jesus would be understood, the commandment can be complied with. Its spirit is the same as another injunction he has laid upon us. “All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so them; for this is the law and the prophets.”⁽²⁾ Our love for ourselves makes us desire that all others should manifest friendship, kindness, honesty and truthfulness, in their intercourse and dealings with us. We should have a love for others that will lead us to practise on the same principles in all transactions with them. Whatever the spirit, whatever the course of conduct, love for ourselves leads us to wish our neighbors to exhibit towards us, we should be willing always to practise in return towards them. This would be showing a love for them as for ourselves. And this is the spirit of Christ’s commandment.

(1) Matt. xxii. 37-40. (2) Matt. vii. 12.

5. In an enumeration of the duties which devolve upon us in our relationship to God and our fellow-beings, there are certain ones which are fundamental and indispensable. Among these may be mentioned *Honesty* in all business transactions. Each man owes it to his Creator, to society, and himself, to deal fairly and honorably with his neighbors in all the affairs of life. He who is dishonest sins not only against God and the good of others, but against his own prosperity and happiness. One dishonest act excites a desire to another; and he continues to venture further and further into deceit, until at length he is suspected, detected and exposed. When once an individual is suspected of dishonesty, it tends to encourage others to retaliate upon him, and defraud him in return. And when, at length, full detection ensues, as it will, sooner or later, then his reputation is blasted, all confidence in him is withdrawn — every person will seek to have as few transactions with him as possible — his business is destroyed — he is shunned by the virtuous and good — and he becomes a despised and an unhappy man. This is the punishment God has affixed to dishonesty.

6. Those who are scrupulously fair and equitable in their dealings, and who despise to take advantage, or to defraud, however favorable an opportunity may seem to offer, are truly wise.

They cannot fail to reap good fruit, in such a course. They obtain the confidence of all who are acquainted with them, and secure their patronage in business matters. "Like begets like." A man who deals fairly with others most certainly obtains fairness in their transactions with him. Thus he secures prosperity without difficulty. Or, if misfortune overtakes him, he is surrounded by hosts of friends, who still grant him their confidence, and cheerfully render him any assistance necessary to enable him to overcome his difficulties, and start anew. These are the rewards a wise Providence sends on the honest and good.

7. *Industry* is also an indispensable duty. Man was made for activity. Every joint, and sinew, and muscle, indicates this fact. Industry is but a proper exercise of the powers of body and mind, in some honorable and useful employment. It is all-essential to health; developing, as it does, the various organs of the system, into a vigorous growth and strength, and enabling them to impart their highest benefits. Industry is also one of the first essentials to prosperity in the pursuits of life. With the habits all right, an assiduous and faithful application to business will rarely fail of leading to ultimate success. These are the certain rewards of the industrious man. Idleness is the bane of human happiness. It fills

the body with the seeds of lingering and painful diseases, and leads to premature death. It clogs the wheels of enterprise — blocks up the road to prosperity — nullifies every element of success — and engulfs its victims in obscurity and poverty. These effects are the well-merited punishments a just God brings on the idle man.

QUESTIONS ON LESSON X.

1. Is man an isolated being? To whom is he related, on the one hand? To whom, on the other? By what bond? What do these ties confer upon him? What does he receive through them? What would be his condition were it not for their assistance?

2. What grow out of the relationship man holds to other beings? What is he bound to do in regard to these duties and obligations? On what does this fact rest? What kind of obligation does the receiving of favors lay us under? Is this a clear duty? What does man receive from God? What return does the receiving of these blessings demand? Of what are those guilty who fail to make this return? Can those be properly grateful to God who neglect to worship him; who mingle his sacred name with profane oaths, and trample on his precepts?

3. What does man receive from his fellow creatures? What is the worth of these advantages? What is he bound to yield society in return? What is the first manner in which he can make this return? What the second manner? What the third? The fourth? The fifth? The sixth?

4. How are these duties summed up by the Saviour? What is the first of these commandments? What the

second? What hang on these two commandments? Are we to understand by "all the law and the prophets," all the duties which God has enjoined on man? What will those do who thus love God and their neighbors? How should the requirement, "love thy neighbor as thyself," not be construed? Can this commandment be complied with? Is its meaning the same in spirit as another injunction of Christ's? What is that other injunction? What does love for ourselves make us desire? What kind of love should we have for others? What should we be willing to practise towards our neighbors? What would this be showing? Of what is this the spirit?

5. What is said in relation to an enumeration of our duties? What is the first duty mentioned? What does each man owe to his Creator, society and himself? What do those sin against who are dishonest? What does one dishonest act excite? What does he venture further into? What is, at length, the result? What is the effect when an individual is suspected of dishonesty? What is the consequence when detection ensues? Does detection always, sooner or later, come? What is this unhappy result?

6. Who are truly wise? What cannot they fail to reap? What do they obtain? What does like beget? What is the meaning of this saying? What does the man obtain who deals fairly with another? What does he thus secure? If misfortune overtakes him, what will be his condition? What are these consequences?

7. What is another indispensable duty? For what was man made? What indicates this fact? What is industry? To what is it essential? What does it develop? What is one of the first essentials to prosperity? To what will faithful application to business lead? But must the habits of all be right? What is idleness? What does it do? What does it clog? What does it block up? What does it nullify? In what does it engulf its victims? What are these effects?

LESSON XI.

MAN'S DUTIES. — (CONTINUED.)

1. ANOTHER essential duty is found in *Frugality*. It is quite as necessary to save as it is to earn. Indeed, without frugality, to husband and preserve, industry is of comparatively little avail. However active and industrious a man may be, unless he takes care of what he earns, his labor will, to a good degree, be in vain. Needless expenditure, the thoughtless squandering of means, however honestly earned, in useless gratifications, in pampering the appetites, or indulging in hurtful amusements, in useless displays and absurd extravagance of any description, is a folly which decidedly indicates a weak and vitiated mind. No expenditures should be made, except for such things as will be of real service — such as will confer substantial benefit on ourselves or others. In order that the Virtues may be enabled to bestow their highest advantages upon us, they must be practised in conjunction. Industry, frugality, or economy, practised, either of them, alone, can be of small advantage. But unite them — industry

to acquire, frugality to preserve, economy to govern expenditures — and more than a three-fold benefit shall flow therefrom.

2. Frugality is neither selfishness nor meanness. A frugal, economical man, need not be a niggard or a miser. He can be generous and benevolent, and still exercise frugality in taking care of his income. A strict economy, when exercised aright, is one of the most useful and worthy virtues. But when carried to such an extreme as to close the ears to the appeals of misfortune, want, distress, or to destroy all willingness to contribute to the forwarding of movements having for their object the upbuilding of the public good, it ceases to be economy, and degenerates to miserly selfishness — a disposition the most dishonorable and wicked. The golden medium is the true point at which to aim, viz., frugality to preserve with all due care, and a generous spirit to give freely when appealed to by distress, or called upon to promote the welfare of society at large. The nearer we approach this standard of perfection, the wiser and happier we become.

3. Among the duties devolving on man, one of the most important is *Temperance*. The evils arising from intemperance are so manifest that no one will deny them; and of a magnitude so appalling that the most vivid imagination cannot

describe them. The direful effects of intemperance are not concealed from public observation, as in the case of some other vices. They are written on the outer surface of things—on the bodies, the countenances, of its victims, and on all their affairs. This evil blights the whole man, body and soul, and casts its mildew on everything connected with him. However an individual may have been adorned by all the graces which elevate humanity, let him fall into intemperance, and it will work a total change in his entire disposition and character. It will dry up every good quality in his heart, and speedily drag him down to degradation and ruin. The hilarity of the inebriate is but the frenzy of a madman. It will burn brightly for a few brief moments, and then suddenly go out in blackness, leaving its victim a prey to a desolation and horror indescribable. The pathway of the drunkard is filled with darkness and terror, and terminates in a death the most awful that can agonize humanity. Such is the punishment God brings upon those who violate the wise and wholesome law of sobriety.

4. The only safety to be found from the evils of intemperance, is in *total abstinence* from all that can possibly intoxicate. They who drink at all of the inebriating cup, as a beverage, however

seldom or sparingly, place their feet directly in the only path that can lead to confirmed intemperance. Avoid it entirely—let not the first glass, the first drop, pass the lips. So long as this rule is lived up to, all is safety and hope. Let it be broken, on any occasion, or on any pretext, and a future, dark and dismal with unutterable wretchedness, presents itself immediately to view.

5. There are few duties devolving on man of a more important nature than a proper observance of the Sabbath day. The requirement of God, that such a day should be observed, originated in a thorough knowledge of human nature, its capacities and wants. It is essential to the health of the body. Constant, unremitting labor and toil—ceaseless anxiety, day after day, without interruption, in regard to the business affairs of life—exert an influence highly deleterious, and which will destroy health, and lead to an early death. The body, the mind, must have relaxation from toil and care, in addition to the hours of oblivion passed in sleep. They must be allowed stated periods of conscious rest, of quiet and peaceful repose, that their energies may gather new strength and elasticity, to go out again to the struggles of the world. A wise Providence has made provision for this want, in the institution

of the Sabbath. Its observance has been made obligatory upon us for our own benefit. This requirement exerts a most healthful and exalting influence upon individuals and communities who comply with its injunction. Peace, harmony, intelligence, virtue, religion, and a salutary public morality, prevail to the highest degree, where the Sabbath is the most generally respected and observed. But in those communities where it is neglected and violated by the great mass of the people, or made a day of mere recreation and amusement, vice, immorality and licentiousness of every description, exist to the widest extent, and inflict their direst evils on society. A habitual disrespect of the Sabbath, naturally, and almost necessarily, leads to a weakening of moral restraints, and results, in due time, in the indulgence of the worst species of iniquity.

6. Intimately connected with the observance of the Sabbath, is the duty of the public worship of God. This is the most important and sacred obligation resting on intelligent and moral beings. The Creator calls upon us, through his revealed word, to worship him in public observances. Ps. c. 1—5. As obedient subjects of a wise, watchful and beneficent Ruler — as dutiful children of a provident and loving Parent — we are bound to yield obedience to this requirement. This obli-

gation is binding on the simple ground of gratitude. From the heavenly Father we have received the boon of life, and the high endowments of soul which elevate us above the brute races. From him cometh protection, health, strength, our capabilities, privileges and blessings. Creatures thus indebted for all they possess and enjoy are bound, by every consideration that can move the human heart aright, to engage in acts of public worship, in prayer and praise to this bountiful Giver of all good. He enjoins it, as some return for his mercies.

7. The influence of public worship on those engaged in it is highly salutary. It diverts the attention from the irritating cares and the sordid pursuits of life ; it turns the thoughts from the dust, the turmoil and strifes, of the business world, and elevates them to a higher sphere, and a serener atmosphere. It lifts the soul up to a contemplation of God and divine things — excites within it an admiration of the beneficent and holy principles which govern the Creator in all his works and ways, and makes impressions on the heart of the most purifying and beneficial description.

8. It is true, God can be worshipped sincerely in private. But how many would worship him at all ; how many would listen to a prayer, or themselves breathe a petition to their Maker, or

utter a word of thanksgiving; how many would adore him in anthems of praise; if public worship should be abolished? In respect to a large class, even in the most religious and enlightened communities, the question lies between public worship and no worship. It is in this view, as well as in many others, that the well-wisher of man sees the utility of public assemblages for divine praise. There is no individual, whatever his moral condition, who can listen to the services proper to the house of God, without experiencing salutary influences, that will make him a better man and a more useful citizen.

9. It is unquestionably the duty of every individual to attend public worship, when the opportunity for choice is presented, at the place where the sentiments he approbates are proclaimed. Each man owes as much as this, at least, to what he believes to be the truth. Those who neglect this duty — who, when a preference is practicable, yield their countenance and support to doctrines they view as erroneous — sin against God, against light, against truth. But where no opportunity for choice offers, and but one place of public worship can be reached, it is the duty of all who respect their Maker, and would obey his requirements, to mingle there with those who are praising God. It is better to worship the Creator

where more or less error is proclaimed, than not to praise him at all.

10. Nor should our vows be paid to God in public only. In the family circle, prayer and praise should be rendered to Him who is the gracious Fountain from whence all blessings flow. In every household an altar of praise should be erected, around which the members thereof should draw, at some stated periods, to unite their voices and hearts in thanksgivings to their Father in heaven. And in the privacy of the closet, when we seek, on our couch, the refreshing influences of gentle sleep, the secret prayer should ascend to God, in gratitude for mercies already bestowed, and to invoke his kind care and protection.

QUESTIONS ON LESSON XI.

1. What is another essential duty? What is as necessary as it is to earn? When is industry of little avail? Under what circumstances will a man's labor be in vain? What indicates a weak and vitiated mind? For what should expenditures be made? How must the virtues be practised, to bestow their highest advantages? What is said of practising either industry, frugality or economy, alone? What is the effect of uniting them?

2. What is frugality not? What need not a frugal man be? How can he be generous and benevolent? What is one of the most useful virtues? When does it cease to be economy? To what does it degen-

erate? What kind of a disposition is this? What is the true point at which to aim? What is the golden medium? What do we become, the nearer we approach this standard?

3. What is one of the most important duties devolving on man? How manifest are the evils of intemperance? Of what magnitude are they? Are the effects of some vices concealed for a season from public observation? Is this the case with intemperance? Where are its effects written? What does this evil blight? On what does it cast its mildew? Will intemperance affect those who are adorned by the graces which elevate humanity? What change will it work on such an one? What will it dry up? To what will it speedily drag him down? What is the hilarity of the inebriate? How will it burn? What will it then do? In what condition will it leave its victim? With what is the pathway of the drunkard filled? In what does it terminate? In what light is the wretchedness produced by intemperance to be viewed?

4. In what is the only safety to be found from the evils of intemperance? Who place their feet in the only path that can lead to intemperance? What should be avoided entirely? What is said of the first glass—the first drop? What will be the consequence of living up to this rule? Let it be broken, and what is presented to view?

5. What is said of the Sabbath day? In what did God's requirement to observe such a day originate? What effect has its observance on the body? What is said of constant toil and ceaseless anxiety? What will they destroy? What must the body and mind have? What must they be allowed? For what purpose? How has Providence made provision for this want? For what has an observance of the Sabbath been made obligatory? What influence does this requirement exert? What prevail in those communities where the Sabbath is the most generally

observed? What exist in those communities where the Sabbath is the most neglected, or observed only as a day of recreation? To what does an habitual disrespect of the Sabbath naturally lead? In what does it result?

6. What is intimately connected with the observance of the Sabbath? What is said of public worship? For what does the Creator call upon us, through his word? Repeat the passage in Psalms. What are we bound to do, as obedient subjects and dutiful children? On what ground is this obligation binding? What have we received from the heavenly Father? What elevates us above the brute races? What cometh from God? What are creatures thus indebted bound to do? By what are they bound to engage in acts of public worship? Does he enjoin this? For what?

7. What is the influence of public worship? From what does it divert the attention? From what does it turn the thoughts? To what does it elevate the attention? To what does it lift up the soul? What does it excite in the soul? What impressions does it make on the heart?

8. Can God be worshipped sincerely in private? Are there not many who would not engage in religious services at all if public worship should be abolished? Between what does the question lie, in respect to a large class? What is it the well-wisher of man sees, in this view? Does it ever make a man worse to worship God? Would it not greatly advance the happiness of the world, if all were constantly to attend the public worship of the Creator? What influence would it exert on every individual? In what respect would it make him better? Are you constant in your attendance on Divine worship? If not, why not? Is your apology satisfactory to yourself? Should you not seek to influence others to attend religious services?

9. Where is it the duty of every individual to

attend worship? When is this his duty? To what does each man owe as much as this? Who and what do those sin against who neglect this? Is it manly, honorable, or right, to yield countenance to doctrines you believe to be erroneous? Is it proper to support them when opportunity offers to support the truth? How would you act, in this case? What is your duty when but one place of worship is within your reach? Is it not better to worship God where some errors are proclaimed than not at all?

10. Should our vows be paid to God only in public? What should be rendered in the family circle? What should be erected in every household? When should the members draw around this altar? What should they there do? When should the secret prayer ascend to God? For what?

LESSON XII.

ON REPENTANCE.

1. THE duty of Repentance is enjoined throughout the Scriptures. It is obligatory on all who sin. When an individual wilfully violates the laws of God, he falls into a state of mind and heart destructive of all true happiness. It is a condition of darkness, hardness, and moral ignorance. The soul, in this situation, can no more experience pleasure, than the body can be the medium of enjoyment while filled with disease. The Father of spirits, aware of the wretchedness which flows from sin, instructs us, in the gospel, of its poisonous nature; and, while inflicting a just chastisement for its commission, calls upon us to turn from its dangerous paths. When men, under the light of this instruction, and the influence of this chastisement, become thoroughly convinced of the evil nature of wickedness, and of the posture of opposition in which it places them to the government of the wisest and best of Beings, their hearts are overwhelmed with sorrow that they had ever become its servants. They abandon it forever, and seek for the pleasant and peaceful ways of

righteousness and truth. This abandoning of sin and error, is, in the Bible, denominated Repentance.

2. Let it be remembered that genuine repentance is not merely a sorrow that our sins have been detected and punished. Nor does it lead to a restraint of vicious practices, solely through fear of the consequences of an indulgence. Such sorrow and restraint may be exhibited by those whose hearts are full of the love of sin. There is no virtue, no merit, in such a frame of mind. Let the fear of punishment be removed from those acting under such influences, or let them believe they can transgress without detection, and they will unhesitatingly fall into the depths of licentiousness. True repentance grows out of a detestation, an utter repugnance, of sin itself—a realization of its opposition to the nature of God and his commandments—a sense of its destructive effects on human happiness—and of the degradation into which it plunges the soul. Hence the shame, the contrition, the sorrow, of sincere penitents, that they have ever given room to so black an evil. Though all punishment for sin should be abolished, they would no more become guilty of it than they would defile themselves with the most offensive filth of the earth.

3. Repentance does not save from punishment.

God has indissolubly linked punishment with transgression. When once sin has been committed, the punishment justly due must and will be inflicted. No possibility of escape has been left open. "Be sure your sin will find you out."⁽¹⁾ "Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished."⁽²⁾ God has ordained that punishment should be sure and unfailing, because it is demanded by the good of the sinner. It is designed to bring him to reflection on the character of his doings, and to lead him to amendment and reformation. Hence, to save from punishment, would be to the sinner's injury, and not to his benefit.

4. Instead of saving from punishment, repentance is in part a fruit of punishment. The chastisements inflicted for wickedness, together with an understanding of the evil nature of sin, and a sense of the goodness of that Being who has forbidden its indulgence, are the direct causes which lead to repentance. The act of true repentance is painful in itself, accompanied, as it ever must be, by a sense of shame and regret, in view of guilt incurred. This is one of those bitter effects of sin which go to make up its punishment.

(1) Num. xxxii. 23. (2) Prov. xi. 21.

5. The change wrought by repentance must be experienced by every individual who has ever committed known and wilful wickedness, before salvation and happiness can be experienced. In no world, in no state of being, can a soul, involved in sin, be brought to a participation in the enjoyments of heaven, until it emerges from the love and practice of vice, to the pure atmosphere of virtue and holiness, through the gate of repentance. The longer this work is delayed, the more difficult will be its accomplishment, and the more painful the process. Those who die steeped in sin will find the same Great Rule in operation hereafter. A change of worlds works no change in the government of God. The same requirements hold good there as here. The sinful soul can find no substantial happiness there, until repentance, sorrow, grief, shame, contrition for past follies, are experienced, and the heart is brought to the cherishing of the principles of goodness and holiness. Let none delay, under the mistaken delusion that repentance, in other states of being, will be granted on terms more favorable, or accompanied by any less pain and sorrow, than in this life. They only are truly wise, who, having fallen into sin, turn from it immediately by repentance, and forever abandon it, for principles of righteousness. These alone can yield true peace

and joy. Wisest of all are they who commit the least sin. They will experience the least of the sorrows of repentance.

QUESTIONS ON LESSON XII.

1. Where is the duty of repentance enjoined? On whom is it obligatory? Into what do those fall who violate the laws of God? What kind of a condition is it? What comparison is made of the soul in this situation? Can a diseased body be the medium of enjoyment? Is the soul diseased while involved in sin? Is a diseased soul happy? Of what is the Father of spirits aware? What does he instruct us, in the gospel? Does he inflict punishment for our sins? What, at the same time, does he call upon us to do? What effect have his instructions and chastisements on the sinful? In what posture does sin place men? What effect does a sense of these things have on their hearts? Of what does the wicked man become the servant? When convinced of the evil nature of sin, how do men proceed? For what do they seek? What does the Bible denominate repentance?

2. What is not repentance? Does it restrain from vicious practices through fear solely? By whom may such restraint be exhibited? What is there not in such a frame of mind? In what case would they fall into licentiousness? From what does true repentance grow? Is sin in opposition to God and his commandments? What effect has it on human happiness? Into what does it plunge the soul? What do sincere penitents feel? What effect would it have on them, were all punishment for sin abolished?

3. Does repentance save from punishment? With what has God linked transgression? When once sin has been committed, what follows? Is there any escape

left open? What passage is quoted from Numbers? What is the meaning of this passage? Repeat the passage from Proverbs. Can there be any doubt as to the meaning of this passage? How do you understand it? What has God ordained? Why has he thus ordained? To what is punishment designed to bring the sinner? To what will it lead him? What, then, would be the effect of saving from punishment? Would a wise God thus screen the sinful to their injury?

4. Of what is repentance, in part, the fruit? What are the direct causes which lead to repentance? Does a sense of God's goodness have a tendency to soften and purify the wicked heart? What is said of the act of repentance? With what is it always accompanied? What is this shame and regret?

5. What must be experienced by those who have committed wicked acts? Before what must this change be passed through? From what must the soul emerge before it can participate in the enjoyments of heaven? Must this be the case in all worlds and states of being? Through what must it pass in thus emerging? What will be the effect, the longer this work is delayed? What will those find who die steeped in sin? What is not changed by a change of worlds? What holds good hereafter, as well as here? When can the sinful soul find substantial happiness hereafter? In what condition must the heart be brought? What is a mistaken delusion? Should we delay repentance here, under this delusion? Who are truly wise? For what should sin be immediately abandoned? What can alone yield peace and joy? Who are wisest of all? Of what will they experience the least?

LESSON XIII.

THE NEW BIRTH.

1. THE NEW BIRTH is a doctrine of the gospel of Christ. It is enjoined in the most emphatic manner. "Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be born again."⁽¹⁾ This change, of a New Birth, is not made necessary by any imperfection in man's moral nature at his natural birth. Every human being is born into the world in a condition of purity and innocence — as sinless and uncontaminated in spirit as an angel in heaven. Were they to remain so — were they instructed aright in God's truth, and their feet kept continually in the path of righteousness by proper training — there would be no necessity for a *new* birth. They would already be in a condition where no moral change would be needed. It is the fact that mankind fall into error and sin, on arriving at years of accountability, that renders another birth, a moral birth, necessary.

2. It is not to be supposed that the New Birth consists in any *miraculous* change in the human heart. If this were so, then men would be in no

(1) John iii. 7.

wise blameworthy for not experiencing it; for they cannot, consistently, be required to work a miracle on themselves. The Scriptures do not represent the New Birth as miraculous in its nature. Neither can any evidence be seen, in the disposition or the actions of those who have experienced it, denoting that a supernatural change has taken place. No new power is imparted. They possess the same nature, the same capacities, the same passions, as before. True, the natural powers and passions are governed differently, and hold another relationship to each other. The spiritual and moral capacities, being in the ascendancy, exercise a controlling influence over the whole man, instead of the lower passions, as formerly. It is the same man after the New Birth as previous to it, but managing and exercising all his powers and capacities in a different manner, and devoting them to purposes of another nature.

3. The "New Birth" was an expressive phrase, used by the Redeemer, to denote a passing from error to truth — from sin to righteousness. It signifies a change of opinion — a renovation of the heart, of the moral principles, of the entire life. Those who are involved in error — who entertain narrow and darkened conceptions of God and his character, of Christ and his mission, must be brought to a knowledge of gospel

truth. They must be led to a belief in the Creator, as the affectionate Father of all spirits, in time and eternity; and in Jesus, as the faithful and successful Saviour of all mankind. This beautiful and heavenly faith must be allowed to exert its genial influences on them — enlarging all their affections, elevating their principles of action, purifying their passions, filling their hearts with love to God and love to men, and leading them into the cheerful practice of the Christian graces and virtues. When men have been brought into this faith and practice, they have experienced the New Birth.

4. This change — this New Birth — is indispensable to man's elevation and perfection in happiness. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."⁽¹⁾ The word "again" is translated from the Greek, "*anóthen*," which signifies "from above." The passage would more properly read, "Except a man be born from above, he cannot see, or enter, the kingdom of God." Being born from above, should be understood as being brought into the adoption of the Spirit of God, which is a spirit of love. "Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God; and every one that loveth, *is born of God*, and knoweth God."⁽²⁾

(1) John iii. 3. (2) 1 John iv. 7.

5. "The kingdom of God," and "the kingdom of heaven," signify the spiritual kingdom which Jesus established on the earth, and which includes his reign, both here and hereafter. It is a kingdom of "righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit."⁽¹⁾ A kingdom where men do right in all their ways — where they experience peace and joy forever, in exercising the holy spirit of love toward God and all their fellow-creatures. How can one, whose mind is darkened by error — whose soul is steeped in selfishness and bitterness — whose heart is filled with spiritual pride, self-righteousness and exclusiveness — or, whose sinful passions rage for brutal gratification — find any congeniality or enjoyment in such a kingdom? Christ's kingdom is a spiritual kingdom — a kingdom of truth, purity and love — and can be enjoyed only in the spirit. Hence the impossibility that a heart can find any happiness in such a kingdom, while filled with haughtiness, with exclusive pride, or with wickedness. Before such a soul can enter that kingdom of holiness and love, and participate in its unspeakable enjoyments, it must emerge from its bondage to error, pride and passion, cast off its love of sin and evil, and come under the influence of truth, virtue and love. When it experiences such a renovation, it

(1) Rom. xiv. 17.

arises to a new sphere of action, enters, as it were, a new existence, and finds sources of the purest and sweetest happiness, totally unknown before. This is the change which the Saviour expressively represents under the figure of a New Birth.

6. Until those who have fallen into an exclusive spirit, or the love of sin, experience this New Birth, it is a moral impossibility for them to find the substantial peace and unalloyed felicity for which their souls constantly hunger. All search for happiness in any other direction will be in vain. Wander where they will, in this world, or in any mode or state of existence, discontent and restless anxiety will ever accompany them, until, by the forsaking of error, the casting out of selfishness, and the abandonment of sin and all love of it, they become fitted to enter upon the high and holy associations and enjoyments of Christ's peaceful kingdom. The moment this is done, whether here or hereafter, the soul finds rest from its anxieties, relief from its pains, and enters into serene and unalloyed enjoyments. Do we desire such enjoyment in this life, at this hour? The way is open. Let the heart and mind experience the renovating change which is requisite, and lo! the kingdom of God is open to our approach. We can immediately enter and participate in its rich and endless treasures.

QUESTIONS ON LESSON XIII.

1. What is a doctrine of the gospel of Christ? In what manner is it enjoined? What was the language of the Saviour on this subject? By what is this change not made necessary? In what moral condition is every human being born? Are they sinless? In what case would there be no necessity for a New Birth? In what condition would they already be? What do mankind fall into? What does this render necessary?

2. In what is it not to be supposed the New Birth consists? If it was miraculous, would men be blameworthy for not experiencing it? Can men be required to work a miracle on themselves? What is said of the Scriptures? Do men's actions, after experiencing the New Birth, indicate a supernatural change? Are new powers imparted? What do they possess? What is said of the natural powers and passions? Which are in the ascendancy? Do the lower passions then exercise their former influence? Is it the same man after the New Birth as before? How is he different?

3. What was the use made by the Redeemer of the phrase "New Birth"? What does it signify? To what must those be brought who are involved in error? To what belief in the Creator must they be led? To what belief in Jesus? What influence must this faith be allowed to exert on them? What effect must it produce on their affections? What effect on their principles of action? On their passions? With what must it fill their hearts? Into what must it lead them? When brought into this faith and practice, what will they have experienced?

4. To what is this change, of the New Birth, indispensable? What is the passage quoted from John? From what is "again" translated? What does it signify? How would the passage more properly read? How should being born from above be understood? What is the spirit of God? Repeat the passage from 1st John.

5. Are the phrases "kingdom of God" and "kingdom of heaven" synonymous in meaning? What do they signify? Did Jesus establish a spiritual kingdom? What does it include? What kind of a kingdom is it? What are the actions of those who are in this spiritual kingdom? What do they forever exercise towards God and all their fellow-creatures? What do they experience in cherishing such a spirit? Can one, whose mind is darkened by error, find enjoyment in such a kingdom? Or one whose soul is steeped in selfishness? Or whose heart is filled with spiritual pride? Or whose sinful passions rage for gratification? What are the characteristics of Christ's kingdom? How can it be enjoyed? Can a wicked and hating heart find enjoyment in purity and love? Hence the impossibility of what? What must take place before such a soul can enter and participate in the enjoyments of the kingdom of holiness and love? When it has experienced such a renovation, to what does it arise? On what does it enter? What does it find? Under what figure does the Saviour represent such a change? Can this change be experienced, and this kingdom be entered, while in this life? What is said in Mark i. 15? What in Luke x. 9? Should we not strive to enter this kingdom immediately?

6. What is it an impossibility for those to find who have fallen into an exclusive spirit, or the love of sin? What must they experience before they can find substantial peace? With what success will they search for happiness in any other direction? Wander where they will, what will accompany them? How long? How can they become fitted for Christ's kingdom? What follows, the moment they are thus fitted? Can it be done here or hereafter? Do we desire such enjoyments now? Can we obtain them? What must the heart and mind experience? What then is opened? What can we do?

LESSON XIV.

ON FORGIVENESS.

1. MAN, liable as he is to imperfection and sin, should seek Forgiveness of God for his own wickedness, and should extend Forgiveness to those of his fellow-beings who offend or injure him. These duties are clearly enjoined in the New Testament. In order to be prepared to discharge these obligations in a proper manner, it is important to have a clear understanding of the nature of forgiveness.

2. It has been supposed by many, that forgiveness, pardon, remission, (which are words of similar meaning,) signify the saving of the guilty from punishment which they justly deserve. This may be their frequent meaning, when used in reference to the penalties inflicted by human governments. Being exceedingly imperfect, and liable to err, in adjusting punishment to crime — sometimes pronouncing sentence too severe, at other times too lenient — human tribunals are compelled to modify and remit punishment; to add to its severity, or save entirely from its infliction, after it has commenced, as circumstances show the

incorrectness of the original sentence, or the necessity of some palliation. But it will be perceived, that the exercise of forgiveness or pardon, in this sense of remitting punishment, grows, necessarily and alone, out of the *imperfection* of human governments.

3. Such a construction of forgiveness cannot be applicable to the Divine administration. God's government is infinitely perfect. He needs no such use of forgiveness or pardon as to rectify mistakes in inflicting his punishments on the guilty, or to modify the penalty he at first designed to send upon them. He makes no mistakes in his dealings. He knows the exact condition of the sinner's heart, and precisely how much punishment he deserves. And that amount of punishment only, he inflicts upon him. There can, then, be no opportunity, in an administration so perfect, for forgiving or remitting *punishment*. This is more clearly seen when the nature and object of punishment is called to mind. It is not inflicted to injure the sinner, but to benefit him; to bring him to repentance, reformation, and happiness. To save the transgressor from punishment inflicted for such a purpose, would be an evil to him, and not a favor.

4. The forgiveness or remission of *punishment* is not a Scripture doctrine. There is not a

passage in the Bible where *forgiveness* and *punishment* are spoken of as connected together. If forgiveness signified saving from punishment, then the word of God would contradict itself. For it declares, in the strongest language, that there is no escape from punishment.⁽¹⁾ Forgiveness, in the Bible acceptation, and in the government of God, is the forgiveness of *sin* — the remitting or pardoning of *guilt*.

5. To forgive sin, in the Divine administration, is to wipe out the remembrance of sin, and not to lay up the fact of the sinner's guilt, to be held as a continual charge against him. To pardon or forgive a guilty soul, is to restore it to the favor and approbation of God, which it had lost by transgression. It is to bring the sinner back to the *same standing*, in the estimation of the Judge of all, that he occupied before he transgressed. When a being possessing a moral nature, does a wrong, an evil act, he feels that there rests in the bosom of the one sinned against, a disapprobation, a condemnation of his deeds. The consciousness of this fact makes him unhappy; and that unhappiness is in exact ratio with the goodness of the being thus sinned against, and the favors and blessings received from him.

(1) See Prov. xi. 21. Rom. ii. 8, 9. Isa. iii. 11. Ex. xxxiv. 7.

For an offender to be forgiven, is to be assured by the being against whom the sin has been committed, that he has wiped out the offence, restored him to his approbation, and esteems him as highly as before the offence was committed. This is the Scripture doctrine of forgiveness.

6. The term on which God grants forgiveness, is sincere and genuine repentance. Not a repentance or sorrow because sin has been discovered, or may be, and that punishment will be inflicted. That is a spurious repentance, which is of no worth and no avail. True repentance is that which grows out of a sense of the evil nature and the enormity of sin itself; and which begets such a feeling of shame and regret at having transgressed the laws of a wise and good Father, as leads to a hatred of sin ever after. Such a repentance merits forgiveness of the sins committed, and receives it; and those thus forgiven, are restored to the commendation and favor of God.

7. Remember, then, that forgiveness is not the remitting of punishment. Nor are men forgiven or pardoned by God, simply *because* they have been punished. The one of these things grows out of the other. The righteous Ruler above, inflicts his punishments on the guilty for all their sins, without allowing a possibility of escape. This punishment, together with other influences,

(such as the goodness of God, and the instructions of Christ,) induces repentance in the heart of the transgressor — a loathing of sin itself. And repentance fits the soul for the forgiveness of sin from the hand of God. He blots out the transgression, and restores the erring one to his approving smiles.

8. Receiving forgiveness from our Creator on these terms, we should be willing to grant it to our offending fellow-beings on the same conditions. *When our neighbors wilfully injure us, either in person, reputation or property, we should in no case retaliate, nor cherish revengeful feelings, nor lay up animosity or hatred against them. While they persist in cherishing the wicked spirit by which they were led to commit evil upon us, we cannot forgive them. That wicked spirit will be their torment, day and night, while they harbor it in their breasts. But when they repent of their wickedness — when they regret in their hearts their conduct towards us, and acknowledge their wrong — then we are bound to forgive them. The remembrance of their offence should be put away, and they should be restored to our friendship and favor.*

9. In his Sermon on the Mount, the Saviour said, "If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if

ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”⁽¹⁾ If your heart is sufficiently alive to Divine impulses to forgive your erring fellow-men their offences against you, when they manifest sincere repentance and sorrow, you are in a fitting condition to receive forgiveness of God, for the wrongs of which you may have been guilty. But if you refuse them your forgiveness, under such circumstances, it indicates that you cherish a sinful spirit in your own heart, which unfits you for the forgiveness of God. How long will he refuse to forgive you? As long as you continue in a state so hardened as to refuse to forgive those who have injured you, and who deplore their evil acts, and ask to be forgiven. While that hardness of heart remains, it will embitter your enjoyments, and poison the cup of life. But when your heart becomes softened to forgive your repentant brother, then you will be in a proper condition to receive forgiveness from your heavenly Father.

QUESTIONS ON LESSON XIV.

1. To what is man liable? What should he seek of God? What should he extend to his fellow-beings? Where are these duties enjoined? What is necessary to discharge these obligations in a proper manner?

(1) Matt. vi. 14, 15.

2. Are forgiveness, pardon and remission, words of similar import? What is it supposed, by some, they signify? When may this be their meaning? Are human tribunals imperfect? What are they liable to do? What do they pronounce at some times? What at other times? What are they compelled to modify? From what are they compelled sometimes to save? Are their sentences liable to be incorrect? From what grows out the necessity of such an exercise of forgiveness?

3. What cannot be applicable to the Divine administration? How is God's government? Of what has he no need? Does he ever make mistakes? What does he know? What amount of punishment does he bring upon the sinner? Of what can there be no necessity or opportunity? When is this more clearly seen? What is the object of punishment? What effect would it have to save the transgressor from punishment?

4. What is not a Scripture doctrine? What passage is it said there is not in the Bible? How would the word of God contradict itself? What does it declare? What is forgiveness in the government of God? Is this its Bible acceptance?

5. - What is it to forgive sin in the Divine administration? What is it to pardon a guilty soul? To what does it bring the sinner back? When a being possessing a moral nature does wrong, what does he feel? What effect does this consciousness have upon him? In what ratio is that unhappiness? What is it for an offender to be forgiven? Is this the Scripture doctrine of forgiveness?

6. What are the terms on which God grants forgiveness? What kind of a repentance must it not be? What description of repentance is this? What is true repentance? What does it beget? To what does it lead? What does such a repentance merit? To what does such forgiveness restore those who receive it?

7. What must be remembered? For what are not men forgiven? From what do these things grow? What is done by the righteous Ruler above? What does he not allow? What other influences are mingled with his punishments? What do punishment and these other influences produce? What do they cause him to loathe? For what does repentance fit the soul? What does God blot out? To what does he restore the erring?

8. On what terms do we receive forgiveness from our Creator? What should we be willing to grant our fellow-beings? On what conditions? What should we not do, when injured by our neighbors? When can we not forgive them? What influence will such a spirit have on them? How long? When are we bound to forgive them? What should be put away? To what should they be restored?

9. What did the Saviour say, in his Sermon on the Mount? When are you in a fitting condition to receive forgiveness from God? If you refuse them forgiveness, what does it indicate? For what does a sinful spirit in your own heart unfit you? How long will God refuse to forgive you? What will that hardness of heart do, while it remains? What will you be in a condition to receive, when your heart becomes softened to forgive your repentant brother?

LESSON XV.

THE RESURRECTION.

1. THE Resurrection of the dead to an immortal existence beyond the grave, is a leading doctrine of the New Testament. It is one of the most important truths ever made known to man. To believe that our being shall not terminate in the tomb; that we shall not fall into the dark embrace of annihilation — to be assured that death is but the door-way leading to another state of existence, where loved ones shall meet to part no more forever — affords a degree of peace and consolation, a strength to endure the evils of life, and a happy exit at the end of our days, which can come from no other source.

2. The world is indebted to Jesus Christ for this momentous truth. Mankind, in every age and nation, have had some conception of a future being, some indistinct belief in its reality. The Old Testament, in many passages, clearly implies, and in fact asserts, the reality of an existence hereafter. But it was not until the proclamation of the gospel, and the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, that the doctrine of immortality was revealed and illustrated, in a manner sufficiently

clear to make it a ground of enlightened and comforting faith. Hence the Apostle declares that Jesus Christ "hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light, through the gospel."⁽¹⁾

3. There is nothing in the raising the dead to life, that should place it beyond belief, as an act of the Creator. "Why should it be thought a thing incredible, that God should raise the dead?"⁽²⁾ That he has power to bestow sentient life, our own existence affords the clearest proof. It can require no more ability to cause the spirit of man to live, after the death of the body, than to usher it into being in the first place. And it must be as easy for God to re-clothe it with another body, fitted to a higher development of its wonderful capacities, in an immortal world, as it was to give it the present body. Having this power at command, that he will exercise it, and usher mankind into another and more elevated sphere of existence, we have the assurance of the gospel, and the evidence of the actual resurrection of Jesus Christ.

4. A diversity of views exists in regard to the *process* of the resurrection. It is believed by many, that the same body we have inhabited in this life, will be raised from the dead, and

(1) 2 Tim. i. 10. (2) Acts xxvi. 8.

changed to an incorruptible and immortal body. In the opinion of others, this body of flesh and blood, at death, crumbles back to the dust from whence it came; and, at the resurrection, the spirit is clothed with another body, adapted to its new state of being, and better capacitated to the exercise of the high qualities with which God has endowed it. This latter view seems to be corroborated by the language of the divine writer. "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."⁽¹⁾ It is also favored by the description which St. Paul gives of the change of bodies at the resurrection. "That which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat or of some other grain. But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body."⁽²⁾ There is, however, but little, if any difference, in fact, between the views expressed above, as to their results. That a new, a different, and better body is given the spirit at the resurrection, is the truth asserted and established by both theories. Whether it is the old body, changed into a new one of an entirely different nature, or a body created expressly for the resurrection state, is a matter of small moment.

(1) Eccl. xii. 7. (2) 1 Cor. xv. 37, 38.

5. The *time* of the resurrection is a subject which has given rise to much speculation. The prevailing opinion has long been, that the resurrection of the dead will be a general and simultaneous event—that none will enter upon an immortal existence, until at some unknown period, yet future, when all shall at once awake to a new life, and commence their career in another world.

6. Against this theory the following objections have been urged:—It involves the supposition that the spirit of man remains in unconsciousness for a period of unknown thousands of years—that the Patriarchs and Prophets, the Apostles and Fathers, have not yet tasted the blessings of an immortal existence, but are all slumbering in a species of non-existence. When friends are removed by death, the highest present consolation which this view affords is, that they are resting in an oblivion of indefinite duration. This theory is contrary to the laws of nature. It would show a useless interregnum in man's existence, for which a parallel cannot be found in any other portion of the works of God. In all the processes of nature there is nothing that rests an instant in an inert and useless condition. Yet, if this doctrine is true, millions of intelligent beings remain inert for ages, useless to themselves and to others. Long periods of time, in which they might be

actively engaged in beneficial employments, are entirely thrown away. Moreover, such a state of unconsciousness is contradicted by the Scriptures. They speak of the dead as now living in a conscious existence. "Now, that the dead are raised, even Moses showed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living; for all live unto him."⁽¹⁾ Does not this passage affirm that these patriarchs are now in a state of conscious being?

7. Most of those, however, who contend for a simultaneous resurrection, believe that, during the time which elapses between death and the resurrection, the spirit exists in a disembodied state—that although in conscious being, yet it has no body. Against this theory, also, many serious objections have been brought. How can we conceive of a disembodied spirit? What is its condition, its sensations, its employments? Is it conscious or unconscious? What is the difference in the condition of a spirit when it has no spiritual body, and when it inhabits such a body? If a spirit can be useful and happy in a disembodied state, why, after the lapse of some thousands of years, is it clothed again with a body? If a body

(1) Luke xx. 37, 38.

is essential to its usefulness and happiness, why is its bestowment delayed so long? Why not clothe the spirit with it at once, at death? Why should Adam and Eve and the first generations, be compelled to await their resurrection, in a disembodied condition, until the last of their descendants shall have died? What objection could there be to their entering immediately, at their death, on a complete and permanent existence, with a body fitted to such new scenes and duties as may open before them?

8. These inquiries lead to the consideration of another theory. A numerous class believe in what may be termed a *continuous* or *progressive* resurrection. When the spirit is separated from the present body, at death, it is immediately clothed with a new, incorruptible and immortal body, and enters at once upon the experience of an endless being. This view of the resurrection is believed to be consistent and reasonable; obviating many objections resting against other theories. It saves the mind from the unpleasant indefiniteness, in relation to the condition of the spirit between death and the resurrection, which pertains to other views. It agrees with the general analogy of nature, in its wise economy and use of time, so directing that everything is in active existence and constant employment. It

also corresponds with portions of the Scripture which allude to those who have departed life, as being now in a conscious existence ; and especially with those passages in which St. Paul declares that to depart from this life is to be with Christ.⁽¹⁾

9. The Apostle, in 2 Cor. v. 1, 2, does not intimate that when "our earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved," or this body dies, we must wait a long and unknown period of time before we can be clothed upon with another body, "the building of God." In this body St. Paul groaned, *earnestly desiring* to be clothed upon with a body from heaven. Would he have expressed himself in such language, if he believed it would be some thousands of years before he would receive his body from heaven ? When the same Apostle, in Phil. i. 23, declared his desire to depart from this life and be with Christ, he clearly intimates his expectation of being with Christ, in a conscious existence, *immediately* after death. Dr. Adam Clarke quotes from *Synopsis Schar* the following, as the belief prevailing among the Jews, anciently, on this subject :—"When the time draws near in which a man is to depart from this world, the angel of death takes off his mortal garment, and clothes him with one from Paradise, in which he may see and contemplate the Supreme

(1) 2 Cor. v. 3. Phil. i. 23.

Wisdom. And, therefore, the angel of death is said to be very kind to man, because he takes off from him the garment of this world, and clothes him with a much more precious one prepared in Paradise."

10. A large proportion of those who adopt the theory of a continuous resurrection, believe that the resurrection is not solely an *act*, but a *state*. They insist that the meaning of the word "resurrection" cannot consistently be restricted to the simple process of raising the dead to life, and clothing them with an immortal body. But while including this, it signifies an *intermediate state*, in which the soul is elevated, lifted up, by divine instruction and holy influences, and progresses in a moral and spiritual life to ultimate perfection. This resurrection state commences with each spirit at its introduction into the future world. It extends to the final consummation of the work of Christ; when, having fitted all souls for the indwelling presence of the Divine Spirit, God becomes "all in all."⁽¹⁾ It is in this resurrection state, (which is synonymous with his mediatorial reign hereafter,) that the Saviour will complete whatever is lacking in the instructions and influences of this world, to bring the human race to the perfection of holiness and happiness. All

(1) 1 Cor. xv. 24—28.

will need his aid. No one departs from life entirely fitted for perfect purity and felicity. The duration of this resurrection state cannot now be known to us; but, at its conclusion, Christ will have brought all spirits to the love and service of God.

11. St. Paul dwells at greater length on this resurrection state, and explains more clearly its processes and results, than any other Scripture writer. (1 Cor. xv.) It was to this state, and its reforming, elevating and purifying influences, that the Redeemer especially referred, when he said to the Jews—"Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven."⁽¹⁾

QUESTIONS ON LESSON XV.

1. What is a leading doctrine of the New Testament? What is the importance of this truth? Is it pleasant to believe our existence will terminate in the tomb? Does it impart any satisfaction to suppose we shall fall into annihilation at death? Is it not more joyful to believe death is the door-way to another state of existence, and that we shall there meet beloved ones to part no more? What does such a faith afford? What kind of strength does it impart? What kind of exit from life?

(1) Matt. xxii. 29, 30.

2. To whom is the world indebted for this truth? Of what have mankind had some ~~conception~~ and belief in every age and nation? What does the Old Testament imply and assert? When ~~was~~ this doctrine of immortality revealed and illustrated? How was it illustrated? How clearly was it revealed and illustrated? What did the apostle declare?

3. Is there anything in raising the dead to place it beyond belief, as an act of the Creator? What is the passage quoted from Acts? What proof have we that God has power to bestow being? What can require no more ability? What must it be as easy for God to do? Was it any great stretch of power in the Almighty to bring us into existence here? Will it require any more power in him to cause us to live hereafter? Has God this power at command? Of what have we the assurance of the gospel? What evidence is there that God can and will raise the dead?

4. In regard to what is there a diversity of views? What is the belief of many? What is the opinion of others? By what does this latter view seem to be corroborated? What is the passage quoted from Ecclesiastes? By what is it also favored? Repeat the words from 1st Corinthians. What difference in result is there between these two views? What is asserted by both theories? What is a matter of small moment?

5. What is said of the time of the resurrection? What has long been the prevailing opinion?

6. Are there objections urged against this view? What does it involve? What would be the condition of the Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles and Fathers, if this theory was true? Where would they now be? What would be the highest present consolation, when friends are removed by death? To what laws is this theory contrary? What would it show? What is said of all the processes of nature? If this doctrine is true, what is the condition of millions? What would be thrown away? What might they be engaged in?

What is contradicted by the Scriptures? How do they speak of the dead? Repeat the passage from Luke. What do you understand this passage as affirming?

7. What do most of those who contend for a simultaneous resurrection believe? What have been brought against this theory? Can you conceive of a disembodied spirit? What can you say as to its condition, sensation, employments, and consciousness? What can be said of the difference between the condition of a spirit when it has not a body and when it has? Can a spirit need a body when it can be useful and happy without it? If a body is needed, why is not the spirit clothed with one immediately at death? What benefit would accrue to itself or to other beings by allowing it to remain thousands of years without a body? How will you answer the question respecting Adam and Eve and the first generations? Can there be any valid objection urged in reply to the last inquiry of the paragraph? What is the most reasonable view on this subject?

8. To what do these inquiries lead? In what do another class believe? What do they believe is done with a spirit at death? Upon what does it immediately enter? What is believed of this view of the resurrection? What does it obviate? From what does it save the mind? With what does it agree? What does nature direct? With what does it also correspond? Repeat the passages referred to in 2d Corinthians and Philippians.

9. What does not the apostle intimate in 2 Cor. v. 1, 2? Will not his language bear an opposite construction? What did St. Paul earnestly desire while groaning in this body? Did he not evidently believe he would at death be immediately clothed with a body from heaven? What did the same apostle clearly intimate in the passage in Philippians? Repeat the language quoted by Dr. Clarke.

10. What is believed by a large portion of those who adopt the theory of a continuous resurrection?

What do they insist in regard to the meaning of the word "resurrection"? While including this, what does it also signify? When does this resurrection commence with each spirit? To what does it extend? Into what condition will Christ finally bring all souls? What will God then become? Repeat the language referred to in 1st Corinthians. With what is this resurrection state synonymous? What does the Saviour complete in this resurrection state? What will all need? Are any, at death, entirely prepared for perfect purity and felicity? What is said of the duration of the resurrection state? To what will Christ have brought all spirits at its conclusion?

11. Who dwells at great length on the resurrection state? What does St. Paul explain? Where is his explanation to be found? To what did the Redeemer refer in his language to the Jews? Repeat the passage quoted.

LESSON XVI.

MAN'S FINAL CONDITION.

1. THE raising of the dead to an immortal existence, is the act of God. Man is as entirely dependent upon him for a future life, as he was for the present. If the Creator had thought proper, he could have so ordered it that every human being would fall into annihilation at the death of the body. Hence it is in accordance with his own will and pleasure, and a voluntary act on his part, that he raises mankind, by the resurrection, to a new and endless state of being.

2. Did God design the immortal life he bestows upon his creatures to be a blessing or an evil to them? When it is considered that he is wise and good—that his nature is love—it is impossible to suppose, in consistency with his character, that he would urge his creatures into any existence simply for the purpose of making them wretched. No view can be more dishonorable to our heavenly Father, or more abhorrent to a truly Christian heart, than the supposition that he will compel any of his offspring to live hereafter, only to furnish himself with an opportunity to

injure them forever, without the slightest reference to their good.

3. The life that now is, was bestowed on the human race as a blessing. According to the plain principles of analogy, and the dictates of reason, a future existence, from the hand of the same God, will be imparted to a similar purpose. An immortal life must be a gift from our Maker. Does he ever *give* to make wretched? If he could not consistently permit a class to live hereafter without enduring endless pain, he would, on the common principles of charity and pity, have allowed them, at death, to sink into unoffending oblivion. This would not have been an injury or a wrong to any who might be permitted to live. Why should a God of holiness, and a tender, loving Father, eternally perpetuate sin and pain in the hearts of his own children? If sin and pain are to be immortalized, God alone must do it. How abhorrent the supposition that he will perform such a work! The thought is in marked violation of all enlightened conceptions of the nature of the Most High. In every point of view, the fact is most evident that the existence into which man is ushered by the raising of the dead, is bestowed by the Creator, as a favor and blessing on all who experience it.

4. The resurrection must necessarily exert an

immediate and marked change on those who experience its transformation. The word "Resurrection," signifies a *rising up*—an improving change. In no case has it the sense of a change for the worse, whether used in reference to a physical or moral process. The resurrection of the dead is, therefore, significant of a raising up, a change of the dead to a new life, for their improvement and ultimate perfection.

5. The Scriptures assert, in the plainest language, that a change of the most beneficial nature will be effected by the resurrection, on all who are raised from the dead. St. Paul declares that Christ "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."⁽¹⁾ The same Apostle gives a more minute description of this change. He assures us that, in place of a corruptible, dishonorable, weak, natural body, mankind shall be clothed, at the resurrection, with an incorruptible, glorious, powerful, and spiritual body.⁽²⁾ It cannot be supposed, with any propriety, that God would give bodies, so angelic and heavenly, to beings whom he compels to exist in sin and misery forever.

(1) Phil. iii. 21. (2) 1 Cor. xv. 42—44.

6. Equally certain is it, that the resurrection must produce at once a moral and spiritual change for the better on the souls of those whom it elevates to another existence. The clothing of the spirit in a body possessing none of the appetites, passions, or propensities, which led to sin in the fleshly tabernacle—the entering into new and strange scenes, and amid influences of a far more elevated and purer nature than any existing on earth—an intercourse and association with higher and holier grades of beings—all these things cannot but effect an immediate and marked influence on any and all men, when they enter upon the stage of another life.

7. The change, however, produced by the resurrection, cannot properly be considered so great as to obliterate a recollection of the past, or exclude the necessity of exertion for future improvement, and higher attainments in knowledge, holiness, and happiness. A remembrance of all previous existence must necessarily accompany an intelligent creature through every stage of being, and in all worlds. This is vitally essential to identity. It is the only manner in which we can know who and what we are. This remembrance is stamped indelibly on the tablets of the soul. Whatever would obliterate it, would, practically, at least, be an obliteration of the soul itself.

8. Were it possible for the recollection of past existence to leave the mind on entering the resurrection state, our present life would be lived in vain. It would hereafter be a *blank leaf* in the book of our history. But this thought cannot be entertained. It is self-evident the Creator had a purpose in view in causing man to commence his being, and pass through this world, previous to his entering another—a purpose bearing on his future welfare. Hence, our experience here—the vicissitudes through which we are called—our joys and sorrows, our prosperity and adversity, our health and sickness—all must exert an influence on our condition in other states of being. God has indissolubly linked the different stages of man's existence together, in so wise an arrangement, that each advancing stage accumulates blessings from all the past, in addition to its own direct productive good. If one stage should be blotted from this grand series, it would mar the harmonious working of the whole, to our serious injury. Faithful memory is the chain which binds these succeeding states of being into one great unity.

9. True, in the light and knowledge of a higher world, the recollection of past life below will occasion more or less of regret and pain. This will be in the same degree that we have yielded

ourselves the servants of sin and folly in this existence. This is one of the bitter fruits growing unavoidably from wickedness. Nor will this regret be without good. It will but stimulate to higher exertions for excellency and glory. Nothing quickens a man so thoroughly to the attainment of virtue and goodness, as a deep and painful remembrance of past transgressions and delinquencies.

10. But the recollections; hereafter, of the present life, while causing a degree of pain in proportion to past follies, will also partake of much that will bestow pleasure. All the dear associations, the sweet memories, the bright and sunny spots, of this chequered world, will still be cherished with the greatest relish, and impart the keenest delight. Moreover, it will be by the aid of past recollection that we shall hereafter be enabled to recognize the dear objects of our love, and cement anew the tender ties of affection which death rends asunder here. All the fond delight we shall experience in communing with them, and recounting the past scenes in which we have mutually participated, will flow as the direct fruit of the vivid memory of this world.

11. It does not seem consistent to suppose that, on arising from the dead in the resurrection state, all will be immediately in the same condition,

either in attainments, knowledge, or happiness. This might well be believed, could holiness, truth, and goodness, or even happiness, be poured into the human heart, as a vessel is filled with water. But the soul of man is so constituted, that it is only by an exercise, a cultivation, a gradual expansion of its capacities, that knowledge and holiness, and the happiness which flows from them, can be attained and enjoyed. Hence, while an exchange of worlds will elevate all men to the possession of much higher advantages than any enjoyed here, and will produce a most favorable change upon them; yet, their immediate moral and intellectual condition, and consequent enjoyments, will, to a good degree, depend on the advancement made in this life. Those who have cultivated their better feelings—who have assiduously walked in wisdom's ways,—who have aimed at the highest attainments in goodness and usefulness—whose minds have been illuminated by a clear perception of the character of God, and the principles of his moral government—will necessarily be in a condition to advance more rapidly in knowledge and happiness, than individuals who have lived and died in selfishness and sin. This great fact forms one of the many high inducements to a life of virtue, usefulness, and truth, while sojourning on the earth.

12. If these views are correct, it follows that the course of treatment adopted towards those who enter the immortal world, will vary in accordance with their moral and intellectual condition. While all will need the instruction of the Redeemer, and the influence of his divine spirit, these will, in each case, be adapted to the peculiar wants of the soul. As the spirits of men enter the immortal world in all the various mental and moral conditions in which we know they die here, it may be believed that each will be subjected to such a class of influences as will be most favorable to their improvement and elevation. The discipline through which Jesus, the great instructor, will direct them, will be as diversified as the moral and spiritual wants of the different hearts he would influence. In no case can it be supposed to consist of an infliction of physical pains and tortures, the lowest and most brutal influence to which an intelligent being can be subjected. But the discipline of the immortal world will be of a high and spiritual nature—such as can be effected by the sweet and softening influences of the gospel, and the enlightening instruction of wise and pure spirits. It will be such a discipline as will instruct the mind, purify the heart, bring its subjects to realize the bitterness and enormity of sin, and the deepest regret for having permitted themselves to

become its servants — awaken within them a hungering after truth and goodness, and lead them to seek for their enjoyments in the exercise of heavenly graces and virtues.

13. The competent school-teacher classifies his pupils according to their mental wants — metes out to each such instruction as they are capable of receiving — and thus leads them all along the path of knowledge. No injustice is done to any of the pupils. None are neglected. All are improved and benefited. So the Redeemer of men, faithful to the work entrusted to him by the Father,⁽¹⁾ assisted by angels and good spirits, will administer to all grades of human souls, as they enter the immortal world, such discipline and teaching as their condition requires, and as shall influence them aright. As they improve, they will ascend to higher positions and to greater enjoyments. Thus Jesus, the Captain of Salvation, will lead them upward on the great highway of heavenly progression. Each will experience more and more happiness as they advance in knowledge, purity, and love; until all shall, at length, attain to an entire development of their moral, religious, and intellectual capacities, and stand, at last, upon a common level — an universal equality — in holiness and felicity.

(1) 1 John iv. 14.

14. Then the resurrection state will close. The work of Christ will be completed. He will be adored by earth's countless millions, and crowned as the victor over error, and sin, and death. And, gathered around the throne of Infinite Love, the redeemed and sanctified universe will unite in ascriptions of praise to God and the Lamb for evermore!

"O, the burst gates! crush'd sting! demolished throne!
Last gasp! of vanquished Death. Shout, earth and heav'n,
This sum of good to man!

Man, all-immortal, hail!

Hail, Heaven, all-lavish of strange gifts to man!

THINE all the glory! MAN's the boundless bliss!"

QUESTIONS ON LESSON XVI.

1. Whose act is the raising of the dead? For what is man dependent upon God? What could the Creator have ordered if he had thought proper? In accordance with what does he raise mankind to an endless state of being? Is this a voluntary act on his part?

2. Can it be supposed God designed immortal life to be an evil to any of his creatures? What should be considered in regard to his nature? What is it impossible to suppose? What view would be dishonorable to our heavenly Father? Would such a view be abhorrent to a Christian heart? Is it to be supposed a holy and benevolent Being would make his creatures live again for any such monstrous purpose?

3. For what was the present life bestowed? For what purpose will a future existence be imparted? On

what principles does this conclusion rest? Must an immortal life be the gift of God? Would he give that which fills with wretchedness? If he could not permit a class to live hereafter without enduring ceaseless woe, what would he have allowed? On what principles would he have allowed this? Would this have been an injury or wrong to any who would be permitted to live? Would a God of holiness immortalize sin and pain? Would a loving Father do this in the souls of his own children? What can God alone do? What kind of a supposition is the idea that he will perform such a work? What does such a thought violate? What fact is most evident? Is this evident in every point of view?

4. What change must the resurrection necessarily exert? On whom? What does the word resurrection signify? What kind of a change? Does it ever signify a change for the worse? Of what is the resurrection of the dead significant?

5. What do the Scriptures assert? On whom will this change be effected? What does St. Paul declare that Christ will do? By the words "our vile body," did the apostle mean only his body and the bodies of his Philippian brethren? Did not he mean all who have "vile bodies," or all men? Where does the apostle give a more minute description of this change? With what kind of bodies does he assure us mankind shall be clothed at the resurrection, in place of our present corruptible, natural bodies? Can it be supposed God would give such heavenly bodies to those whom he will compel to exist in sin and misery forever?

6. What is it equally certain the resurrection must produce? Will this change be for the better? With what kind of body will the spirit be clothed hereafter? Into what scenes will the spirit enter? Amid what influences will it be placed? With what kind of beings will it have intercourse? What influence will all these things produce in entering on another life?

7. What cannot this change obliterate? What can it not exclude? What must necessarily accompany an intelligent creature? Through what? To what is this vitally essential? In what other manner can we know who and what we are? On what is this remembrance indelibly enstamped? What would be the effect of obliterating this remembrance?

8. In what case would our present life be lived in vain? What would it be hereafter? Can this thought be entertained? What is self-evident? What bearing does this purpose have? What must exert an influence on our condition hereafter? What has God indissolubly linked together? In what kind of arrangement? What is done by each advancing step? What would mar the harmonious working of the whole series? What effect would this have upon us? What is faithful memory?

9. What will a recollection in the future world, of past life, occasion? In what degree will this be felt? What is this regret? Will it be fruitless of good? To what will it stimulate? What effect is produced by a painful remembrance of past transgressions?

10. Of what will the future recollections of the present life partake? What will still be cherished with the greatest relish? What will they impart? What shall we be enabled to do by the aid of past recollection? What shall we cement anew? What will flow from the memory of this world?

11. What does it not seem consistent to suppose? How might this be believed? Is this the manner God imparts knowledge and truth? How is the soul of man constituted? Does happiness flow from knowledge and holiness? To what will an exchange of worlds elevate men? What will it produce? On what will their immediate moral and intellectual condition depend? Who will be in a condition to advance the most rapidly in knowledge and happiness? Who will be the least prepared? What does this great fact form?

12. Do you think these views are correct? If they are, what follows? Does the method of managing different persons in this life vary according to their condition of mind and heart? What will all need in the immortal world? How will the Redeemer adapt his instruction and his influence? In what mental and moral conditions do the spirits of men enter the immortal world? To what may it be believed each will be subjected? Who will be their great instructor? Through what will he lead them? How diversified will be that discipline? What can in no case be supposed? What kind of influence is exerted by physical pains and tortures? What will be the nature of future discipline? May it not be supposed Christ will employ wise and pure spirits in his great work of instructing and elevating the souls of men? What influence will the discipline of another world exert upon the mind? How will it affect the heart? To what will it bring its subjects? What will it cause them to regret? What will it awaken within them? To what will it lead them?

13. What is done by the competent school-teacher? What does he mete out to each? Along what does he thus lead them? Is injustice done to any of the pupils? Are any neglected? How are all influenced? Will Jesus be faithful to the work entrusted to him by the Father? Can you describe that work in the language of John? Will he administer to all grades of souls? What will he administer? When will he commence this discipline and teaching? In what direction will he thus lead them? On what will he lead them? What will each experience? How rapidly? To what shall all, at length, attain? On what shall all stand at last? In what will there then be an universal equality?

14. What will then close? Whose work will be completed? By whom will Christ be adored? What will he be crowned? Who will be gathered around the throne of Infinite Love? In what shall they unite for evermore?