A Message of Love From a Grateful Heart

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INTRODUCTION.

THE writer feels that no apology is needed for offering a message of love to the world. She well remembers the time when she was an “alien from the commonwealth of Israel, a stranger from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.” A pitiable condition, indeed! It is true the open Bible was before her, but having a mind filled with superstitious ideas and traditions of men, it was to her a book of mysteries, comprehensible only to the infinite God whose spirit dictated its language.

While thus “alienated from the life of God by ignorance,” a friend pointed out to her the “truth, as it is in Jesus,” and, step by step, led her from darkness into the glorious light and liberty enjoyed by the children of God.

Having been granted this privilege, by a belief of, and obedience to the gospel, the writer brings this message from a heart grateful beyond expression to the Giver of all good for His plan of redemption, and to the messenger who brought the glad tidings; and overflowing with love for perishing men and women who have a “zeal of God but not according to knowledge.” She sincerely trusts that you, too, by a diligent study of the “Scriptures which are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus,” may come to a knowledge of the truth, and assume “the only name under heaven given among men whereby men must be saved”—a step which she knows by experience will fill you with joy unspeakable and, if followed by a godly life, “an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”
CHAPTER I.

"God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jno. 3:16). Salvation then is limited to "whosoever believeth in him." If man's redemption depends upon his belief in Christ, what shall he believe in order to be a believer in Him? Each one of the numerous sects, denominations, and organizations offers a different creed to the seeker of the truth, as the one thing to be believed. Can one believe just any of them sincerely and be saved? Paul says, "The gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Rom. 1:16). Not a gospel, but the gospel, and the gospel only; because we hear the same apostle declaring to the Galatian believers in language that cannot be misunderstood, "Though we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed" (Gal.1:8), "For," says he, "I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal. 1:12). Hence we find that the gospel Paul preached was the power and the only power of God unto salvation, and it was revealed to him by Jesus Christ.

Dear reader, what constitutes the gospel? If one should ask you what the gospel is, could you give one a definite answer from the Bible? Remember, "it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth," and one cannot be saved by a belief of something of which one has no knowledge. We find these words in Gal. 3:8—"And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, "In thee shall all nations be blessed." What have we here? The gospel. What does the gospel set forth? In Abraham, whose belief was counted to him for righteousness, shall all nations be blessed. That is, Abraham is the father of the faithful. Since there is but one faith (Eph. 4:5), without which it is impossible to please God (Heb. 11:6), we must believe the same gospel that Abraham believed in order to have the one faith that characterized Abraham's life.

We read in Heb. 11:1, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." This defines Abraham's faith, or the one faith produced by a belief of the gospel. For what things did Abraham hope? The things promised in the gospel preached to him as revealed in Gen. 12:3—"In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." This hope brought Abraham out of his own country and away from his father's house into the land the Lord showed him. Here it was that the nature of the multi-national blessing was more fully explained in the language: "The Lord said unto him, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine
eyes, and look from the place where thou art, northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever" (Gen. 13:14, 15). What did the Lord promise? The land of Canaan. To whom did He promise the land? To Abraham and his seed. Who is Abraham's seed herein mentioned? We are often told this refers to the Jews, the descendants of Abraham. Must we guess at the answer to this question? In Gal. 3:16 our doubts are put to flight by these words: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." Thus we see that the gospel preached to Abraham promised to him that, together with the coming Christ who should be his seed, he should inherit the land (Canaan) forever.

In after years Abraham was given a son of whom God said to him, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called" (Gen. 21:12). The same gospel that had proclaimed Abraham the father of the Christ-seed who should bestow a blessing upon all nations of the earth was preached to this son by the Lord in this language: "Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed (Christ) I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father—Gen. 26:3.

So strong was Isaac's faith produced by a belief of the gospel that when sending his son, Jacob, to take a wife of his own nationality, he said unto him, "God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people; and give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee and to thy seed with thee; that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave unto Abraham" (Gen. 28:3, 4). No doubt this blessing pleased the God Isaac worshipped, for the first night its recipient spent on his journey, as he lay upon his stony pillow under the starlit canopy of heaven, that God appeared to him in his remarkable dream and said: "I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac; the land wherein thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed, and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south; and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 28:13, 14). These Scriptures clearly set forth the fact that the same gospel was preached to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and promised an ultimate blessing to all nations of the earth.

We are often asked why we dwell at length upon these promises made to three ancient Jewish worthies hundreds of years ago. The class that makes this inquiry, forgetting that Paul has emphatically declared that the promise was made to Abraham and Christ, takes the position that the Jews are the "seed" mentioned in the promise.
Therefore, it thinks the promise was fulfilled when the Jewish nation was led into the land of Canaan under Joshua, thus becoming a matter of history to those who have lived since that time. Is that the disposition you would make of this promise? Paul said, in Acts 26:6, as he made his defense before king Agrippa: "And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob" (Acts 3:13). Is that your hope?

It was this same hope that had made Zacharias rejoice over the birth of his son, John the Baptist, whom he knew had been sent as a forerunner of Jesus the promised seed of Abraham, for he is recorded as saying, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people and hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; as he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began; that we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all that hate us; to perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant—the oath which he swore to our father Abraham"—Luke 1:68-73.

Does it not seem strange to you, dear reader, that Paul and Zacharias should give expression to a hope based upon the fulfillment of a promise that had been fulfilled years before under the law? Think you, these promises have been fulfilled? In Rom. 15:8 we read, "Now I (Paul) say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God to confirm the promises made unto our fathers." What did Jesus do? He made more sure, ratified, or added strength to the promises God made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, which alone shows they had not been fulfilled. But another statement is made concerning the same promise in Heb. 11:8, 9, "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise." Verse 13 of the same chapter says of those of like faith with Abraham mentioned before it, "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth."

In addition to all this, we have Stephen's words found in his answer to the accusation brought against him by false witnesses, as recorded in Acts 7:2-5: "And he (Stephen) said, Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken; The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, and said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall show thee. Then came he out
of the land of the Chaldeans, and dwelt in Charran; and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him into this land (Canaan) wherein ye now dwell. And he gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on; yet he promised that he would give it to him for a possession.”

It is true that God made a covenant with Abraham concerning his descendants, the Jews, that he did fulfill. But will you notice how carefully this is spoken of in Neh. 9:7, 8: “Thou art the Lord the God, who didst choose Abram, and broughtest him forth out of Ur of the Chaldees, and gavest him the name of Abraham; and foundest his heart faithful before thee, and madest a covenant with him to give the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Jebusites, and the Girgashites, to give it, I say, to his seed, (not to thee and to thy seed) and hast performed thy words, for thou art righteous.”

It was under this covenant the children of Israel were led into Canaan by Joshua, but Paul explains the relation of the law to the promise made “to thee (Abraham) and to thy seed” (Christ) this way: “And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise” (Gal. 3:17, 18). Why, then, Paul, was the law given? Mark his answer. “It was added” (to the promise) “because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made” (Gal. 3:19). “Wherefore,” says he, “the law was our shoolmaster to bring us to Christ (the promised seed), that we might be justified by faith.”

Now, dear reader, these promises, as we have learned, must be considered just as important as the gospel, since they are one and the same thing. The gospel, however, does not promise anything to any one except the seed of Abraham. How may we become so related to Abraham? In Eph. 3:1-5 we read, “For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, if ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: how that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery (as I wrote afore in few words, whereby, when ye read ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ, which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the spirit).” What is this revealed mystery? The next verse (6) says, “That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel.”

Since Paul was told that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, it would be well for us to let him explain how they become fellow
heirs. Hear him, "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Gal. 3:26-29). What promise? We turn back to Gen. 13:14, 15 and read again, "And the Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever." Then as we remember that Paul has said, that by a belief of the gospel which produces the one faith and baptism into the only name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved, Gentiles may become joint heirs with Christ of the promise offering wonderful blessings to all nations in Him, we are made to exclaim: "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

CHAPTER II.

In writing to the Ephesians Paul calls their attention to the fact that they were once dead in trespasses and sins and says to them, "Remember that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world" (Eph. 2:2). If it was necessary for the Ephesians to acquaint themselves with two covenants of promise before they could change the relationship from "without" to within Christ, would we not be safe in saying that the gospel contains two covenants of promise? One as we have seen was made with Abraham, but where shall we find the other? Since one’s salvation depends upon a belief of the gospel of which the second covenant composes a part, this is an important question and deserves the consideration of every thoughtful person.

In a record of the last words of David found in II Sam. 23:3-5 we read, "The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God. And He shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain. Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure, for this is all my salvation and all my desire." Here we learn that the second covenant was made with David, and he gives expression to a hope based upon the "one faith" by saying that in the fulfillment of this promise he sees his salvation—all his desire.
What is this wonderful covenant? Have you ever read it? Do you, like David, see in its fulfillment all your salvation and all your desire? Hear these words of the Lord spoken to David: “And when thy days be fulfilled and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be His father and He shall be my son. If He commit iniquity, I will chasten Him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men; but my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established forever before thee, thy throne shall be established forever” (II Sam. 7:12-17). Thus reads the covenant by the fulfillment of which David said he would be saved.

Do you, dear reader, see salvation for David in this promise? People are wont to say that Solomon was the promised seed, and this covenant related to him and his reign on David’s throne. Suppose we grant that such a statement is true, how did Solomon’s reign bring salvation to David? Besides, could Solomon’s reign have met the requirements of the covenant? The first lines of that covenant read, “And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with the fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee.” This requires David’s death before the seed is “set up,” and it is on record that Solomon was anointed king before David’s death, of which fact David said: “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, which hath given one (Solomon) to sit on my throne this day, mine eyes even seeing it” (I Kings 1:48). Besides, God had said of that seed, “He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God. And He shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds, as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain” (II Sam. 23:3, 4). Think ye that Solomon, whose immoral life caused the division of the kingdom of Israel, could be described by such beautiful expressions of purity?

If Solomon was not the promised seed, to whom was David’s throne promised? David must have known, because as he came to die—a time when man seriously considers Job’s question, namely: “If a man die shall he live again?”—he declared that this seed’s reign would bring salvation to him—the one desire of his heart. Isaiah prophesied of this same seed, for he said: “Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders; and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish
it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this”—Isa. 9:6, 7.

Are you still in doubt as to whom David’s throne was promised? If so, we will see what David knew about it. In his memorable sermon on the day of Pentecost, Peter made it known thus: “Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his loins according to the flesh he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption (Acts 2:29-31). Whom did David know would sit on his throne? Paul seems to agree with Peter on this subject. He said in speaking of David, “Of this man’s seed hath God according to his promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus. Is not this in harmony with the words of the angel who announced to Mary that she should be the mother of Jesus? He said, “He (Jesus) shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest, and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David; and He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there shall be no end” (Luke 1:32, 33). These Scriptures plainly teach that Jesus was the promised seed of David.

Did you notice carefully what was promised to Christ, the seed of David? Did not God say that a kingdom should be given Him, one which He should rule and reign? Not only did God promise Christ a kingdom, but David’s kingdom; for you remember He said to David, “Thine house and thy kingdom shall be established forever before thee; thy throne shall be established forever.” Did God promise Christ David’s literal kingdom here on the earth? Dear reader, what other than a literal kingdom on the earth has David ever possessed? The Bible tells me of but one kingdom that ever belonged to David, and in it were found all the elements necessary to constitute any literal kingdom—a king, royal associates, territory, subjects, laws, and a capital.

Zedekiah was the last king that ever sat on the throne, and at the end of his reign God said, “And thou profane wicked prince of Israel, whose day is come when iniquity shall have an end. Thus saith the Lord God, Remove the diadem, take off the crown; this shall not be the same, exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn it, and it shall be no more until He come whose right it is; and I will give it Him” (Ezek. 21:25-27). As a result of this prophetic declaration, Zedekiah was deposed, his subjects scattered in all parts of the world, his capital and dominion seized by another nation and his laws made of none effect.

But you remember the God of heaven said, “It shall be no more
until he come whose right it is and I will give it him." Give what to him? A kingdom, His kingdom! Enthrone Christ as David's successor, surround Him with royal associates, give Him a dominion from whose capital His laws shall go forth and govern His subjects!

This is no wild scheme of human construction, but a wonderful plan of redemption conceived in the mind of the infinite God and revealed to a lost world in the Scriptures of truth. Would you question the truthfulness of this assertion? If so, let the Bible set your mind at rest. It names every element that shall be found in the kingdom of God in this language:

I. KING.

And the Lord shall be King over all the earth; in that day there shall be one Lord and His name one—Zec. 14:9.

The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever.—Rev. 11:15.

And Jesus said unto them (His disciples), Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel—Matt. 19:28.

II. ROYAL ASSOCIATES.

But the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever. And the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom. And the kingdom and dominion and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom and all dominions shall serve and obey him—Dan. 7:18, 22, 27.

And they sung a new song saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth—Rev. 5:9, 10.

III. TERRITORY.

He shall have dominion also from sea to sea and from the river unto the ends of the earth (Psa. 72:8).

Ask of me and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession—Psa. 2:8.

O let the nations be glad and sing for joy; for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth—Psa. 67:4.
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And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end—Luke 1:33.

IV. SUBJECTS.

And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruninghooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more—Isa. 2:4, 5.

V. LAWS.

And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem—Micah 4:2.

VI. CAPITAL.

At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem; neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart—Jer. 3:17.

Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously—Isa. 24:23.

This is the kingdom the God of heaven will set up that shall break in pieces and consume all other kingdoms and shall stand forever (Dan. 2:44). The King is now in a “far country” awaiting the day of righteous judgment appointed by His Father. “For,” says Peter, “He shall send Jesus Christ . . . whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began”—Acts 3:20, 21.

“Restitution”! Does not the word make your heart throb with joy? In the beginning, when God had completed His work of creation, He looked upon “everything” He had made, and “behold, it was very good.” To-day He beholds vice and crime throughout every land. The cursed earth yields thorns and thistles. Sinful men wield the reins of government in all nations and corruption and bribery prevail. Famine, pestilence, war, sickness, sorrow, pain and death are, alas! familiar words the world over. But thanks be to God, he has promised a “restitution of all things.” “When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory” (Matt. 25:31). He will then make war to cease unto the ends of the earth (Psa. 46:9) and peace on earth, good-will toward men will be an accomplished fact, “For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.”—Hab. 2:14.
There is another requirement in this covenant that should be noted carefully. It says, "Thine house and thy kingdom shall be established forever before thee." We have already seen that the first part of the covenant requires David's death before his seed is "set up," while the last part declares that the kingdom shall be established forever before David, or in his presence. Would you call this contradictory language? Nay, verily, my friend! This is the glorious gospel through which Jesus Christ abolished death and brought life and immortality to light (II Tim. 1:10). By man (Adam) came death; but Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life, he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live" (Jno. 11:25). Was David a believer in Christ? Judge for yourself by the words with which he expressed his faith. Said he, "I shall be satisfied." When? "When I awake with thy likeness" (Psa. 17:15). Herein is found salvation for David. "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption" (I Cor. 15:50) is Paul's language on this subject. David was flesh and blood. He died and was laid to his fathers and saw corruption, but, said he, "God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave, for He shall receive me" (Psa. 49:15). That is the time to which David looked forward with hope. Then it is his mortal body will put on immortality and he can say, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" Since this is to occur when Jesus Christ shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom (II Tim. 4:1) do you wonder, dear reader, that David said, with his dying breath, "God hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure, for this is all my salvation and all my desire?"

We are now in a position to understand Isaiah's invitation to a dying world—"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? And your labor for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David" (Isa. 55:1-3). Back yonder in the garden of Eden, man transgressed God's law. The penalty for such a transgression was, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen. 2:17). Man ate; and a just God could now drive him from the garden, "lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever" (Gen. 3:22). "Therefore," says Paul, "by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men"—Rom. 5:12.
But "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life" (Jno. 3:16). What shall one believe in order to be a believer in Christ? Paul says, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Rom. 1:6). Dear reader, What constitutes the gospel? To quote Isa. lv:3, "Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David." Like the, at one time, hopeless Ephesians, acquaint yourself with the covenants of promise, and by baptism into Christ, become Christ's and Abraham's seed, and an heir according to the promise. Then you shall be no longer a stranger and foreigner, but a fellow-citizen with the saints and of the household of God (Eph. 2:19). Having thus entered into a covenant relation with the Most High, you may, "by patient continuance in well doing," receive eternal life. For the promise is, "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God" —Rev. 2:7.

CHAPTER III.

Jesus Christ announced his life work to the world in the language of Isaiah, "The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord" (Luke 4:18-19.) Since Jesus was anointed to preach the gospel that offers life to the hopeless transgressors, surely we can find on record just what composed the gospel that he preached. Did He ever herald the glad tidings of the kingdom of God? Will his teachings harmonize with what we have declared to be the gospel? Go with me to Inspiration and be, not "almost," but altogether persuaded concerning the truth of this subject. Here we find the teachings of Jesus expressed in these convincing sentences:

"Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand"—Matt. 4:17.

"And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom”—Matt. 4:23.

"After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven”—Matt. 6:9-10.

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven”—Matt. 7:21.
"And I say unto you; that many shall come from the east and west and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven"—Matt. 8:11.

"Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God"—Mark 1:14.

"And He said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also, for therefore am I sent"—Luke 4:43.

"And it came to pass afterwards, that He went throughout every city and village, preaching and showing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God; and the twelve were with Him"—Luke 8:1.

"And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick"—Luke 9:2.

"There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out, and they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God"—Luke 13:28, 29.

"For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come"—Luke 22:18.

"And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel"—Luke 22:29, 30.

"Pilate therefore said unto Him, art thou a king then? Jesus answered, thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth"—Jno. 18:37.

"Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, write not, The King of the Jews; but that He said, I am the King of the Jews"—Jno. 19:21.

"These scriptures are abundant proof that Jesus believed and taught the same gospel that had been preached to Abraham and David.

So important did He consider the gospel, He spent the entire time, consisting of forty days, from His resurrection till his ascension, speaking to his disciples of "the things pertaining to the kingdom of God"—Acts 1:3. As a result of this instruction, the last words His disciples ever addressed to Him were, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" "Poor, deluded disciples," some one has said, "they are looking for a literal restoration of the kingdom of Israel." Do you think, dear reader, that the disciples failed to comprehend the teachings of Jesus concerning the kingdom of God? Here is a man who at the tender age of twelve years confounded the doctors of Israel by His wisdom. This is The One of whom His enemies said, "Never man spake like this man."
He has called His disciples from the different vocations of life to preach the kingdom of God—Luke 9:2; He, himself, has gone “throughout every city and village, preaching and showing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God; and the twelve were with Him;” for three years He has personally instructed His disciples concerning this all important subject; now He is preparing to leave them and go into a “far country;” hear their last words, “Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?”

Ah! dear reader, would you say those disciples were deluded?”
What a reproach to bring upon the teaching ability of Jesus Christ, the most able instructor that has ever lived on earth! Besides, does not their question harmonize with God’s plan to establish His kingdom, as set forth in the gospel? Remember it was David’s throne that was overturned, and they had been taught to look for its restoration as the time of salvation. Do you wonder they would longingly say, “Lord wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?” What was their Lord’s reply? He said unto them, “It is not for you to know the times and seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power.”—Acts 1:7. Does not this answer agree with Paul’s teachings? He said, “But of the times and seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.”—1 Thess. 5:22.

The Message of Love

CHAPTER IV.

In Christ’s last conversation with His disciples as recorded in Luke 24:44-49 we have this language: “And He said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me. Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you; but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.”

It is well to bear in mind that these words were addressed to men who had been preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God under the guidance of the Christ. What was it they did not understand? Mark the words, Thus it is written and thus it behooved Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.”
If you remember, Christ had said to the twelve on one occasion, "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished. For He shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on; and they shall scourge Him and put Him to death, and the third day He shall rise again." (Luke 18:31-33.) But they did not understand these things. Why? The next verse (34) says, "And they understood none of these things, and the saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken."

This, then, is a new feature to be added to the gospel. At one time it had been "hid" from the disciples, but now Christ has "opened their understanding" in regard to this subject. Thus far only the gospel of the Kingdom of God has been heralded, but henceforth we may expect to see the disciples preaching "the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ." For Jesus said to them, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

Did the disciples bear witness of these things as their Saviour commanded? On the Day of Pentecost, they received the "power from on high" and, as Peter was the spokesman, it would be well to notice his discourse. Remember, he addressed "devout men" of the Jewish nation, who understood the "things of the kingdom of God," but rejected the lowly Nazarene as the promised king. To them Peter preached repentance and remission of sins in His name for the first time, saying, "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; Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain, whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death; because it was not possible that He should be holden of it. For David speaketh concerning him (Christ), I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for He is on my right hand, that I should not be moved; therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope; because Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance. Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David," (Why speak of David?), "that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him,
that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, He would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that His soul was not left in hell, neither did his flesh see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we are all witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens; but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ” (Acts 2:22-36).

These words evidently convinced Peter's hearers that they had crucified the rightful heir to David's throne, for we are told that "When they heard this, they were pricked in their heart and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?” (Acts 2:37.) Would you not expect such a question? They realized what a great mistake they had made in crucifying the One on whom Israel's redemption depended. "What shall we do?” must have been a cry of despair, but it was not in vain. God in His mercy has so provided that "whosoever will” may take of the water of life, and Peter as His witness at this time, set forth the crucified Saviour as "the way, the truth and the life.” He said, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins” (Acts 2:38). This is the way of reconciliation as Peter declared it, and "they that gladly received his word were baptized” (Acts 2:4).

There is another occasion upon which Peter is found serving as a witness for the "Firstborn from the dead.” Cornelius of Caesarea, although a "devout" man, and "one that feared God with all his house,” knew not the gospel, without a knowledge of which there is salvation for none (Rom. 1:16), and the Lord instructed him to send for Peter, who should tell him "words” whereby he and his house should be saved (Acts 11:14). Remember, Cornelius was the first Gentile convert, and not one of the saving words Peter addressed to him should be overlooked. The same words that Cornelius and his household were instructed to believe in order to be saved, are the same words that every Gentile must believe if he would be saved, for the plan of redemption remains the same.

What were the words Peter spoke at this time? He said to Cornelius, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. The word”—what word?—”which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ; that word”—what is that word?—"I say, ye know, which
was published throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached" (Acts 10:34-37). Here Peter tells Cornelius and those of his house that they already know a certain "word" which was published throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached. What is that "word?" Is it possible for us to know just what Peter referred to? Go with me to Mark 1:4, and see what "word" began from Galilee after John's preaching. Here it is said, "Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God." This, dear reader, clearly shows that the "word" was none other than the gospel of the kingdom of God that the Lord Jesus himself proclaimed; and Peter affirms that the Caesarean household thoroughly understands it.

But you remember the gospel is now of a two-fold nature, as it were, and having ascertained that his hearers had acquainted themselves with "the things pertaining to the kingdom of God," Peter proceeded to expound the things concerning the name of Jesus Christ by telling them "How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil, for God was with him. And," said he, "we are witnesses of all things which He did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree; Him God raised up the third day, and shewed Him openly; not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after He rose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is He which was ordained of God to be the Judge of the quick and dead. To Him give all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts 10:38-43).

The record tells us that, while Peter was speaking these words, God gave the Holy Spirit to those who heard him, enabling them to speak with tongues and magnify His name. Thus confirming Peter's assertion that "God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness is accepted with Him," Seeing that his brethren of the circumcision who were with him, were convinced of this fact, Peter continued by saying, "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Spirit as well as we?" (Acts 10:47.) Since God had granted the Gentiles "repentance unto life," the believing Jews could but hold their peace. Then Peter commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, and Isaiah's prophecy which says, "In His name shall the Gentiles trust," found its fulfillment.

Philip was another able witness for his Master. He went
down to the city of Samaria and preached “Christ” unto them (Acts 8:5). Did he preach the same thing that Peter preached? We know that Peter preached the “word,” or the gospel of the kingdom, and the things concerning the name of Jesus Christ; but Philip preached “Christ.” Is there any difference in preaching “the things pertaining to the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ” and preaching “Christ”? Would you think so? Acts 8:12 states that, when as a result of his preaching “Christ,” the Samaritans believed Philip preaching “the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.” Nor are those the only names by which Philip’s subject was designated. For it was reported to the other apostles at Jerusalem that Samaria had received “the word of God” (Acts 8:14). Hence we know that to preach words whereby a man may be saved, or to preach Christ, or to preach the word of God, one must preach the Gospel, or the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ.

Some time after his visit to Samaria, Philip one day heard a man reading that portion of the prophecy of Isaiah, which says, “He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened He not His mouth; in his humiliation his judgment was taken away; and who shall declare his generation? for His life is taken from the earth.” When he had finished reading, he said to Philip, “I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or some other man?” What was the answer? It is said, “Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus” (Acts 8:35). Would there be any injustice in saying that Philip preached unto him the gospel, or the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ? Surely not. Philip must have taught this man the same thing that he taught the Samaritans, because the record tells us that as he and Philip were journeying along together, “They came unto a certain water; and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still; and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him” (Acts 8:33-38). Do you think it would have been possible for the eunuch to believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and not believe the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ? There can be but one answer, but we have another man who faithfully witnessed for Jesus who can offer convincing testimony on this subject.

The same Lord who instructed Peter and Philip to preach the gospel, chose Paul “to bear his name before the Gentiles, and kings,
and the children of Israel.” Please do not forget that this is the man who once said, “I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.” In answer to the question, “What must I do to be saved?” he said, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved” (Acts 16:3). Then he proceeded to preach “the word of the Lord” to the inquirer and administered baptism unto him. We have already learned that when Peter preached the “word” and Philip preached “Christ” their hearers believed “the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ,” and the report went out that the Samaritans had received the “word of God.” Then are we not safe in saying that, when Paul instructed a man to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation, and preached “the word of the Lord” unto him in order that he might be saved, that he taught him the gospel, or the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ?

The same apostle reasoned with the Jews of Thessalonica from the Scriptures for three Sabbath days, “opening and alleging that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ” (Acts 17:3). This reasoning caused quite an uproar in that city, because those who believed were accused of acting contrary to the decrees of Caesar, by saying, “There is another king; one Jesus” (Acts 17:7). If to preach Christ is not to preach “The things pertaining to the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ,” why did the Thessalonians say that a king other than Caesar, even Jesus, would reign? They must have looked forward to the establishment of the kingdom of God in the earth.

From this city Paul journeyed to Berea, where he again addressed the Jews. “These,” it is said, “were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily whether these things were so” (Acts 17:11). Thus we see that when Paul preached “Christ” at Thessalonica, he was preaching the same thing that he did when he preached the “word” at Berea, and it was made known at the former city that the “word of God” was preached of Paul at Berea. What is “the word of God?” You remember Philip preached this same thing at Samaria (Acts 8:14), and his hearers believed “the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ” (Acts 8:12). Therefore we know, that whether it be said that the apostles preached Christ, the word, Jesus, or the word of God, they were preaching the gospel, or the things pertaining to the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ. Wherever they went, in obedience to their Master’s command, they proclaimed but one
thing—the gospel as it is set forth in the law of Moses and in the prophets.

Near the close of his life, Paul was imprisoned by the same nation that had crucified the King. When this faithful man of God stood on trial for the "hope of the promise" God made to the fathers, he had but one plea to offer in defense of his conduct—"I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come; that Christ should suffer, and that He should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles" (Acts 26:22-23). Paul was not a promulgator of a new theory. His Lord had said, "All things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms concerning Me," and he bore witness to "none other things." Moses and the prophets had always been considered a reliable source of information by his accusers. In view of this fact, he appealed to the judge who was "expert in customs and questions among the Jews," with this question: "King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets?"

This is the same question we would bring to you today, dear reader,—"Believest thou the prophets?" Is it necessary? Accept Paul's answer. Having been asked to give a reason for his hope, the record says, "When they appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening" (Acts 28:23). At this same place he "dwelt two whole years in his own hired house and received all that came in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 28:31). Now, dear reader, if Paul who kept the one faith throughout his life (11 Tim. 4:7) preached the gospel consisting of the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ from the law of Moses and the prophets, is it not necessary for you to believe the same teachings of those divinely inspired penmen in order to be saved? "Believest thou the prophets?" If you do, you must believe that God will perform the oath that He made to the fathers, as set forth in the first chapter of this booklet. If you do, you must know that God will one day fulfill the covenant made with David by establishing His kingdom here in the earth. If you do, you understand the gospel of the kingdom of God that Jesus Christ was anointed to preach. If you do, you are thoroughly acquainted with the gospel consisting of the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ that the Lord Jesus commanded His apostles to teach. "Believest thou the prophets?" If you do, and have not yet entered into a covenant relationship with
that One to whom "give all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins," be baptized into His name that your sins may be blotted out, and thus become an heir to those blessings in Christ of which the prophets have spoken.

Then, in obedience to Peter's exhortation to those of like faith, "Add to your faith virtue; to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his sins. Wherefore," said he, "the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if you do these things, ye shall never fall; for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (II Peter 1:5-11).

CHAPTER IV. 

The first law ever enjoined upon man had for its penalty, "Thou shalt surely die." It is generally conceded that Adam became a violator of that law, thus subjecting himself to the punishment prescribed by God, the Law giver. This fact, we repeat, is admitted, but the dispute arises when an explanation of the penalty is offered. Yes, judgment was executed in Adam's case, but many and varied are the answers given when the question, what is death? is proposed.

Should the meaning of the question concern us? Paul said, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men" (Rom. 5:12). For this reason, dear reader, the settlement of this question aright, should mean much to you and me. According to Paul's language, we stand awaiting the same penalty that was meted out to Adam—he that what it may. In other words, we are death-doomed. Do you know what that means?

Of one thing we are certain—death is a penalty for sin (Gen. 2:17). It matters not what you may term death, it is an "enemy" and will meet with destruction at the hands of Jesus Christ during His righteous reign here in the earth (I Cor. 15:26). If it be true, as we are so often told, that "death is the voice that Jesus sends to call us to His arms;" how can this be reconciled with the fact that death comes as the penalty of sin?
What is death? In Gen 5:5, we read, “And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years, and he died.” Is it possible for us to know just what occurrence is expressed by the word “died”? The sentence, “Thou shalt surely die,” was pronounced in these words, “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken, for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return” (Gen. 3:19). With this plain statement from God’s word before us, is there any need of going further to determine just what occurred when Adam died? There would not be had man never made Gen. 2:7 read, “And the Lord God formed a body of the dust of the ground and breathed into that body man, a never dying entity, and man became an immortal soul.” Herein lies the difficulty. If we are to deal with immortal souls, my friend, we may as well erase death from our vocabularies, and say with those who believe that doctrine, “There is no death,” for, since immortal means never-dying, there is no death for immortal souls. But there must be a mistake somewhere, because God said to that soul He created, “Thou shalt surely die,” and he did die, for you remember the record says, “And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years, and he died.” Since it is a fact that during the nine hundred and thirty years that he lived, Adam was not dead, and when the nine hundred and thirty years (all the days of his life) expired, he could not have been alive, it follows that death is the opposite of life. Taking this scriptural view of the subject, we can readily see why God denounced the serpent as a liar because he said to that soul susceptible of death, “Thou shalt not surely die,” or, “There is no death.”

When Gen. 2:7 is rightly read, it harmonizes with all other portions of the Bible, and the subject of death is a comprehensible one. It reads, “And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living (not an immortal) soul.” Because of disobedience God said to that soul formed of the dust of the ground and animated by breath from the source of all life, “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.” In these scriptures we have the creation of man, a living soul, and the sentence of dissolution in death as pronounced upon the living soul. Notice carefully, dear reader, that it was man who was formed of the dust of the ground; that it was man who disobeyed the divine command; that it was man who was sentenced to return unto the ground, from whence he was taken. Thus we see that the living soul of the Bible is the bodily being called man.

That is the way Paul understood it, for he used “living soul”
and "natural body" interchangeably. Said he, "There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body; and so it is written, the first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam (Christ) was made a quickening spirit" (I Cor. 15:44,45).

Now, my friend, with a scriptural view of the creation of man, we are in a position to understand death as the Psalmist defined it. Said he, "Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help. His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish" (Psa. 146:3,4). Is a dead man unconscious? Popular teachers say he is not, but these are the words of David, and they are in strict accord with the wise man’s expressions on this subject. He said, "The living know that they shall die, but the dead know not anything" (Eccl. 9:5). In view of this fact his advice is, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, wither thou goest" (Eccl. 9:10).

Does it not seem strange, dear reader, that in the face of these open declarations of the unconscious state of the dead, from God’s word, men would teach that the dead know even more than the living? Yet it is a fact. If it be reported that one of the lower animals has died, however, no one doubts that death in this case means that a being has been deprived of life, thus leaving it wholly unconscious. But the majority of people scorn the idea that death brings unconsciousness to man; all the while forgetful of Eccl. 3:19,20. It says, "For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them; as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no pre-eminence above a beast; for all is vanity, all go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again."

Could an explanation of death have been given in more intelligible language? The Bible always speaks of it as the deprivation of being and not as the commencement of life in another sphere, and so David understood it. He practically pleaded, "Here my prayer, O Lord, and give ear unto my cry, hold not thy peace at my tears; for I am a stranger with thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were. O spare me, that I may recover strength, before I go hence, and be no more" (Psa. 39:12,13).

Hezekiah, king of Israel, also had a correct view of this subject. When he was "nigh unto death," he prayed for an additional length of days. Having received an answer to his prayer, he offered the following words of thanksgiving to God for his recovery, "Thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption; for Thou hast cast all my sins behind Thy back. For the grave cannot praise Thee, death cannot celebrate Thee. They that go down into
the pit cannot hope for Thy truth. The living, the living, he shall praise Thee, as I do this day” (Isa, 38:17,19).

These scriptures leave no doubt as to the reality of death and the total extinction of its victims. And yet, while they impress upon our minds the mortality of man because of Adam’s transgression, and our inability to ward off death, they reveal to us the necessity for a resurrection—the hope of believers throughout all ages of the world. Job could understand that a real death that deprives one of life, demands a real resurrection to restore that life; and he gave utterance to his faith in such a resurrection in this language, “I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God” (Job, 19:25,26). Like Job, David gave expression to a hope of life only through the resurrection. Said he, “God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave” (Psa. 49:15). Martha, the sister of Lazarus, did not hesitate to declare her faith in the resurrection as the means of a future life for her brother who had died. When Jesus said to her, “Thy brother shall rise again,” her answer was, “I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day” (Jno. 11:24). Paul’s hope was founded upon the resurrection of the dead. His words to the Corinthian believers are, “If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? Let us eat and drink; for to-morrow we die,” (I Cor. 15:32).

There is another fact, however, that should not be overlooked. The apostles preached “through Jesus” the resurrection from the dead (Acts, 4:12). To use Paul’s expression, “As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive” (I Cor. 15:22). The phrase “in Adam” includes every member of the human family. Wherever mankind dwells, the cemetery is there in evidence of the fact that “In Adam all die.” But “God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” Be sure that you get the thought. Death came through Adam and a resurrection from the dead is offered only through Christ. It is “whosoever believeth in Him” that shall not be permitted to perish, but instead he will be granted eternal life. All men are “in Adam,” but the believer only will be recognized as sustaining that blessed relationship to the Redeemer expressed by the words “in Christ”. Hence we know that no one except a believer can look forward to a resurrection from the dead.

Paul addressed the believers at Thessalonica concerning the resurrection in this language, “But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope, for if we believe that Jesus
died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.” Then there must be some who have no hope of a resurrection, and the hopeless ones must be those who are not asleep in Jesus. Is there a doubt yet lingering in your mind? If so, let the words of the Redeemer Himself remove it. As he journeyed to the grave of Lazarus who had fallen asleep a believer in Him, Jesus Christ uttered those ever to be remembered words, “I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live” (Jno. 11:25). Do you, kind reader, see in these words the hope of a resurrection for the unbelieving? Does not this language show that they are just where Paul found the Ephesians—“without hope and without God in the world”?

Through Jeremiah God foretold the fate awaiting some of those who had no hope. Said He, “In their heat I will make their feasts, and I will make them drunken, that they may rejoice, and sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the Lord,” (Jer. 51:39). Again, “And I will make drunk her (Babylon’s) princes, and her wise men, her captains and her rulers, and her mighty men; and they shall sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the King, whose name is the Lord of hosts” (Jer. 51:57).

The perpetual or never ending sleep of a number of men who were ignorant of the commandments of God is also spoken of by Isaiah. His language is, “O Lord, our God, other lords (rulers) beside Thee have had dominion over us; but by Thee only will we make mention of Thy name. They are dead, they shall not live; they are deceased, they shall not rise; therefore hast thou visited and destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish” (Isa. 26:13,14). Compare with this the same writer’s language in regard to the righteous dead. It reads, “Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust, for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead” (Isa. 26:19). Could such forceful expressions be misunderstood? The unbelieving “shall never see light” (Psa. 49:19), but “Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them,” (Rev. 14:13). Reconciliation then, the only means by which one may obtain a resurrection, is to be found in Christ alone.

When the children of Israel were being led from Egypt by Moses, God said to him, “Thus thou shalt say unto the children of Israel: “In all places where I record my name I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee” (Ex. 20:22,24). This place of meeting was in the tabernacle above the mercy seat which was over-shadowed by the cherubins with out-spread wings” (Ex. 25:22). Away from
this place where His name was recorded, God would not meet with and bless the Israelites. When Christ came, and by His death set aside the law of Moses, He became the bearer of His Father's name. As Paul expressed it, "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them" (II Cor. 5:19).

Since a resurrection is offered only to those who become reconciled to God through Christ, the question that should engage our attention just now is, how may one become so related to Him who is able to destroy death? Paul said, "Jesus Christ hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (II. Tim. 1:10). The gospel, as we have learned, consists of the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ. Then if you would have the hope of resurrection, believe the gospel and be buried with Christ in baptism. When you have thus obtained reconciliation by a union with Him who is the resurrection, in the appointed way, you belong to that class to whom Paul wrote "If we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection (Rom. 6:5).

CHAPTER VI.

"My beloved * * * work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil. 2:12) was Paul's instruction to the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi. These words can but be utterly expressionless to any one who believes that saints in Christ Jesus obtain salvation regardless of what their lives may be after they become the children of God, what think you, kind reader? Did the New Testament writers, guided by a Divine Hand, pen line after line of admonition to the believers everywhere, beseeching them to live pure, upright lives in order to make their "calling and election sure," when their calling and election could not have been otherwise than "sure"? Such confession is not to be found in the Bible. It is heathen tradition that represents the inspired writers pleading with men to avert an impossible doom! They in truth, faithfully proclaimed the teachings of their Master who declared, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 7:21). Such language, kind reader, may be entirely at variance with your present views concerning the Scriptures, but whatever you believe, it would be well to accept Paul's advice to the Thessalonians—"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (I Thess. 5:21).

In Gal. 6:7-9, we read, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that
soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.” How often do we hear this scripture used as the subject of a discourse addressed to those whom the majority of people of today term sinners! But, if you will kindly notice, it is taken from a letter written to the churches of Galatia, and at the beginning of the chapter quoted from those who are thus admonished are called brethren by Paul. Besides, the so-called sinners have never been engaged in “well doing”, and therefore could not be spoken of as growing weary of doing something they have never begun. This sowing is being done by the servants of the Most High, and when the reaping time comes, He who is no respecter of persons (1 Pet. 1:17), will reward each according to his works (Rom. 2:6). “To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, (God will render) eternal life” (Rom. 2:7).

That a believer must live a godly life if he would be saved is also taught in Rom. 8:1. It reads, “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” With these words ringing in your ears, can you say, dear reader, that regardless of conduct, God’s children will be justified? The Galatians were not so taught. Paul said to them, “Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings and such like” (Gal. 5:19-21). Can a believer indulge in such vices and escape condemnation? Hear him who has set forth the works of the flesh make answer, “They which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. “But,” continues he, “the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law” (Gal. 5:21-23). These warnings are expressed in forceful language and should be well heeded by those who would be found worthy. “If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live” (Rom. 8:13) is God’s law, and it is for His children to choose between the two ways of living, knowing that He “with whom is no variableness neither shadow of turning” will bestow life or death according to the deserts of each servant.

Quite the same explanation is made by Peter. To those of like faith he wrote, “Add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful
in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren," he pleaded, "give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (II Pet. 1:5-11).

Paul beautifully likens the probation of believers to a race. Said he, "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible" (I Cor. 9:24,25). According to this language it is absolutely necessary for a believer, like a contestant in a race, to shape his life with but one purpose in mind—to win. Every habit in the life of each that would serve as a drawback must be given up and temperance in all things practiced. Here the likenesses end and the differences begin. In a race but one can win a crown, while Paul said of the believers’ opportunity, "There is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing" (II Tim. 4:8). Those who enter the first give their entire time and thought to their training in order to obtain a corruptible crown; those who enter the second are admonished to present their bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God to obtain a "better and an enduring substance". "Wherefore", said Paul, "we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear" (Heb. 12:28). In the former no one is sure of success; in the latter, "He that doeth the will of God abideth forever" (I Jno. 2:17).

The Psalmist has asked the following timely questions, "Lord, who shall abide in Thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in Thy holy hill?"? The answer is, "He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart" (Psa. 15:1-2). This is altogether fitting. You remember that Jesus Christ "though He were a Son, yet learned His obedience by the things which He suffered; and being made perfect, He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him" (Heb. 5:8,9). To render this obedience one must undergo like trials as did the Lord, because we are told that "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (II Tim. 3:12). But, since Jesus was made perfect through suffering, is it unjust of Him to demand an endurance of the same sufferings of those who would attain the same perfection?
A MESSAGE OF LOVE.

Peter said, "Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps" (I Pet. 2:21). Christ bore the cross and was found worthy of the crown that He shall receive at the time appointed of the Father. Now He would say to those who suffer for His sake, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne" (Rev. 3:21).

With the above declaration before them, kind readers, do you wonder at the zeal displayed by the apostles amidst the fiery trials they encountered? And do you not see how necessary it was for them to go about "confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and (saying) that we must through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God”? They understood that eternal life will be granted only to those who overcome and they did not lack the courage to teach men so both by word and deed.

When the Thessalonians met with persecutions, Timotheus was sent to “establish” them, and to “comfort” them concerning their faith: “That no man should be moved by the afflictions: for”, said Paul, “yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto. For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know. For this cause,” he continued, “when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labor be in vain” (I Thess. 3:3-5).

Surrounded by life’s temptations the Hebrews were thus admonished, “Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith; but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him” (Heb. 10:35-38).

Such warnings and admonitions as have been given are found throughout the Bible, and it is needless to say that their importance cannot be questioned. If you, dear reader, have entered into a covenant relationship with the Redeemer and would enjoy eternal life in His kingdom, make the happy choice that Moses made. “By faith,” it is said, “Moses, when he came to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he hath respect unto the recompence of the reward” (Heb. 11:24-26). Such a choice can but give that peaceful assurance that enabled Paul to say in the late evening of life, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."
Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day” (II Tim. 4:7,8).

CHAPTER VII.

When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory: and before Him shall be gathered all nations; and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand: ‘Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal’ (Matt. 25:31-34, 41-46). Here we have a picture of “all nations” as they stand before the Judge of the earth and receive according to the things done in body, whether they be good or bad. As you behold these two divisions, the one entering into everlasting punishment; the other, into life eternal, do you seem to see both the sinners and the righteous clothed upon with immortality, thus perpetuating wickedness as well as righteousness throughout the ceaseless ages of time? Would not such a belief be contrary to the teachings of the Bible wherein we read, “The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ, our Lord?”

The Thessalonians were taught that God would employ fire as a destructive agency to wreak vengeance upon their persecutors. To them it was written, “It is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you, and to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction, from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power” (II Thess. 1:6-9).

The majority of people overlook the fact that the fire and not the wicked is said to be everlasting. No where in the Bible do we find immortality promised to the unrighteous, and without it no one will be able to withstand the devouring flames with which Christ will purge the earth. Isaiah has made known this fact in the following convincing language, “The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell
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with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?” The answer made is, “He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil; he shall dwell on high: his place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks; bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure. Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off” (Isa. 33:14-17).

We have on record an excellent example of God’s power employed to shield His obedient servants from the destructive effects of fire which the ungodly were powerless to resist. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, three faithful Jews who refused to practice idolatry, were cast into a heated furnace that they might be destroyed by the flames. But when the king who had thus decreed stood by to witness their destruction, he was astonished to see them walking about unharmed by the fire. At his bidding they went forth out of the furnace, “and the princes, governors, and captains, and the king’s counsellors, being gathered together, saw these men, upon whose bodies the fire had no power,” nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them” (Dan. 3:27). Did the wicked ones who cast these men into the furnace have a like experience? “The flames of the fire slew those men.”

In the days of Noah when wickedness was great in the earth, God overflowed the heavens and the earth with water and that wicked world perished. “But,” we are told, “the heavens and the earth, which are now,......are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men” (II Pet. 3:7). Said Peter, “The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness” (II Pet. 3:10,13). Well did the psalmist say, “For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be. But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace” (Psa. 37:10,11). Thus we see that it is God’s purpose to destroy the wicked and leave no place for them to dwell, but unto them that fear his name “shall the Son of righteousness arise with healing in His wings.”

Upon the above promise is founded the believers’ hope which Paul has expressed in these words, “We that are in this tabernacle
do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life” (II Cor. 5:4). We realize that this life is but “a vapor that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away,” and is attended by innumerable pains, sorrows and disappointments resulting from sin. Yet it is not our desire to die, but we long for Christ who is our life (eternal) to appear and change our bodies of humiliation, and fashion them like unto His glorious body. He can say, I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for ever more” (Rev. 1:18), and “we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.”

John, the revelator, beheld the redeemed, an innumerable throng, standing before the throne of God, clothed in white robes and bearing palms in their hands. “These”, he was told, “are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in His temple; and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of water: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes” (Rev. 7:14-17).

Isaiah graphically describes the beauties of the earth when the curse has been removed by the establishment of Christ’s kingdom and the blessings to be enjoyed by those who shall receive it as an inheritance. Said he, “The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God. Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each bay, shall be grass, with reeds and rushes. And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the way-faring men, though fools, shall not err therein. No lion
shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there: and the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away” (Isa. 35).

As you read these wonderful blessings in store for God’s elect, do you wonder that the Christadelphians look forward with joy to the day of the announcement, “Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death; neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain?” We know that with God is the fountain of life and we long to be made partakers of His divine nature. “Hast thou not known?” said Isaiah, “Hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, faileth not, neither is weary?” This cannot be said of mortal man, but we have this assurance, “They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint” (Isa. 40:31).

“Like the glorious light of day,
Like the bright sun in his way,
Like a life without a sorrow,
Like a never fading tree—
So shall life immortal be.

“Like a smoothly flowing river,
Flowing on and stopping never;
Like a sure foundation stone,
Like a man whose work is done
Like the ever rolling sea—
So shall life immortal be.

“Like the diamond sparkling bright,
Sending forth its gleams of light,
Like a clear and cloudless morning
In the east, the sky adorning
Like the stars in heaven we see—
So shall life immortal be.

“Like the treasured golden grain,
Like the sunshine after rain;
Like a royal diadem,
Like the New Jerusalem
Like a lovely bride to be
Clad in immortality.
"Like the palace of a king,
Like a never-failing spring,
Like the gold tried in the fire
Like the ones that never tire,
Like the air when pure and free—
So shall life immortal be."

"Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our
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