

*“All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me.”*

John 6. 37

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Why I do NOT believe in the  
**FINAL SALVATION OF  
ALL MEN**

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- Booklet V -

*“He that believeth on the Son hath **everlasting** life:  
and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life;  
but the wrath of God **abideth** on him.”* John 3. 36

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Order forms and further literature on this deeply important subject,  
gladly sent to exercised believers for personal perusal,  
and passing on to God’s glory, as He enables.

# WHY I DO NOT BELIEVE IN THE FINAL SALVATION OF ALL MEN.

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THESE lines are written to help those who humbly acknowledge the ruin of man, and a wondrous salvation by free grace, through the blood of the Lord Jesus, and who have been made willing to rest on the complete inspiration and decisive authority of the Holy Scriptures. If any do not recognize and feel that man is, by nature, a child of wrath, if the Scripture is to them only a book with some good thoughts, we would speak with *them* first as to their own personal need of the Lord Jesus, as a personal Saviour. May He be glorified in the salvation of some even now! *Then* the understanding of God's ways can begin!

We do not believe in the final salvation of all men because—

(1). Scripture does *not* assert this,† but the passages usually brought forward have a *Scriptural* limitation. They must be read in *their context*, etc : for example :—“The times of restitution of all things, *which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets.*” We turn to the prophets and find :—“From one sabbath to another shall all flesh come to worship before Me” immediately followed by “The carcasses of the men that have transgressed against Me”: (Isa. 66. 24).

In like manner read Isa. 25. 6-8 *with the added 26th chapter*, and its judgments. Again the blessing of Isa. 32. 15 does not say a word about the removal of judgment for those dead, and in hell. (Note too Millennial prophecies—such as “Every one that is left,” Zech. 14. 16 : the “all’s” of such Psalms as 67 do not hint resurrection).

(2). Scripture definitely emphasizes an eternal punishment for some from mankind :—

“These shall go away into everlasting punishment” Matt. 25. 46.

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† God does not wish His people to be confused (John 14 . 2). His plan is *clear* in Scripture. Or if there is a veiling, we know something of its nature (1 John 3. 2), in such momentous questions as to the future.

"He shall be tormented . . . the smoke of *their torment* ascendeth up for ever and ever ; and they have no rest" Rev. 14. 10, 11, cf. 20. 10 (There is no hint of resurrection from the second death in 20. 14, 15\*).

(3). Universalism would deny the Divine descriptions of the work of Christ—

"All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me" John 6. 37. In John 17. 9 the world is contrasted with those given to Him.

(4). Consequently universalism would nullify the work of Christ, since it would involve a salvation apart from being given to Him. Those who teach a *temporary bearing of wrath* followed by an entrance into glory, may assert they believe that it is because of Christ's work any are saved, but in such a case, they not only widen Christ's work, but make it *ineffective* to save a man from wrath. If many a man must bear some penal wrath, the work of Christ is not satisfactory !

(5). The sample nation—Israel—has a promise of universal salvation (Rom. 11. 25, cf. Ezek. 37†) which is definitely explained as to its extent, in accord with Divine principles of language :

(a) "They are not all Israel who are of Israel"—Romans 9. 6, observe 10. 21 with 11. 1, 7, 10.

(b) "I will pardon them whom I reserve"—Jer. 50. 20.

(c) "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the Name of the Lord : the *remnant* of Israel shall not do iniquity"—Zeph. 3. 12, 13.

(d) "I will bring the third part through the fire"—Zech. 13. 9.

Very definite is the testimony of Rom. 9. 27-29.

(6). One striking example is *Divinely* emphasized to show that "*all*" cannot mean "all without exception" but (as commonly)

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\* Doubtless some will acknowledge this and say "Precisely so, this proves annihilation." But the Holy Spirit definitely shows that life is not mere existence and death is not annihilation. If we understand God's sentences as we please we shall make havoc of Scripture. His wrath abides.

† It has been thought by some that this chapter prophesies universal blessing *via* resurrection. But 'tis the resurrection of the nation : the dry bones speak (verse 11), they are *persons* on the earth feeling their need, not the physical bones of past ages. God Himself explains this, hence we are leaving literalism if we reject His key.

"all without distinction" (of race, age, condition, &c): we allude to  
"It had been good for that man if he had not been born"  
Matt. 26. 24.—

The Holy Spirit *repeats* this in Mark 14. 21. If Judas were finally saved, he would be a unique trophy of grace (1 Tim. 1. 15, Luke 7. 42, 43), and it would, indeed, have been good to have been born. *Otherwise*, if the passage simply asserted a dark background before salvation, it would not have been good for any of us to have been born, for *our* sins brought judgment to Christ.

(7). Scripture nowhere suggests a remedial fire, or a good effect: on the contrary the words are often *repeated*:—

"There shall be weeping and GNASHING of teeth." Matt. 8. 12, 13, 42, 50, 22. 13, 24. 51, 25. 30, Luke 13. 28. There is no sign of repentance *over sin* in Luke 16, nor in Rev. 20. 10. The theory of remedial fire *denies* the rooted **depravity** of man (Gen. 6. 5).

(8). Any who have difficulties as to the nature of punishment, because of the character of God, forget—

(a) The limitations of human knowledge and wisdom.

(b) The intense wickedness of sin.

(c) The fact that arguments such as "I should not do this" would *necessarily question* God's present **toleration** of evil in the world, and attack His governmental providence, with the many sorrows around. Thus the objection is fundamentally "unchristian," though this may not be realized.

(9). The words of Isaiah 24. 21, 22 do not declare a deliverance from wrath. The same word is rendered "punish" in 21 and "visited" in 22. They are visited as Babylon in Jer. 50. 31. There is not a word of escape.

(10). The testimony of 1 Pet. 3. 20, in the light of 1 Pet. 1. 11, 2 Pet. 2. 5 and Gen. 6. 3, is that Christ through Noah warned the ungodly "When once the longsuffering of God waited, *in the days of Noah*." Men rejected and "the end of all *flesh*" came, and they became *spirits in prison*, for God must punish sin.\*

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\* The preaching was not after death, any more than the *contrasted* preaching of 4. 6, where we have the gospel declared to those now dead, who had been judged *according to man* (i.e. as persecuted *believers*). Hence 1 Peter 3 asserts the condition of these at the time of the apostle's writing, and *denies* non-existence, &c.

(11). Varied objections raised show a failure to grasp the Divine language, e.g. some have inferred that as "cities" are mentioned in Jude 7 the temporary fire on the buildings is called eternal. But did the buildings go after strange flesh? Again, 1 Cor. 15 is brought forward, but this passage explains its application to believers:—apparently there is no limitation in verses 42-44, but John 5. 29 ("judgment") makes clear that the resurrection of the ungodly is not in glory, and the destruction of death is not its annihilation (26 see 25: the word in 26 involves an entire restraint from activity, *not* a removal from existence: death still exists! \*).

Thus the deeply solemn words ring out, "It is appointed unto men once to die, but *after this* the judgment" (Heb. 9. 27), and again, "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but *the wrath of God abideth on him*" (John 3. 36), that we may be exercised in heart, and tell of the One Saviour for guilty sinners *now*. If we would be in the line of God's will we shall say, with intense concern "Behold, NOW is the acceptable time: behold, NOW is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. 6. 2).

(12). Whereas in Col. 1. 20 we have a glorious reconciling, there is a definite *contrast* in Phil. 2. 10. Things "under the earth" are *not* mentioned as to reconciliation (so in Eph. 1. 10—note 1. 14—has the same limitation). The *omission* is Divinely appointed, and we call to mind the solemn message of Rev. 22. 14. Oh that some may be snatched from a false hope, and caused to rest on the work of the Lord Jesus even His finished work, to the praise of the glory of the grace of God.

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\* Verse 28 "That God may be All in All" asserts the glory of our Triune God, when the Son shall have *crowned* a series of acts of subjection by delivering up the covenant-appointed Kingdom as the reward associated with His covenant-work, and all its precious humiliation. Hence the words have nothing to do with Pantheism, or with universal restoration. It is plain that similar expressions, in *quite* a different context, refer to the privileges of the redeemed (e.g. Col. 3. 11): they do *not* assert or hint that men will be brought from hell to become members of Christ.

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God does not meet a sinner HALF-WAY, but He has come to sinners the WHOLE WAY, to bring them, moreover, THE WHOLE WAY into His presence.

## **Some Broken Props for Universalism.**

**T**HE passage regarding the "spirits in prison" in 1 Peter 3 is often misused to preach that Christ went to the Antediluvians when they were in Hades, to proclaim deliverance after death. The Scripture says nothing like to this, and it is equally contrary to all other Scriptures. Yet the mistake is so deeply rooted that sometimes the words of the Holy Spirit in the next chapter, "For this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead" (1 Peter 4. 6), are entirely misinterpreted, as if they confirmed the same error. A little humble, prayerful, earnest pondering, of the two passages together, will probably convince most dear children of God how contrary to the words Divinely used is this sad and dangerous theory.

Shall we take 1 Peter 4. first? When was the Gospel preached to these persons? The passage itself contains God's answer. Was it not that they might be judged in the flesh? † Then this preaching preceded their physical death. Indeed, their judgment in men's law courts was because of this preaching. Evidently then they became martyrs for Christ. Thus we have dead believers, who were nevertheless living according to God when Peter wrote the epistle. They were not under His judgment, but restfully waiting, (while they lived in the spirit), a share in the glory of the Lord and resurrection. No other interpretation, it is evident, will meet the crucial word "That." The preaching was before the judgment in a human law court. This verse therefore, has nothing to do with the ungodly dead.

The context entirely agrees. In verse 4 we have rejected believers, and their trials are seen again in verse 12, fiery trials. They are partakers of Christ's sufferings, ‡ i.e., death at the hands of men (13). And the judgment is man's judgment now (verse 17). A parallel passage illustrates. New believers are viewed in 1 Corinthians 15. 29 as being baptized to take the place of the dead ones who had suffered for their witness. The church was meant to be a suffering church (Rev. 12. 11). In the light of Revelation 20. 4 we see how Christendom has missed the mark.

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† It is no more "men in the flesh" than "God in the Spirit"; the Greek links "in the flesh" and "in the Spirit" with the verbs "judge" and "live."

‡ Contrast "the suffering (singular) of the death" (Heb. 2. 9); atonement under the hand of God.

"But," someone may ask, "why are they called the dead, if they were not dead when the Gospel was preached to them?" The question is important, and the answer is simple. They were dead at the time of writing, and are thus described. The stress on their death for Christ's sake is important. If I say, "King George was born in 1865" will anyone assert I am inaccurate, because he was not "King" but only "Prince" then? But the Holy Spirit's own language is conclusive beyond English. I call to mind a translation proposing "Abram" in Romans 4. 3, but, though it speaks of a time prior to Genesis 17, the Scripture definitely says "Abraham." Genesis 12. 8 is **before** Genesis 28. 19, but it is written "He pitched his tent, having **Bethel** on the west."§ Hence the word "that" in 1 Peter 4. 6 can maintain its rightful meaning. And now we can turn to 1 Peter 3. There seems to be throughout a designed contrast:—

1. The word "preach" is different, and omits the term "gospel," and emphasizes "heralding"; there is no thought of acceptance of the message only.
2. "Spirits" are here also, but they are seen in prison, not as "living according to God."
3. There is nothing of man's judgment and rejection; 'tis God's display of holy anger.

There is one definite time-mark, only one, which is repeated,\*\* (a) "once," (b) "when," (c) "in the days of Noah." Why is there no other time-mark? (note *ὅτε* in the Greek). Is not this the time before us? And "went" is an appropriate word for the "old world" as Peter describes it (2 Peter 2. 5). The noun from the verb used for preaching is employed for Noah in the same verse (and the same writer was inspired to emphasize the Spirit of Christ in Old Testament servants of God, (1 Peter 1. 11). The very next Greek word after "preached" is "disobedient ones," and the next two words are "once when." There is no hint of any other preaching. The ungodly rejected,

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§ A somewhat striking expression is "Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it" where the fulfilment of God's purpose is viewed as if reached before He had caused the church to exist, by His precious atonement.

\*\* "Which sometimes were disobedient" looks like a fresh sentence, but only in the English. "Disobedient" is in the Greek dative; Christ preached to disobedient ones.



and they remained spirits in prison when the epistle was written, a solemn reminder of judgment experienced and felt. Consciousness is a reality.

And thus these two chapters of Scripture give a twofold witness. Disobedient ones rejected and fell under God's judgment, and were, long after, still in God's prison. Believing ones fell under man's judgment, but they were viewed by Him as those free from judgment, through His beloved Son, and they were truly living, away from the judgment upon sin (Rom. 6. 23). This twofold teaching is to stir up God's beloved people to continue witnessing, even amid rejection. The path may be one of suffering, but how blessedly different to suffer according to the will of God (1 Peter 4. 19), in judgment that is now, than to be under God's wrath. Where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?\* In prison now, and far off "in that Day," and then in unchanging judgment! How earnest should we be, to tell of God's precious Gospel by the blood of His beloved Son, while the long-suffering of God waits, and "now is the day of salvation."

\* Leaflet gladly sent.

## **Eternal Punishment** - *and the error of the "annihilation" of the lost*

Three brief proofs are ample.

1.—The word that describes the punishment—eternal—also describes God: the "everlasting God", the "King eternal": if the lost die finally, so does God.

2.—Our Lord discloses the equal eternity of both the saved and the lost. "These shall go away into *eternal* punishment; but the righteous into *eternal* life" (Matt. 25. 46). If the punishment of the lost is temporary, so is the life of the redeemed: on the contrary, if the "eternal life", the "eternal salvation", the "eternal glory", be endless, so is the "eternal punishment".

3.—The punishment itself is described as eternal. "Who shall suffer punishment, even *eternal* destruction from the face of the Lord" (2 Thess. 1. 9). That is, the *destruction* is unending, not instantaneous: their destruction begins in death (Matt. 10. 28), but they rise for judgment, and the destruction is deathless, "where *their* worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched" (Mark 9. 48). To preserve the worm and the fire millions of years after the annihilation of the lost would be absurd. "The smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever" (Rev. 14. 11).

# The “All’s” of Scripture.

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**C**HILDREN of God, graciously made willing for all His revealed will, can indeed marvel at His love, and, owning themselves deserving of eternal punishment, yet beholding the infinite grace that has made them members of Christ for ever, may well rejoice to tell the glorious gospel of Christ. They see something of the awfulness of sin, and humbly, reverently, and solemnly, speak of that which God will do in judgment. A brusque manner, a mechanical accuracy, a cold indifference, a seeming lightness when dealing with eternal punishment,—how unholy are such characteristics, and how our hearts long to have fuller likeness to Christ in the handling of His truth.

Undoubtedly there will be saved a **great** number whom no man can number. Election is **not** a plan to save two or three. But universalism is not found in Scripture, and to declare it is to misrepresent God, and to delude men. We dare not speak or act or pray against the words of God: nor can we find in the new life, and its desires, a rebellion against Him, but only a holy confidence in His perfect purpose. It is the flesh that rises up against God’s judgment. The flesh may be disguised as universal love, but it is a self-assertiveness, that underestimates sin, and undervalues the precious work of the Son of God. As soon as our “feelings” take the place of God’s own revelation, we have need to examine our ways very earnestly.

Many who, by grace, accept Scripture readily and loyally, find their need for more prayerful study of the Holy Spirit’s words “all” and “every.” And the following thoughts may help them. When we read in the beginning

of Scripture, "I have given you **every** herb bearing seed"—the same word as "all"—we realize that God refers to **every kind** of herb. When we come to the words near the opening of the later Scriptures, "He was troubled and all Jerusalem with him," and again, "There went out to him . . . all Judea," we realize at once that there was not an untroubled part of Jerusalem, and that all districts of Judea were represented. And thus one could go through the concordance. We reject the thought that expressions are mere hyperbole. The Holy Spirit uses the word rightly. The theory that "all" necessarily means "without exception" is a fiction: it signifies the completeness of that of which the **context** speaks. To explain a word without its context is to deny the full inspiration of Scripture. Who would object to the verse "God is a Spirit," because we read Christ cast out the spirits with His word," or oppose the expression "God is light," because it is written "I form the light," and "Thou hast prepared the light"? Indeed, God Himself has warned us against a universalizing of the word "All"—"When He saith, all things are put under Him, it is manifest that **He is excepted**, Which did put all things under Him" (1 Cor. 15. 27). This is the more remarkable, because the context there has been **misused** to spread universalism, and further, because **we** should have naturally said "**Superfluous**, when the word 'things' is added," ignoring the **Greek** idiom of verse 28 ("All things in all"). In like manner, when we find references to "all" as sinners, we never include the Lord Jesus. Universalism is based on a fictitious theory that a signification of a word in one context must be the same in every other. This is more evidently erroneous when a term is adjectival or pronominal, as the word "all."

And it may help believers to realize a related thought. If I say "I see you," I do not mean "your life"—I see your face. If it be said, "The English rule that country," not every Englishman is involved; or again, "The nation was steeped in iniquity" would not imply that there were no believers. Almost all words are used to describe the whole or a part or all sections of the whole, according to the context. "All nations" are blessed in Abraham's seed, i.e., representatives of all nations, as it is written, "**out of every** kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation" (Rev. 5. 9). We must compare Scripture passage with Scripture passage, and find, after prayerful meditation, the Holy Spirit's dictionary and commentary, if I may so express it, in the Scriptures themselves. It is easy to hurry, and to have no time for humble thought, in the presence of God. Hence the spread of many saddening misinterpretations, often fascinating to the flesh. The meek are those whom God guides in judgment, and if we have not time to wait, and ponder His precious words, it is manifestly our own sinfulness that leads to misunderstanding. God is still graciously ready and willing to teach. Are we ready to be teachable?

Our beloved Lord went about the **whole** of Galilee, healing **all manner of** sickness (the usual word for "all") and they brought unto Him **all** sick people, i.e., all manner of sick people, and no disease baffled Him. The teaching is clear and we are praiseful (Matt. 4. 23, 24). So in 8. 16, the "all" that were brought to Him were healed, and He gave His disciples power over "all manner of sickness" (10. 1). Chapter 10. 22 does not signify that every individual would hate God's people: but **all manner** of men have showed their enmity (cf. 24, 9, all nations, and John 15. 19, the world). Matthew

17. 11 indicates "**all manner of things.**" Thus we have no doubt as to the Holy Spirit's usage of the word **elsewhere**. Why should we alter it in this connexion?

Many of the most "universal" expressions are employed of Israel—"all Israel shall be saved." It is therefore the more striking that the Holy Spirit emphasizes "**The remnant shall return, even the remnant of Jacob, unto the mighty God**" (Isa. 10. 21), and again, "I will pardon them whom I reserve" (Jer. 50. 20, Amos 9. 10). It is of this nation, too, that the Lord marks out one very definitely for eternal judgment (Matt. 26. 24, John 17. 12), and probably Antichrist is of Israel (Ps. 50. 16-21, Dan. 11. 37).

The "all" of Roman 3. 23 is definitely and grammatically linked with "being justified freely," and though others have sinned, only those believing into Christ are **mentioned** in this passage. Nor is it otherwise in 1 Corinthians 15 .22, only the death in Adam of those who become children of God is **there** before us. "As in Adam all die" is universally true, but 1 Corinthians 15 does not deal with the ungodly in this connexion. "The dead" of verse 42 are not the unsaved dead, no limiting **word** is needed, the **context** gives the limitation. There is not a syllable about the resurrection of judgment (John 5. 29).

To read Acts 3.21 without the descriptive words "**which God hath spoken** by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began," is to alter what He has written. And so is it throughout. Prayerfully read the context, and the answer will be graciously given again and again. We observe the words of Psalm 91.11 "in all thy ways," and notice that they are missing in the record of Satan's quotation (Luke 4. 10). Thus we not only see the marvellous unveiling of the difference between faith and presumption, but also the Holy Spirit's witness

against omitting certain words from a verse, and then misusing it. As to no other subject is this gracious warning more needed than with respect to the error of universalism. And let an earnest exhortation be added against putting natural inclinations and feelings in the place of *God's words*. His arrangements in past history and present providence are a holy test for simple faith. The heart that says, "I would not do thus" as to the future will soon say, unless restrained by mercy, "I would not have done this in the past," or act thus in the present. But God is wiser than we are, infinitely wiser, and self's standard is altogether lower than His (Isa. 55. 8, 9). The contrast with infidelity is full faith, and there is no logical resting place in between.

We waited for any difficulties, and proposed an article dealing with verses sent by any earnest enquiring children of God, ere reprinting this. The fact that such were not sent, nor opposition raised by those who set aside God's truth, may indicate that He has graciously helped some of His own, and remind us that the objections of the natural man will not stand the test of the Scriptures. But we would reiterate glad willingness to render assistance to His beloved people, as He graciously enables us. How fully are we all dependent on Himself.

Some may feel one hesitation still. If the word "all" is thus explained, what about "all" in such verses as Colossians 1. 16, and Hebrews 1. 3, or again in Philippians 4. 19? The heart may again find its resting place in the words of the Holy Spirit. **There is no limiting context.** So in 1 Corinthians 15. 51, the "we" gives the only restriction. The word is in the singular in John 6. 37, and there is nothing to explain EXCEPT **"that the Father giveth."** So in Romans 10. 12, "That call upon Him" is the Holy Spirit's limitation: there is none else. Our hearts may well rejoice and be glad. Thus we can cast **"all our care"** (1 Pet; 5. 7) upon the Lord, for He is "the God of **all** grace" (verse 10), and He has given us **all** things that pertain to life and godliness (2 Pet.

1. 3), nor will He fail. The important point for each believer is this:—Dictionaries do not decide the meaning of a word but register it: the Holy Spirit's own use of words must be found by comparing Scripture with Scripture (1 Cor. 2. 13), prayerfully, humbly, quietly. Then will Divine light and blessing be granted, and those who have said, "Who shall roll us away the stone?" will look and see the stone has been rolled away—to the praise of the glory of God's grace.

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## The Death of Christ, and Judgment.

THE grace of God shines out in the death of the Lord Jesus. What wondrous love that **He** should be given up by God the Father for **undeserving** sinners. And the love was equally His own (Gal. 2. 20). But we not only see grace; righteousness is displayed, for grace reigns through righteousness (Rom. 5. 21). The glory of God's truthfulness is manifest. Not one sin can be excused. Every claim of His holy law must be met. It is not, "Take thy bill, and **sit** down quickly, and write fifty," but provision is made for the full payment of the great debt, that salvation may be entirely free. Hence we are made to **sit** in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. This is the resting place of a redeemed soul, the joy of a believing heart, the glad declaration of one who has tasted that the Lord is gracious. And the Holy Spirit ever leads to the contemplation of the finished work of the Lord Jesus, with its manifold blessings in the experience of a Christian. But righteousness is not only the magnifying of law, it is the display of justice which, outside Christ, would be a crushing weight. And if the warnings of Scripture as to future wrath are very searching, is it not clear that nothing is more terrifying to the sinner than the death of Christ,—**unless he finds his hope there?**

The Lord Jesus was personally sinless, yet the waves of wrath broke upon Him when He took the place of sinners. What hope can there be for the **guilty** one? If God would not pass over sin when it was reckoned to the Righteous One, all hope of extenuation is gone, completely gone. Judgment is holy and severe. The alternative is—Christ, or wrath. If I have Him as my Saviour, there is peace; if I have Him not, there is no peace.

The death of Christ is the evidence that judgment is penal, **not corrective**. How could He have taken **corrective** chastisement? **That** concerns the **condition** of the one enduring it. He took the **position** of the sinner. His substitutionary work is the death blow to all **theories of men**. “My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?” reveals the doom of those who believe not into Him. The ark met the flood for Noah, but those outside the ark met the flood for themselves. The type was a solemn witness.

And, let it be remembered, death is not annihilation, nor is the sinner's death an escape from wrath. When the Lord Jesus had met the sword, it was needful that His obedience should be rewarded, but it is contrastedly needful that the guilty one should be left in judgment. Nor has the sinner ever finished what Christ finished—the full realization of God's purpose and entire acquiescence therein are essential to the bearing of the law's sentence. Hence the death of Christ should terrify the sinner who does not believe. For it holds out no hope of any compromise, but it **reveals a sure and certain hope** to the heart-broken sinner who believes. “Payment God will not twice demand,” and so “we have peace with God.”

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The Son of man indeed goeth, as it is written of Him:  
but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed!  
**good were it for that man if he had never been born.**

Mark 14.21

And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed:  
so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can  
they pass to us, that would come from thence. Luke 16.26



# WHY I DO NOT BELIEVE IN THAT WHICH HAS BEEN CALLED “CONDITIONAL IMMORTALITY.”\*

1. Because it weakens the *Divine* words of warning in such passages as Matt. 25. 46 and Rev. 14. 11, and suggests throughout a human mode of interpretation, instead of “comparing spiritual things with spiritual.”

“These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.”

“The smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever.”

2. Because it *modifies* the Scriptural meaning of many Scripture terms, such as “life,” “death,” “destroyed,” and finds no word from GOD which can be interpreted to prove its contentions, without ignoring other Scriptures. “He that hath the Son hath life”—hath *more than* existence (1 John 5. 12). Sinners are dead *now* (Eph. 2. 1), and *the very word “destroyed”* is used of such (Matt. 10. 6) (“Lost”). That is to say, destruction is from God’s *standpoint*,† a removal from Him, *not* annihilation. Hence we read :—

“Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction *from the presence of the Lord*” (2 Thess. 1. 9, cf. Gen. 6. 17 § “*from under heaven*,” and Rev. 22. 15 “*without are dogs*” cf. Ps. 83. 17, 18 (“*men*” in italics, “that they may know”).

3. Because it assumes that fire will annihilate, whereas, if Scripture refers to persons in the fire of judgment, it refers to *their conscious existence*.

“And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments . . . I am tormented in this flame . . . Lest they also come into this place of *torment*” (Luke 16. 23, 24, 28). (No suggestion of any change, or expectancy of deliverance by non-existence).

“The Lake of fire and brimstone, (where the beast and false prophet are) and *they* shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever,” Rev. 20. 10. Note Jer. 51. 58.

The words “weeping and gnashing of teeth”—SEVEN TIMES—have the same unchanging force : they imply the REVERSE of annihilation.

4. Because it would involve unwarranted *release* from punishment by means of non-existence. Inasmuch as the advocates of this theory say, “Death is annihilation” and death is *the wages of sin*, the punishment-climax, yea, the very punishment itself

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\* A *brief* epitome, by God’s grace. Much more could be said. Any *concerned* are welcome to write. A *positive* statement of truth is partly included, but let there be a *fuller* realization of the grace of God as a corrective for all error. *Truth* is so important, and one longs that it may *affect* the lives of writer and readers together. (Obtainable as a reprint, the Lord enabling).

† How much could be said on the importance of this standpoint. What is forgiveness? ’Tis literally, “a sending away of sins.” Away from where? Those who were far off are made nigh. Far off from Whom? The word “offering” is “Korban” or coming nigh. Coming nigh to Whom? What is peace? Peace with God. Every part of Scripture must be realised from God’s standpoint. § Note Deut. 32. 20.

would have become a great deliverance ! \*

5. Because if "life" is only "existence," and man is not *created* to exist after death, EITHER punishment is NOT according to works (Rev. 20. 12), OR if men are Divinely sustained in an age-enduring existence for this punishment to fall on them, this age-enduring existence is given them for such an object. But "age enduring" is, alas, given as the explanation of "eternal," and life is said to be existence. Hence this would imply *they* had "eternal life": so sadly would the promise of God be turned aside, if this interpretation were recognized. (1 Cor. 15. 13-19 illustrates this mode of setting forth the terrible consequences of false doctrine).

6. Because if "death" means non-existence, and Christ bore the punishment of His people, this theory would seem to set forth His annihilation awhile, at least as to His perfect human nature.† Such a thought is without Scripture warrant, and surely repulsive to a thoughtful, unbiassed believer, who implicitly believes Psalm 16. 10, 11.

7. Because inasmuch as—

"There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth"

(Matt. 8. 12, 13. 42, 50, 22. 13, 24. 51, 25. 30),—

an erroneous interpretation would leave the *last* sin as a stepping stone to release: it would thus be, in a Scriptural sense, *unpunished*, and the righteousness of God unvindicated.

Consequently "conditional immortality" (as men use the term) is without a Scripture foundation, being built on the assumption that God annihilates a man, and that the fire of punishment removes existence, being subversive of the judgment of God on every sin, and implying a change of action on God's part. We say, "as men use the term," for the *English* word "immortality" is Scripturally used to set forth the glory of God (1 Tim. 6. 16), and the blessing of His people (1 Cor. 15. 53, 54). God's expression is "*deathlessness*." And the word used in 2 Tim. 1. 10 is "*incorruption*."

Hence "conditional immortality" makes headway through a misuse of terms. It *implies* that others believe in "unconditional

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\* In this connection it is solemn to see that a day will come when men shall "seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them" (Rev. 9. 6). This illustrates the condition of the ungodly after this life, and that annihilation would be the reverse of punishment.

† But we may be asked, "Did He take eternal punishment?"—and would reply:—

(a) Scripturally the word "death" does not state the length of the effect, *other words do*.

(b) When Christ died, He took *wrath*, but, *having righteousness*, He must be raised, whereas the ungodly continue in *their condition* without release. Nor can we forget that God appoints a *sacrificial* equivalent. If men *force their* idea of a parallel, He bore punishment only *before*, and by, physical death. But they acknowledge judgment *after*, and thus show the defect of *their own* reasoning.

incorruption or deathlessness," but this is quite wrong. We acknowledge the *death* of the ungodly (Rom. 6. 23), but the Holy Spirit, Who uses *death* for their present *existence*, does not make death the synonym of *non-existence*.

We deny this sad theory, and its erroneous use of Divine words. Weigh, in the balances of the sanctuary, a usual argument: "God only has immortality"—"Therefore man is not immortal."\* **WHAT DOES THIS PROVE?** *Nothing* as to annihilation. It asserts the **DEATH** of the sinner. We have never opposed that solemn fact. Alas, many dear children of God have helped the error by speaking vaguely of "the immortality of the soul," and of the sinner's "immortal soul." But exactness is necessary. No Scripture warrants the use of a word (which in Scripture implies *glory* and an unchanged condition of blessing), with regard to the unsaved. How many young believers have been led astray thus. Some one has spoken to them of "the immortal soul" and added, "Scripture teaches that man is mortal." They have felt shaken as to the *truth*, whereas they should only have been shaken as to the *wrong* use of words by Christendom.† If the answer had been given, "Yes, immortality in Scripture is only used of *blessing*, and man is naturally *away from the Lord*, hence I never speak of 'man's immortal soul,'" the objector would have been unable to answer from Scripture. The "conditionalist" is arguing from a *human misuse of words*, but he also has *his* misuse, as we have seen in connexion with the word "death."

May our gracious God grant to us a loving and humble sense of His so great salvation, and a willingness for all His will. How often we have all found ourselves led astray by wishes, and dear readers, who have, alas, believed the error, earnestly opposed in these pages, are tenderly asked to ponder the question—"Has a *wish* any power in deciding against eternal punishment?" Any attempt to bring God to our level, and to suggest *parallels* between our actions and His, must fall short. If we say, "I should not do this," or "God could not thus punish," we are exalting a natural idea of what should be, unmindful of the fact that as to many things which God *has* done and which God *allows*, men would say, "I should not do this." Till we are sufficiently reverent to leave such a mode of argument altogether, we cannot

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\* Re-read notes above as to the *real* meaning of "immortal." It suggests a condition of glory! Plainly man is NOT in a condition of glory.

† It will be prayerfully noticed by God's people we do not speak of man as possessing "an *immortal spirit*" any more than "an *immortal soul*." The tri-partite nature of man is asserted of believers (1 Thess. 5. 23 see John 3. 6), but the unsaved are described as "body and soul" (Matt. 10. 28) or as "flesh and spirit" (note Gen. 6. 17, "flesh wherein is the spirit of life"). But this stress on the precious *gift* of that which is born of the Spirit does not in any way help the theory that man's soul is annihilated: the continued existence of body and soul in hell is a solemn fact, and the very chapter before us (Matt 10) uses the same word in verses 6, 28, ("lost," "destroyed") annihilation cannot be implied in verse 6, but separation from God is emphasized: cf. the deeply solemn words of Rev. 22. 11-15.

learn His mind. "The *meek* will He guide in judgment ; and the meek will He teach His way " (Ps. 25. 9). Let us rest on the one salvation from "everlasting punishment" (Matt. 25. 46), and dread any doctrine of men, which puts aside the powerful warning which God has so graciously used to draw many lost sinners to feel their need ; and then, as they view Christ's work for such,—He has caused them to rejoice in the gift of "eternal life," and to make known His wondrous love to those who deserved nothing.

8. Because the very attack of Satan on God's warning is continued by this sad error. This is often quite overlooked. Remarkably, "conditionalists" have claimed Gen. 3. 4. But Satan's promise was "life" not "existence." Many say that if we teach "eternal existence" we perpetuate the devil's doctrine. Nay, was his doctrine eternal suffering? Moreover, the Lord God's testimony was, "*In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*" Those who set forth annihilation deny Christ's word, and say, "Adam did not *die in that day* : for death means to them non-existence. In other words, they, not we, seem to be perpetuating the devil's misuse of God's holy warning.

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### **"Christ . . Our Life" Col.3. 4.**

**M**ANY, alas, confuse existence and life. Our beloved and exalted LORD JESUS is not, by any means, to be described as "our existence." He is "our Life," so that if our earthly existence be taken away, our real and eternal life remains, because we are in Him! Wondrous thought, that our eternal life is as sure as His, for it is *HIS*! Because He lives, we shall live also. It is impossible for one in CHRIST JESUS to come under the judgment of wrath. The whole question of law has been settled. A perfect righteousness has been righteously granted, and our life is quite distinct from that merely earthly career which once was ours. May each believing heart rejoice in such grace, and make manifest the heavenliness of disposition which befits those who are born from above.