

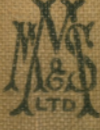
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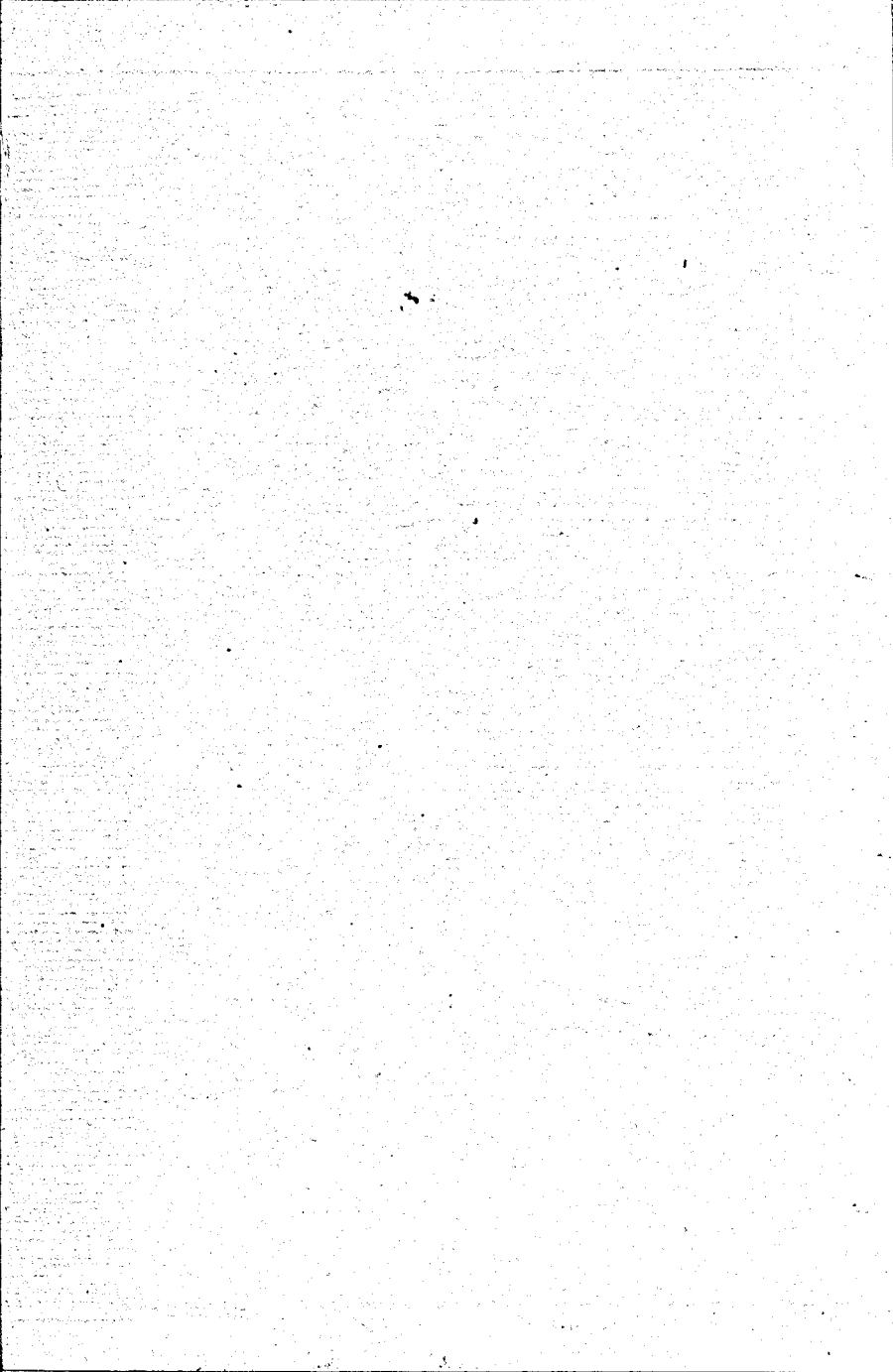
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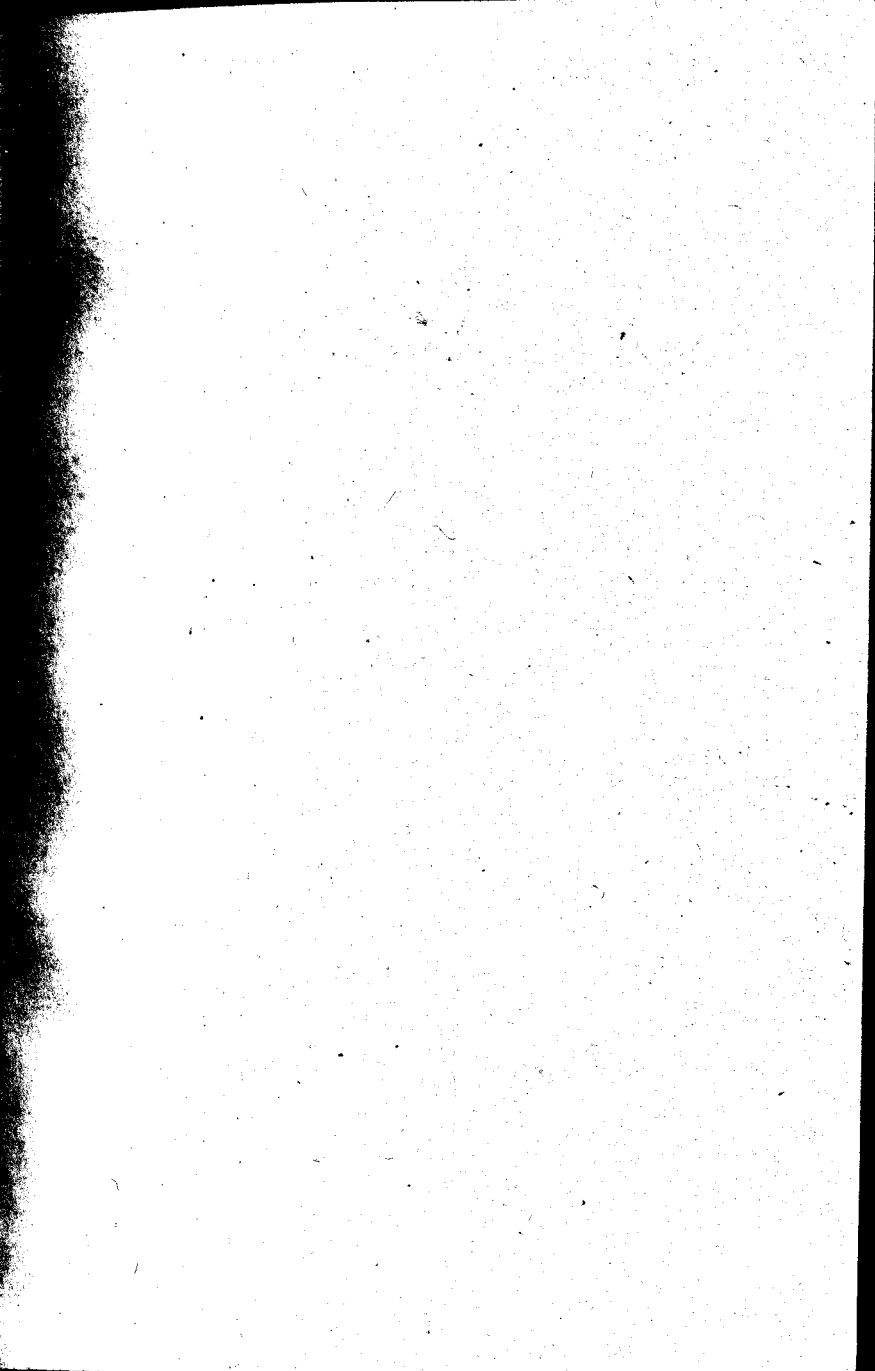
GOD'S HELL

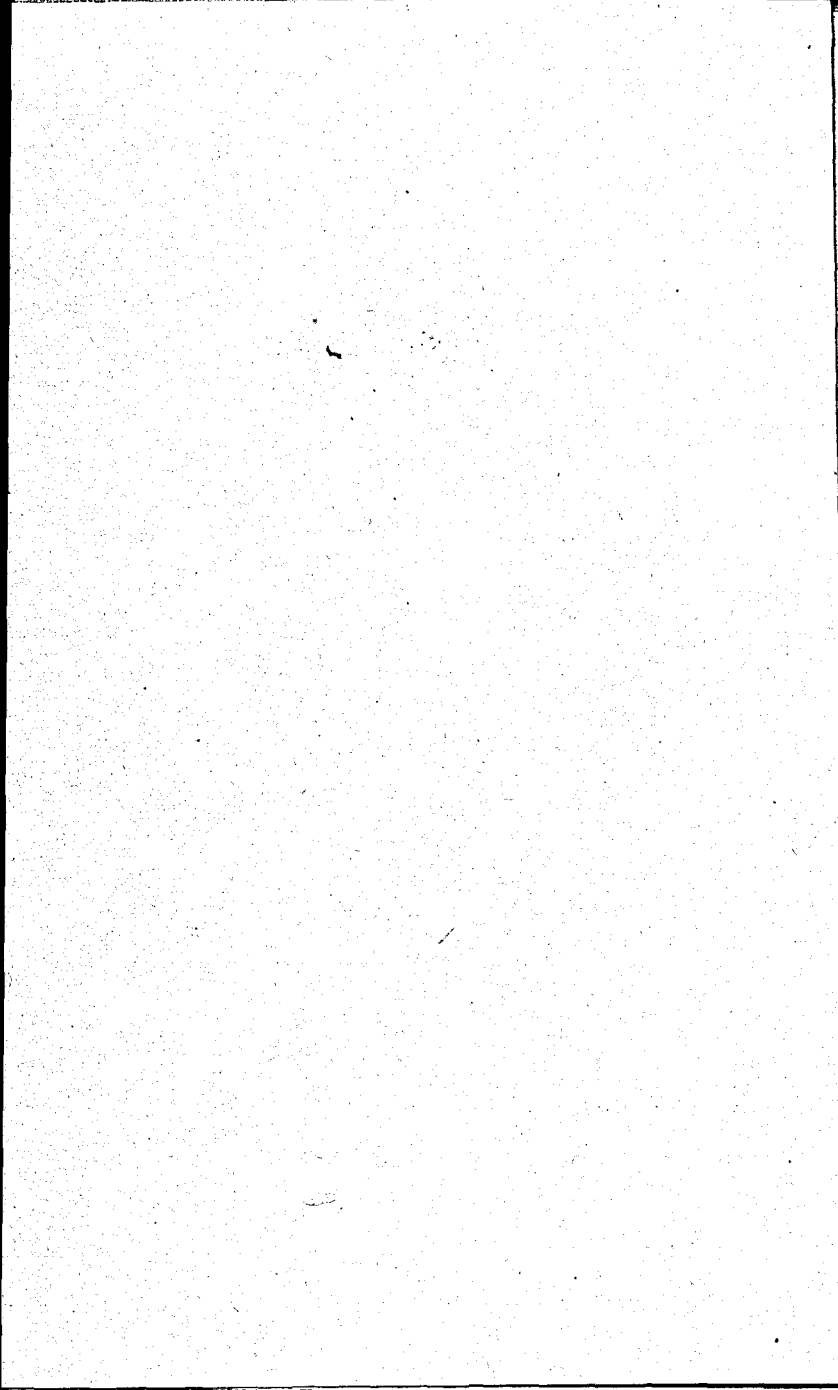
W. P.

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GOD'S HELL

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GOD'S HELL

AND OTHER ADDRESSES

BY THE REV.

WM. P. NICHOLSON

AUTHOR: *The Evangelist—His Ministry and Message*

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
PREFACE	vii
THE PALE HORSE AND HIS RIDER	9
GOD'S HELL	30
GOD'S HEAVEN	65
THE GREAT JUDGMENT DAY	90
THE UNPARDONABLE SIN	117



PREFACE

THESE addresses have been wonderfully used by God, in many parts of the world, in awakening lost sinners to their great need and terrible danger, and hastening their decision for Christ. They are not popular themes or by any means commonly used by evangelists or ministers, but they are none the less God's truth, and needing to be declared with all love and earnestness as never before. These days of loose living and smooth preaching, men are living as if there was neither a Judgment Day or a Hell. They have false notions of God and His love and mercy, that enable them to live and believe presumptuously. Many are afraid of appealing to fear or frightening their hearers and even go so far as to say it is wrong. Their words and attitude are a striking commentary on Jesus Christ and His methods, Matthew x. 88 : " And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul ; but rather *Fear* him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." These are days when " there is no fear of God before their

eyes," and such fear was never more necessary, when lawlessness and Communism and defiance of God and government are abounding on every hand. Fear may drive a man to Christ for salvation, but we know it is not fear that holds him there, but His love and loveliness. May these messages accomplish this end in this wider ministry than they have ever done by preaching.

Yours because His,

Wm. P. NICHOLSON.

THE PALE HORSE AND HIS RIDER

"I looked and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him."—REVELATION vi. 8.

ISN'T it fine to be able to have a subject on which we are all agreed, especially a religious subject? We may not believe in God, Heaven, Hell, Bible or Church, sin or salvation. In fact, we may be rank infidels, but we must believe in Death. We may argue and disagree about how death came and why, but we cannot deny the *FACT*.

We may be firm believers and doubt and deny nothing vital to our salvation, but we too must also believe in the fact of death. There is death and decay all around us. We are dying every day we live. Our mental and physical forces are dying daily. We are just managing to keep about one step ahead of the pale horse and his rider. Our allotted span was to be three score years and ten, but the average life to-day is around forty. And all this in spite of medical and scientific discoveries and "miraculous" surgical operations, doctors,

IO THE PALE HORSE AND HIS RIDER

druggists and drugs galore, and still we are dying in spite of them all. So we cannot deny the fact of death. Every city has its cemetery. There is never a day that there are not numerous funerals in every city. You have never lifted your morning paper and not found a death notice. Generally the first column of the front page is given to such notices, and the column is usually filled and overflowing to another column.

THE ULTIMATE FACT

Death is the ultimate fact in the presence of which all human resources fall bankrupt. We are told *LOVE* is the greatest thing in the world, and the strongest. Yet love is bankrupt when death puts his icy fingers around the heart-strings of the one we love. However tenderly and tenaciously the mother may love her child or the wife love her husband, when death comes their love is bankrupt. Love can neither keep back death nor bribe and delay his coming. Take *WEALTH*. It is mighty. There are some who would say it is *Al*-mighty. Only God is *Al*-mighty. Yet wealth in spite of all its power is bankrupt when death comes. The wealthiest die just as truly and surely as the poorest. Wealth may secure the greatest skill and every

known facility to retain life, but it is bankrupt. Their mansions may be great, with every device to protect life against disease and death, but when death comes, all their devices are bankrupt.

Wealth cannot bribe death or beat it back. He is no respecter of persons. *GENIUS* is bankrupt also. What wonderful inventions and discoveries are made these days by men of genius, and yet in spite of all their genius they die. They have never invented or discovered any means to beat back the pale horse and his rider when he comes. The greatest inventors and discoverers die in spite of all their genius.

POWER is also bankrupt. The most powerful men of all ages have died. Their position, however exalted and great, does not enable them to defeat death. Monarchs, emperors, dictators, presidents, financiers, politicians, commercial princes, all die. Your physical life may have been trained and developed until every fibre and muscle is perfect, but you will die just as truly as the sickliest and weakest. No power of man can enable him to evade or escape the pale horse and his rider.

RELIGION, never mind whether true or false, Occidental or Oriental, is bankrupt. Your form of

12 THE PALE HORSE AND HIS RIDER

religion may teach you to deny death, but you will surely die all the same. Heathen die, Christians die ; none are exempt or immune from it. Saved and unsaved, all die alike. It doesn't matter what human resource you can think of, it will be bankrupt when the pale horse and his rider comes.

“The glories of our blood and state
Are shadows, not substantial things ;
There is no armour against death.
Death lays his icy hands on Kings.
Sceptre and Crown must tremble down,
And in the dust be laid
With the poor crooked scythe and spade.”
(SHIRLEY.)

THE BIBLE TEACHES

Scripture clearly teaches several things about death.

First. It was *caused by sin*. God told Adam and Eve, “The day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” When they doubted God's word and disobeyed God's will the sentence was executed. They became dying creatures, and ultimately died. “The soul that sinneth it shall die,” declared the Prophet. We die because we are all sinners by birth and practice. Babies die because they were

born in sin and shapen in iniquity. There never would have been a corpse or a grave if sin had not entered.

Second. Death occurs *only once*. "It is appointed unto men *ONCE* to die." Many imagine that we keep on dying and become some other sort of being until we reach perfection. It is all nonsense. We die once for all.

Third. Death is the *common lot* of all. There is no escaping it. The rich die, the poor die, the good die, the bad die, the old die, the young die, the sickly die, the healthy die. The millionaire dies, the mendicant dies, kings and queens, bishops and priests, criminals and crooks, all die. There is no exemption or exception. Death is no respecter of persons. He cannot be bribed or delayed or defeated.

Fourth. Death is the *appointed lot* of all. "It is appointed unto men once to die." "For I know that thou wilt bring me to death and to the house appointed for all living," Job xxx. 23. You may be busy or lazy. You may dislike it or like it. You may believe it or doubt and deny it, but when your appointed time comes you have to go. It may meet you in the middle of your busy life suddenly, or it may give warning of its approach

14 THE PALE HORSE AND HIS RIDER

by lingering sickness, but, sudden or slow, he will surely come, and only at the appointed time and in the appointed way. God's appointments are always kept. There is no luck or chance about death. There are no accidents with God. When your appointed time comes you have to surely go. The very means to be used, the sickness or accident, is all appointed. God makes the appointment and we keep it. We cannot excuse ourselves or escape it. We must *surely* die. God has appointed it. To explain this is impossible. I don't try to defend it, I'm declaring it. Because it is a mystery it isn't an absurdity. God will bring you, not accident, or luck, or chance. GOD will bring you to death and to the house appointed for all living.

DEATH TO THE BELIEVER

To the truly-born again man, death need have no terrors. He is certainly the last enemy, but Christ has robbed him of his sting. There are many truly born again and still they are in bondage through fear of death. They seem to be ignorant of the fact that "through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were

all their lifetime subject to bondage." Glory to God! Death is swallowed up in Victory, so we can shout, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" "Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." This is no mere sentiment, but a glorious reality, and the possession of every saved man or woman, boy or girl. Don't remain in bondage a minute longer, dear child of God; claim your liberty from such bondage and begin to sing and shout in triumph over the tomb.

Listen what the poet says about death:

"What is death? O what is death?
 'Tis slumber to the weary;
 'Tis rest to the forlorn;
 'Tis shelter to the dreary;
 'Tis peace amid the storm.
 'Tis the passage to that God
 Who bids His children come,
 When their weary course is trod.
 Such is death; yea, such is death."

Let us turn to our Bible and learn something about the Believer and death. We are taught it is a *sleep*. We are never frightened of sleeping. What a blessing at the end of the toilsome day to retire to rest and kindly sleep overtakes us. It is only

when sleep seems to evade us for a time and we spend sleepless nights, and then returns, that we appreciate the blessedness of sleep. So death will be all that to us, when we reach the end of the road, tired and worn out and weary with life's burdens and trials and joys.

Death is spoken of as an *Exodus*. What a joyful blessing the exodus was to the children of Israel. No more slavery; no more bondage; no more burdens; no more sorrow and pain. What a glorious deliverance it will be. What release, what freedom and joy. Home at last, Hallelujah!

Death is also represented as a *Departure*. You have seen the vessel moored to the wharf. The time comes for its departure. The ropes are let go and out she steams into the ocean on her journey to other lands. So it will be with us one day. Sickness and disease and old age will loosen our hold on this life and earth, and when every shore line is gone we depart to be with Christ, which is *very far* better.

Death will be a *putting off* this earthly tabernacle. It has served us well. It has cost us much bother and pain looking after it, but when death comes we put it off as we do our garments when retiring:

"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." One day we will be clothed with immortality and a body like unto His glorious body. What an exchange! Surely we shouldn't be sorry to "*put off*" this frail, sickly, weak, decaying body when we are promised such a body in exchange? Thank God! death need have no terrors for saved men and women. If we can say with the Apostle, "For to me to live is Christ," then we can say "to die is gain." So real and blessed was this to the aged Apostle that he said, "I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and to be with Christ; which is far better." May the Lord make this matter of dying a blessed reality to every believer.

"'Tis the snapping of the chain,
 'Tis the breaking of the bowl;
 'Tis relief from every pain,
 'Tis freedom to the soul;
 'Tis the setting of the sun,
 To rise again to-morrow,
 A brighter course to run,
 Nor sink again in sorrow.
 Such is death, yes, such is death."

We may be delivered from the bondage of the fear of death and yet be frightened of "*Dying*." This is altogether a different matter. That lingering pain and increasing weakness brought about by some deadly disease ere we die. It would be ideal to suddenly die, without pain or weakness or sad and tearful good-bye. One moment here and the next moment in the presence of Jesus. Byron cried out, "O God, 'tis a fearful thing to see the human soul take wing, in any shape or mood." Shakespeare wrote, "Death is a fearful thing. The weariest and most loathed life that age, ache, or penury, or imprisonment can lay on nature, is a paradise to what we fear of death." Don't let us bother about dying. Let us see that for us "To live will be Christ." Then when we come to die, we will receive DYING GRACE. What would be the use of dying grace to live with? His Grace will be sufficient when we come to die. He won't fail us or forsake us when we are passing through the dark valley. He will see us safely through, and present us faultless before His Father's throne.

DEATH TO THE UNBELIEVER

The fact of death to the unsaved man or woman is a terrible and terrifying reality. Death is the King of Terrors and the terror of kings. And unsaved sinners don't like to think about it or prepare for it. They live as if they were never going to die. If you ask them if they have made their will they look at you with fear in their eyes, to see if you thought they were going to die. The very mention of death makes their heart beat faster with fear. Let someone be killed in an accident near them or some member of their family die suddenly, see how solemnly and tenderly they will walk for a while. It soon wears off and they begin to live again without any thought of death or without making any preparation for it. They know they must die sooner or later, and sooner *than* later, but they do all they can to forget it. Why all this fear and even terror? Let me give you some reasons why the fact of death fills you with fear and uneasiness.

WHY SINNERS ARE AFRAID OF DEATH

Death makes sinners frightened because when he comes :

I. They will cease to be interested in the exciting scenes of life. You will bid good-bye to all your pleasures, sinful or legitimate. You couldn't live without them, but you'll have to die without them. No wonder the thought of death frightens you. You thought it was too great a sacrifice to forsake the pleasures of sin to gain eternal life and salvation, but you will have to make the sacrifice when death comes, and leave every pleasure. You just couldn't live without picture shows, card parties and dances. To talk about giving them up was simply ridiculous. You will have to die without them. Life wouldn't be worth living without them. When death comes and feels with icy finger for your heart-strings, you will cease to be interested in all these things and you will bid good-bye to them for ever. How horrible death must be to one who has lived only for worldly pleasures and must leave them behind. Remember, you can't take one of them with you, and there are no pleasures in hell, where you have to live for ever. No wonder you live trying to forget you have to die and shun everyone and every service where you might be reminded of it: you will have to leave your gay companions who are so dear and necessary to you now. They

helped you to forget you had to die; now you are dying they don't flock around your death-bed to see you dying. They feel sorry for you, but forget you, as your death fills them also with terror.

II. Then when death comes you will have done with all the pursuits and callings of life. The king will have done with the crown and throne. The lawyer will leave his legal duties. The business man will leave his buying and selling. The busy mother will leave her home and domestic duties. You may be busy or lazy. You may believe it or deny it. You may ignore it or laugh at it, but you will die and leave for ever everything you spent your life building up and developing. You hadn't time to prepare for death, you were so busy in business, but now you have to take time to die and leave it all. Whose then, shall these things be? A rich man once sat amid his possessions and had a talk with himself, and said, "He had great possessions and many years to live, and said to his soul, eat, drink, and be merry." As if you could feed your soul on corn, fields and barns. You might as well think you could feed your body with geography or mathematics. The Lord came on the scene, and

said, "*Thou fool*, this night thy soul shall be required of thee."

How many busy, wealthy fools there are to-day living as if they were here for ever, and heaping up riches and increasing their possessions and settling down as if they had never to leave them. Making provision and preparation for everything, but none for death. No wonder fear and terror fills the heart and mind when they think of death and dying and having to say good-bye to their money and money-making and possessions they gave all their time and strength and talents to accumulate and possess. No wonder he is the King of Terrors.

III. Another thing that fills the sinner with terror at the thought of death is, he will have done with all the means of Grace. He hasn't much use or time for them while living, but he felt they were there and could be made use of in an emergency. But now death has come, he can't go to Church, he can't hear sermons, maybe can't even read the Bible or pray. These things are strange and foreign to him, he neglected them so long while living. You couldn't be bothered with them while living, now you are dying you won't be bothered with

them. You bid good-bye for ever to the Church, Sacraments, Bible, prayer and fellowship with believers. You will no longer be annoyed with the means of Grace God provided for your salvation and eternal welfare. Oh, if only you had made use of them while living they would have comforted you in your dying hour, but you had no use for them or place for them in your life and now you are bereft of them when you need them most. What folly to live as you are doing, poor dying man.

IV. Terror fills the heart of the sinner when death comes, for he feels and knows his probation is ended and his destiny is fixed. These are days of probation. You are given time to repent, time to believe, time to prepare to die. How precious time is. How lavishly you spend it. How foolishly you spend it. When death comes time ceases. Your probationary period is ended and you go out to your eternal destiny. Never another call or chance to repent. Never another offer of mercy and pardon. Never a call to believe and be saved. All, all, past and gone for ever, and what a destiny. Hell for ever. The absence of God and good, and the presence of the devil and evil. Never to be comforted

but for ever tormented. Separated from love and peace and united to hatred and misery for ever. Hope for ever gone, and despair for ever begun. Weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth, instead of songs and everlasting joy. What a destiny, and death ushers it in. No wonder the thought and fact of death is terrible to you. Death doesn't change anyone. "He that is filthy, filthy *STILL*. He that is holy, holy *STILL*." If you write on clay and the frost comes, it doesn't change what was written, *it fixes it*. So when death comes, he doesn't change the sinner, he seals him. Character is eternal.

" WISE TO PREPARE FOR DEATH "

Let me urge and intreat you, sinner, to prepare for death. You have to die. It is the last ultimate fact you have to face, why not get ready for it? To be ready to die, is to fit one to live. How wise you are about everything else. You prepare for every emergency here. You insure your barns and beasts, your business and home, your life and health and family. You lay up for the proverbial rainy day. You are counted wise amongst your friends. You boast, you never leave anything to chance, and

yet how uncertain all these things are, and yet how certain death is and you make no preparation or provision for it. Surely this is the very height of folly. Why, man, you have more care and concern for your beasts than you have for your soul. You take more care of your car or barns or house than you take of your soul's eternal welfare. "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his soul?" What advantage will it be if you have made provision for everything else and none for your soul? Five minutes after you are dead what will it profit you if you have been wise and careful about everything else and no preparation for dying? I read about a rich man who had a jester who was so successful a jester that he was sure there was not another like him in the world, so he gave him a golden wand and sent him to all countries and courts to find out if there was another as good as he was. If he found one, he was to give him the golden wand. After years of travel, he returned to his master to report the result of his adventure. His master was dying. The jester came to his bedside and asked him what was the matter. The rich man said he was going on a long journey. The jester asked would he take him with

him. His master said he couldn't. Then the jester said, "When will you return?" The rich man said, "Never." The jester then said, "Did you know you had to take this long journey and never return?" "Yes," said the rich man, "I have known all along I would have to take it." The jester said, "Have you made any provision for it, Master?" "No," said the rich man, "I have made provision for everything but this." The jester put the golden wand into the hand of the dying man and said, "Master, you are the greatest fool I have ever met."

Tell me, friend, are you not like this rich man? Living as if you were never going to die, and making no preparation for it.

PROCRASTINATION

I can hear you say, you know you must die some time, and you have made up your mind you will prepare for it—*SOMETIME*, but at present you are too busy with business or pleasure to do it now. You fully intend to do it before you die. You love the world too much to forsake it and seek the Lord and be ready to die, but you will do it. You have made up your mind about it. You are not careless

or unconcerned, but you don't want to do it now. Tell me, friend, when are you going to die? Do you know the day, place and hour? Have you a lease on your life? Who has guaranteed you will live a year, month, week, or day? You know only God knows when your hour will come and death will visit you. Life is very uncertain as well as short. You may be cut down suddenly and soon, you don't know how near the pale horse and his rider is to you. Wouldn't it be terrible to miss making preparation after having made up your mind you would do it sometime? Aren't you taking an awful risk? You hear people say when someone dies suddenly, "He was cut down without a warning." Oh, no, he was well and often warned, but, like you, he put it off too long.

In one of our meetings for men, when the invitation was given to accept Christ, a young man stood up and said, "I will." That was 5 p.m. on a Sunday. He was a motor mechanic. Next morning he went to the garage to begin work. He lifted an electric drill, plugged it, and made for the car to drill it; he stepped in a pool of water and was instantly electrocuted. The drill had a short in it and he didn't know.

Fourteen hours converted. That was a close shave, wasn't it? Just managed it by fourteen hours. How close are you going to cut it, friend?

We were holding an open-air meeting near a railway station. A porter decided for Christ at the meeting. He knelt at Jesus' feet about 8 p.m. He had to go to the station and attend to the mail train passing through. At 8.5 he was mangled to pulp under the train. At 8 p.m. a sinner saved by grace, at 8.5 p.m., saved to sin no more. That was a close call, wasn't it? Just by about five minutes. Tell me, friend, how close are you going to make it? Seeing life is so uncertain and eternity so sure and everlasting, wouldn't you be wise and be warned to make ready for death? There is only one preparation you can make that will secure your safety and salvation before and after death, and that is, repent of your sin and your good works, and accept Jesus Christ as your own personal Saviour. He died to save you. He took your place and paid your debt on Calvary's tree. He is able to save to the uttermost all who come, and He will never leave you nor forsake you until you are safe for evermore. So risk not your soul on another delay.

For *Now* is the accepted time. *Now* is the day of salvation.

"Life at best is very brief,
Like the falling of a leaf,
Like the binding of a sheaf,
Be in time.
Fleeting days are telling fast
That the die will soon be cast
And the fatal line be passed—
Be in time.

Time is gliding swiftly by,
Death and judgment drawing nigh,
To the arms of Jesus fly—
Be in time.
Oh: I pray you count the cost,
Ere the fatal line be crossed,
And your soul in hell be lost—
BE IN TIME."

GOD'S HELL

“And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.”—LUKE xvi. 23.

My subject is God's Hell. Not Man's hell or the Church's hell, but God's hell. God was its architect and builder. It never entered into the heart of man to design or devise hell. The same all-wise, all-loving God who designed and built heaven designed and built hell. I want you to let this truth grip you. If it does, you won't think or speak lightly of hell. To hear some people ridicule the fact of hell as if it was some man-made, cunningly-devised fable. They look upon it as some antiquated and antedated bogey. Hell is God's creation as surely and truly as heaven. The one is just as real and necessary as the other and just as everlasting. In my sinful and youthful days when suffering as a consequence of my sin I used to say, “This is all the hell there is.” Maybe, sinner, you are saying this, too. Oh, no, you are mistaken. This is *your* hell. You made it. Your wilful sinning brought it about. God had nothing to do with it. Don't blame God for your

misery and suffering. But God has a place prepared for every impenitent and unrepentant sinner, called Hell—God's hell.

I am bringing this solemn subject to you with no lightness of spirit or flippancy of speech, neither is it my intention to ravish your feelings or fill your heart with fear unnecessarily. Although if I can accomplish this very thing, and it makes you decide for Christ to-night, I will be the last to apologise for doing so, and you will be the last to ask me to do so, for I am sure of this, that if the fear of hell brings you to Christ, it is not the fear of hell that will keep you following Christ. It will be His love and loveliness that will bind you to Him with bands stronger than steel.

Neither do I bring this message to you apologetically, for I have no apology to make for any message of my Master. Neither do I come to discuss this subject, but to declare it with all plainness and fearlessness, and I trust in love. I believe there never was a day when this message was needed more than the day we are living in. The pulpit is almost silent about it or denies it, and the average church member treats it with contempt, as if it were some antedated and antiquated nursery bogey or fable.

I do not preach it with the desire to see you go there, but with the earnest desire to warn you to flee from the wrath to come; for just as sure as God has said it, hell is the destiny and doom of every impenitent, Christ-rejecting man or woman. I would not go the length of my foot to hear what the wisest man has to say about hell or what he thinks about it, for the opinions of the most intellectual theologian in the land to-day are of no more value than the opinion of the most ignorant man in the world. I am not here to give you what "I" think about hell, or what the Church thinks about hell, but what the Lord has to say about it. My reason for confining it to what Jesus says about it is because it limits the range of our inquiry and also gives authoritative evidence or knowledge about hell.

TWO REASONS

I take this subject up for two reasons.

First. For the sake of the Christians who are here to inform their mind and arouse them to a solemn sense of their responsibility. Surely if there is a spark of humanity in us, or the love of God about us, we can never be at ease while our fellow-men are on their way to hell, and do nothing to warn

them and win them for Christ. If a house were on fire to-night in this town and we knew that in that burning building there were men and women and children in danger of such a horrible death, is there a man here, yea, or woman either, who wouldn't do all in their power to save them, even at the risk of their own lives? No, not one. Everyone that is worthy of the name of man or woman, would eagerly do this. If you knew that a boat had capsized in the bay and a number of people were drowning, which of you here would not risk his life to save them? Yet men and women every day on every side of us are rushing to hell as fast as time can take them, not to a physical death merely, but to eternal death and hell. How can we sit still and do nothing to save them?

The worst of it is, not only will many who call themselves Christians do nothing to save their fellows, but they will do all they can to hinder those who are doing all they can to snatch them as brands from the burning, by criticising their methods and messages and calling them coarse and vulgar, saying they are too emotional and sensational, etc. Instead of boosting them and encouraging them, they do all they can to discourage and hinder. May the Lord

use my message to-night to rouse every Christian up to do all they can by all means to save some.

General Booth, the founder and leader of the Salvation Army, said to some hundreds of his cadets when they were graduating from the training home, "Young men, if I had had my way I would never have had you here for years in this Training Home, but I would have put you in hell for twenty-four hours, so that you might have felt the pains and pangs of the damned, that you might have heard their weeping and wailing, and their gnashing of teeth, and seen something of their torments. I would then have let you out and sent you into the world to warn men and women to flee from the wrath to come. I would be sure of this, you would never take the work easy, or treat it negligently while you were in it."

I feel the old General was about right. Oh! if the old Devil can get us to not believe in the fact of hell, then he knows that he has cut the nerve of our energy and effort. I remember one time lying anchored in Table Bay, Cape Town, waiting our turn to get into dock to discharge our cargo. One evening after we all had turned in, we heard a cry so clear, "We're drowning!" "We're drowning!" Not a man of us but was on deck with very little

clothing on him and into the boat. Maybe we didn't make those ash oars bend as we pulled for the men who were drowning. Maybe the bos'un didn't urge us on, and the men who were left behind cheer us. They didn't criticise how we pulled, just so long as we pulled for all we were worth. I couldn't imagine one of the men on the vessel saying to the other men, "There is far too much excitement here," or "They are not decently enough dressed," or "They are not rowing according to rules." Man! if one had begun to talk like that, they would have thrown him overboard. Oh, no! They were all intent on rescuing those drowning men, and doing all they could to help those who were pulling the oars. Suppose some man had come along and said with great eloquence and intelligence, "Those men are not in any danger; it is only imaginary danger or parabolic danger," or "They only *think* they are in danger. If they only knew better or were more perfectly informed, they would not make all that fuss." Do you think we would have done all we did in the way we did if we believed that? You know we wouldn't. It was because their danger was real that we did what we did to rescue them.

HELL A REALITY

Hell is a reality, Christian men and women. Let us be up and at it, and at it all the time.

Second. Then I bring this message to those who are not saved, but are on their way to hell, so that you might be awakened to your danger and urged to flee to-night from the wrath to come. It is awful to think that you sit there in your sin, and if you died right now, in hell you would lift up your eyes being in torment for eternity. Instead of singing these beautiful psalms and hymns, you would be weeping and wailing and gnashing your teeth for ever in hell. Oh! may God, by His Spirit, to-night open your eyes to see your awful and imminent danger. There is nothing but the very skin on your ribs between your soul and hell. Just that heart-beat between you and hell. Do you know, dear friend, that there are scores in hell to-night who sat where you sit now, and heard what you hear now? They thought just as you think now. They never intended to be in hell. They made up their mind about that, just as you are making up yours now. They heard just such messages as you have been hearing. They said the same things you

have said about them. Some of them even laughed at the thought of hell and made fun of the preacher who told them about it, just as you are doing now, but there they are in hell for eternity. How did they get there? Let us hear them speak. How did you get there? "I got there because I put it off too long." Did you intend to go there? "Oh, no! I made up my mind that I would some day repent and believe, but I put it off too long." I fear some of you will be there, too, and with the very same wail on your lips, for you are doing the very best thing to grieve God and please the devil, and damn your own soul. "You don't need to be a drunkard to be damned, or a blasphemer or harlot. Oh, no! All you need to do is to reject Christ. Just what you are doing now, and as sure as the sun sets to-night, and will rise to-morrow, in hell you will open your eyes being in torment.

Oh, I beseech you, do not delay any longer. Why should you perish? God loved you and gave His Son to die for you.

Trust Him now, for *NOW* is the accepted time. *NOW* is the day of salvation. Don't believe your own notions if they are contrary to God's Word, or the notions of others, however good and wise

they seem to be, but take God's Word for it and flee from wrath.

FOUR QUESTIONS

There are four questions I will try to answer on this subject. First—"The certainty of hell." Second—"The nature of hell." Third—"Where is hell?" Fourth—"How shall we escape hell?"

I. THE CERTAINTY OF HELL

Can we be really sure there is a hell? What authority have we for declaring there is such a place? There are so many opinions about it. Some very good and learned men deny the fact of it altogether. They can't believe that a loving God would condemn a soul to hell for a short life of sin here. Isn't it strange, you rarely, if ever, get unconverted men disbelieving in hell. They may say they don't believe when things are well with them, but when they come to face death, then they believe all right. It is usually the converted man who discredits the truth about it, for it sort of eases his conscience for not doing anything to save lost souls. He has an excuse for his laziness and indifference regarding the perishing. He talks about the "Fatherhood of God" and the "Brotherhood of Man." If God is

the Father of all then hell is an impossibility and an insult to God and man. But God is not the Father of all. Is He the Father of the devil? No; He is the Creator of the devil. You might as well talk about God being the Father of dogs and cats and cabbage and trees, as say He is the Father of all men. It is not right to confound creatorhood and fatherhood.

Confusion

I remember a very nice refined-looking lady came to me after she heard me preach on hell, and she said, "You are a father, and I am sure love your children." I said I did. She then said, "I suppose if you could ease the pain and sorrow of your child you would do so?" I said I would. She said, "What would you think of a father who could save his child from suffering and not doing so?" I said he would be a tyrant and a monster. She said, "I am glad to hear you say so, for, you see, that is what you are making God out to be. God could never see His children in hell and in torment. He would be a monster if He did." "But," I said "lady, you just make one mistake, and that is, God hasn't a child in Hell and never will have one there. There are none on the road there,

either. All God's children are either in heaven or on the road there, and dead sure of getting there.

"The people who are in hell are the devil's bairns. God as a Father has a home for His children, so the devil is a father, and he has a home for his children." If you have never been born again, you are of your father, the devil, and his works you do. God is only the Father of those who believe in Jesus Christ, and are His born-again ones. I believe it is this damnable heresy in the Churches to-day that is causing men not to believe in hell. My friends, there is surely a hell, for the Bible clearly teaches it. No honest reader can come to the Word of God and shut his eyes to it. It is as clear and real as the teaching about heaven. It's queer how they all believe there is a heaven and yet they only know that there is such a place because the Bible teaches it, and yet they deny the teaching of the same Bible when it teaches about hell. Such a position is illogical and unreasonable. If there is no hell, then there is no infallible Bible, and we are left to the opinions of men and their speculations. If there is no hell, then we have no Christ or Christianity. The churches are just a farce, and the Sunday preaching just a waste of time. It is

Christ and hell, or no hell, no Christ. Christ stands or falls with hell.

Unbelief does not alter Hell

If this Bible is the Word of God—and it is—if Jesus Christ is the Son of God—and He is—then there is a hell. You may deny this fact, but that will not destroy it. Whether I believe a fact or not will never alter that fact. Fire burns, whether I believe it or not. Poison kills, whether I believe it or not. Frost freezes, whether I believe it or not. The sun rises and sets, whether I believe it or not. The world is round, whether I believe it or not. Two and two make four, whether I believe it or not. Hell is a reality, whether I believe it or not. I'll be there if I reject Christ, whether I believe it or not!

“But,” you say, “don't you know that learned men have changed the word ‘hell’?” I know that. What right they have to do so, I don't know. But suppose they have changed the word or name, does that alter the fact or the nature of the place? Suppose I said there was no such country as this, or changed the name of this country, would that destroy the country or alter it any? You know right well it wouldn't. You may change my name,

but you don't change me or obliterate me. I am just the same fellow with another name. You may call a vulture a bird of paradise, but it is just the same old scavenger. You may call a skunk a canary, but he won't sing on that account, neither will he smell any sweeter. You may call hell by whatever name you care, but it is just the same awful place where they weep and wail and gnash their teeth. It sounds nice to call it "the grave," "Sheol," "Tartarus," "Gehenna." It sounds very scholarly and nice to the ear, but don't forget it is just the same fearful place of torment.

You tell some man you are angry with to go to "Gehenna," and he'll think that you mean him to go for a holiday somewhere, or that you are wishing him well. But you tell him to go to hell, and he will soon let you know what he thinks of you. I fear there is a danger here. By changing the words we may take away the fear and fact of such a place from men's minds.

Not a Parable.

But maybe there is someone here who says, "It isn't good exegesis to base a doctrine on a parable." The Scripture I read just now wasn't a parable.

When our Lord used a parable He let us know that it was one, but this is not a parable, it is the relation of an actual fact that was known to those who heard Him tell it. "There was a certain rich man." "There was a certain beggar." He gives their names and their manner of life, and how they lived. I can imagine how those who listened would whisper to each other and say, "We knew Lazarus. Many a time we helped him." "We knew the rich man He is talking about, and many a time passed his home." So He did not invent the story to enforce the truth, but He took a local incident, and by it He burned in this truth. The rich man did not go to hell because he was rich. There is no vice in riches, and there is no virtue in poverty. He went to hell because he left God out of his life. The poor man went to heaven because he trusted in the Lord. It is always that way.

We are also sure there is a hell, because common sense demands one. I can never understand the mind of those who will not allow God to have a hell for men and women who will not have His Son to be their Saviour. Yet in these civilised lands of ours we have large penitentiaries and gaols. What a shame it is to put men and women in such

places of torment, and keep them there shut up from the world, robbing them of their liberties and privileges, and treating them like cattle or slaves. Separating men from their homes and families, and bringing pain and shame on their friends. Isn't it a shame that this civilisation should do such a thing? Many a time men are in gaol because they have done only one crime, and then some of them we take out and hang or electrocute them. You would look with pity on me if I talked like this about gaols, and wonder what sort of a mind I had, or where I came from. You would say, "Don't you know these people are lawbreakers? It is for their own good and the safety of the country and the people that we put them in there and do this with them."

Common Sense

Do you think that we have more sense than God? Who are the people who go to hell? They are men and women who rebelled against God and refused to be saved by the blood of His Son. What else can God do with them but put them in prison? What sort of a world would it be if all the criminals were allowed to go free, and do whatever they cared? Our person or our property would not be

safe, and life would not be worth living. We have great big asylums all over the land. Thousands of people—good, nice and decent people at that—are kept there against their will; are taken from their homes against their will and shut up in these places. The treatment they get is not very comfortable at times. Isn't it a shame to have such places and treat people like that, seeing it is through no fault of theirs? I can imagine the look you would give me, and how you would wonder where I had come from. What contempt there would be in your voice when you would tell me, "Don't you know that these people are insane? They are not responsible. For their own sake and the safety of society they are put in such places." I see. I understand. But let me ask you, "Has God not got such a place for mad people, too, in eternity?" Certainly He has. Surely a man is mad who damns his own soul by wilfully rejecting Jesus Christ as his Saviour, in spite of the love of God and work of the Holy Spirit. What sort of a world would eternity be if all the people who would not have God to be their God, or His law to guide them, or rejected His Son as their Saviour, if they were allowed to go where they pleased and do as they pleased?

Oh, no ! men and women, hell is God's penitentiary ; hell is God's madhouse. If you continue to rebel against God, God has a gaol for you, and if you are so foolish as to refuse His salvation, God has an asylum for you. God has just about as much common sense about such things as we have here on earth. God never sends a man to hell. Man goes there by the deliberate choice of his own will.

A God of Love

I am sure you have heard the question asked : " How could God be a God of Love and send men there ? " God never sends any man to hell. But such a question as that suggests or implies that they who asked it would not themselves do such a thing. Almost saying that they have more love and compassion for men than God has.

I was conducting a campaign in West Australia one time. One day I received a letter from a preacher saying that if I would be more like Jesus I would preach more about heaven and less about hell. This made me go to my Bible to find out whether I was unlike Jesus, preaching about hell so much. This is what I found. Jesus spoke about hell about thirteen times, and in awful and gruesome language,

and He only spoke about heaven once, "In My Father's house are many mansions." You would think by the way some talk that they had more love for their fellowmen than Jesus had or has. Jesus is incarnate love. He so loved that He gave Himself for the salvation of men. Do you find these men who talk about loving their fellowmen ever dying or even suffering to save them? Oh, no. They sit calmly by their fireside cooing like a turtledove about love, while all the time they don't know the first thing about love. The one next to Jesus who told more about hell was John, the Apostle of love. As you read the Book of Revelation about hell, how terribly graphic and gruesome is the description. Do you mean to tell me these turtledoves of to-day have more love, or know more about love, than Jesus or John did? Surely not. But is it a mark of love for men to hid the truth from them because it is awful?

Excursion Train

Suppose you had an excursion from this town? You were all in the train going to your destination. I was on the railway, and as I walked I came to a bridge and found it was broken. I knew your train with its hundreds on board was about due; in

fact, I could hear it coming. I think for a moment. I will warn them of their danger and stop them. But then again I think, it would be a pity to spoil their holiday or any part of it. I might get people scared, and maybe some of them might faint. I love them so much and want them to have as nice a time as they can get, so I wave them God-speed and wish them a good time while all the time I know that right ahead is the broken bridge. The train rushes on and all aboard are killed, or mangled. The whole town is deluged in sorrow. I come amongst you and tell you that I knew the bridge was down; but I loved the people so much I couldn't find it in my heart to warn them and spoil their fun even for a few minutes.

Tell me, how many of you believe that it was love that prompted such an action on my part? How long would they let me live in that town, or even live at all? What are we to say of men and ministers who stand before their fellows who are rushing to eternity as fast as time can take them, and to hell if they are without Christ, and yet never warn them of their imminent danger, or hide the fact of their danger from them by telling them that there is no hell? God is love, etc. The horror of it! The damnableness of it! Could you imagine a meaner

thing than a person putting a man on the wrong road when asked about the way? I have had that done to me, and it cost me hours and miles. It was a dirty, contemptible trick to play on any man. But that was only putting a man wrong in time. But to deliberately put men wrong for eternity without the hope of ever getting right. Surely such a man is a Judas Iscariot, or worse. Just as sure as there is a heaven, there is a hell. The authority we have for the one is the same as the other. They both stand or fall together. If there is no hell, then there is no heaven.

II. THE NATURE OF HELL

All we know about the nature of this place we find in the Word of God. It is the same about heaven. All its glories and bliss are revealed in the Bible. We dare not take the notions of men about so serious a matter. We cannot describe fully the one or the other, but there are some things clearly revealed in His Word. Let us consider them.

Death

Hell is a place of Death; no annihilation or cessation of life, but a life separated from God. There they never cease to live, they are dying but

never die. On earth death is the terror of kings and the king of terrors, but if Death were to go to hell and it was known that they would cease to be, there would be joy in that dark, joyless world, but their agony in that place is their undying existence. "Their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched."

Unsatisfied Desires

It is the place of Unsatisfied Desires. You created desires here and you tried to satisfy them, and in some measure you succeeded. But in hell you will be consumed with undying desire, eternally intensified, but eternally unsatisfied. How men here will murder for money, will endure hard work and little food for alcohol, will waste their bodies for fleeting pleasure. In hell they will have all the desire, but not the means to gratify it. For ever and ever tormented with the cravings of the body they indulged here on earth. They will as surely have a body as the saints will. This man in hell wanted water. He felt the agony of the flames. He had eyes and a tongue. I pray you, do not get it into your heads that this is all metaphorical. What sort of punishment would it be if a judge sentenced a man to be hung, but only metaphorically? It would

be ridiculous, and it is just as ridiculous to think that in hell they are only spirits.

Vile Companionship

It is a place of Vile Companionship. The vilest and the worst that ever have been on this earth. The scum of creation will be there. What a hell it will be for some who have been reared in refinement and culture, loving everything lovely and of good report, but still rejecting Christ, to be cast into hell with liars and adulterers and murderers and fornicators and all abominable creatures. To have to live amongst such here—you would rather be dead. You will have to live with such for ever and never be able to die or remove to some other place. Oh! I pray you, who are so loving and lovable and lovely in your lives, why should you perish and dwell in such a place for ever? Turn ye, why will ye die?

No Hope

It is a place Without Hope. The reason you can now sit and listen to all this with not a tremor or a fear is because you hope that it is not true or that you will never be there, but some way, some time, you will repent and believe. It is only a false hope,

for you have no right to presume on the mercy and love of God. You may want to come when you wish, but you may not be able. The Lord says, "When you call I will not answer." You are so buoyed and built up with a false hope that you imagine that you can make God into a convenience, that He must be at your beck and call when you want Him and where, but you have not one single promise to build such hope upon. There will be no hope in hell to thus buoy you up. It is a place of hopeless despair. Hope has never entered its portals and never will. You leave all hope behind you when you come to die, if you are without Christ. Hopeless gloom and darkness reign there for ever.

Ruin

It is a place of Increasing Ruin. I remember one time saying that if I were to get to hell and be allowed to preach to the lost souls there, that I would not have to plead with them as I have to do here. An old retired preacher came to me afterwards and said that were I allowed to preach in hell, I would not be able to get one of them to repent, for if they were not saved here by the mercy and love of God they would never be saved by the fire

and the pain of hell. It is true. The ruin begins here, and goes on and on for ever. You will be far worse in hell than here, and through all eternity will be getting further and further into ruin. That is why it is called "The Bottomless Pit." It has no bottom. It is awful to even think of. Will you not be warned to flee from such awful and irretrievable ruin?

Memory

It is also a place of memory. I am not very concerned whether you believe that there is literal fire in hell. It seems to me that if there was, it would ease the anguish and the agony of those who are there. But you will have Memory there. It will be awakened never to sleep again. Here you are able to drug it with the drink of the dance or with the lust of gold. You are able to forget here, but you will never be able to forget there. The agony of it! When men are hunted by an awakened memory here, they commit suicide. You will not be able to do that there. You must live. You must remember. Memory will be like ten thousand mirrors around you reflecting and recalling the sins and follies of this life. You will there remember the greatness of the glory you lost.

It is a very light thing to you now. You would sell it for a night's pleasure in sin, a few acres of land, or a few pieces of gold, but then you will be able to form some adequate idea of its worth. You will remember you could have obtained it. That will be hell in itself. To know that you might have been walking the streets of gold and singing the new song, and filled with the felicities and the bliss of the saved, but now by your own folly and will you are condemned to eternal darkness and despair and torment. You will remember the many lost opportunities you had. You laughed when you had the chance to repent and believe. You said lightly that you had plenty of time. Oh, the anguish of remembering !

You must think about it. Things will pass and repass before your mind to your eternal torment. You will remember how often you were urged to flee from the wrath to come. You thought your mother was a burden to you when she so often desired you to repent. She wearied you with her continual pleadings. You laughed at the preacher when he tried to alarm you. The sermon was long and a weariness to you. You slept under his preaching. You scorned the friend who tried to get you to trust the Lord Jesus. All their pleadings are

past forever and you are left with the pain and remorse of memory as you think of all this. Your mother's tears will scald you then. The voice of entreaty will haunt you through all eternity.

Sold Cheap

You will remember the easy terms on which you might have received eternal life and escaped death. This will be the sorest of all. If it had been impossible for you to repent, or if you had no choice in the matter, or if your circumstances were such that you could not believe, it would make the agony easier ; but to know that you might have had a life of eternal bliss with the purified for the accepting, will burn you with an unquenchable fire and torment you as an undying worm. You will remember what you sold your soul for. Some of you are selling heaven for the pleasures of sin that are only for a season, and even then you do not get all you thought you would. Some of you are selling your soul for liquor, some for fame, some for gold.

If only you had the satisfaction of knowing that you made a good bargain for your soul it might ease the torments there, but oh, the agony when you remember how cheaply you sold eternal bliss

and bought an eternity of woe and agony. You will remember you wilfully did it. Here you blame the Christians for their hypocrisy. You blame everyone, even God, but there you will find out that you are the guilty one, and that deliberately and wilfully you sealed your doom and secured your damnation. For all eternity you will be blaming yourself and tormenting yourself for your folly and pride.

You will remember how hard you wrought to get to hell. "The way of the transgressor is hard." How true this is! It speaks as loudly as Calvary speaks of the Love of God. If God had not been love, He might have made the way to hell easy and fast, but He has hedged the way there with thorns and barriers, and a man must work hard to get there. He has to stifle conscience again and again. He has to tramp over the tears and prayers of God's people. He has to silence God's Word, quench the Holy Spirit, trample under foot the precious Blood of Christ; all this before he goes there and succeeds in damning his soul for ever. If God does not love us we would have been in hell long ago, but He would not let us go even when we were wed to our sin and determined on our eternal destruction.

Surely I have said enough about the nature of hell, but before I leave this part of my subject, let me give you some more of the terms used by God to depict the nature of this place. Some people would give you the idea that there was very little in the Bible about hell, and what preachers said about it was taken from some isolated portion of it and was greatly exaggerated by their preaching.

Here are some of the terms used by the Lord, and after you have read them I am sure you won't think light of the place, or think that it is some picnic or half-way house on the road to heaven.

The Bible Hell

"A lake of fire," "A bottomless pit," "A horrible tempest," "A devouring fire," "A place of sorrows," "Where they wail," "A place of weeping," "A furnace," "A place of torments," "Everlasting burnings," "A place of filthiness," "Where they curse God," "Everlasting destruction," "A place of outer darkness," "Where they have no rest," "Where they pray," "Where they never repent," "Everlasting punishment," "Where they gnaw their tongues," "Blackness and darkness for ever," "Prepared for the devil and his angels,"

"Where they cry for a drop of water," "Their breath is a living flame," "They are tormented with fire and brimstone," "There are dogs, sorcerers, murderers and unbelievers," "They drink the wine of the wrath of God," "They don't want their friends to come," "Their worm dieth not and their fire is not quenched," "Hell fire," "Hell," "Second death," "Chains of darkness," "Wrath to come." These are only some of the many terms used by God, but I am sure they are not idle words, or words carelessly used, but it is the sober truth of God. To me it is awful, and yet I fear some of you are tired of hearing about it and treating it all as if it were a myth. I beseech you treat this message not in that way, but believe it and repent ere it is too late. You may be saying that I have overdrawn the statements, but, friend, if ever you get there, you will then say that the half was never told. Take no risks, be saved from sin now and hell hereafter.

III. WHERE IS HELL?

Hell begins where man's day of grace ends here. There are so many who imagine they can be saved when they like and where. That just when they

take the notion they can flee from the wrath to come and escape hell. That they can turn the Lord God Almighty into a convenience, and make a servant of Him, so that He must be at their beck and call, and when they take the notion of seeking Him He must be found of them. This is the devil's delusion to damn your soul. The Word says : " Seek ye the Lord *while* He may be found." "*While*," "*Found*." " Call upon Him *while* He is near." You may seek Him and not find Him. You may call when He is not near. Jesus told the men of His day, " Ye shall seek Me and not find Me, and where I am ye cannot come ; ye shall die in your sins."

" There is a time, we know not when,
There is a place we know not where,
That seals the destiny of men
For glory or despair."

You may reject Christ for the last time now, then your Day of Grace has come and gone for you for ever. That is where hell begins for you and every other soul who has sinned their day of grace away. God is under no obligation to save you. Salvation is of purest grace. It is of the Lord. You never will deserve it, or be able to buy it or merit it. If you are to be saved you must accept

it as a poor, undeserving and hell-deserving sinner. Be warned, unsaved one, and if you have the least inclination to be saved, don't kill it by putting off accepting Christ any longer. But just now, where you are and as you are, trust Him with your soul and be saved for eternity. This is God's day of grace. To-morrow it may have passed for you, and you may live a good decent, happy, religious life for forty years after this, and in that living body of yours dwell a doomed, dead, and damned soul. You say where is hell? Listen and I'll put it in a sentence. Hell is the *end* of every Christ-rejecting life—every Christless life. You may belong to the Church and be very devout and devoted in your attendance on the means of grace. You may give your body to be burned; you may preach with the eloquence of men and angels, and have all faith so that you could move mountains, you may have all knowledge and wisdom, but if you have not Christ, the moment you close your eyes in time you will open them in hell, being in torment. The moment a born-again one dies, they are in the conscious presence of the Lord. As soon as the Christless man dies he is in hell and conscious torment.

This is not a fable cunningly devised to scare you,

but it is the truth of God. It would be better and safer for you to trust the word of God and not depend on the notions of men, however learned or great they may be. There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end is death. You may reject the truth of God and accept your own opinions or the opinions of others, and have perfect satisfaction and peace by doing so, but the end of death is hell just the same. Although they give you a Christian burial and say many nice things about you, that will not make your torment any easier, or your condition any cooler. Be wise and be warned in time, and seek the Lord *while* He may be found, and accept Him as your Saviour and Lord, and you will never perish, but have everlasting life.

IV. HOW ARE WE TO ESCAPE HELL?

This is the part of my message that I like. The other part has been very hard to declare to you, but to be true to your soul I had to do it. I will never regret doing it, if you have been led to flee from the wrath to come. It will not be any joy to me to know you are damned, but, oh, it would be added joy and glory to know that you had been urged to believe in Christ. None need perish. You

may have raked in the very kennels of hell, your sins may be as black as the pit and as numerous as the sand on the seashore; the fires of hell would be a ripe and rich harvest for the seeds of iniquity you have sown; still there is mercy with the Lord here and now. Jesus Christ has died, the just for you, the unjust. He was bruised for your iniquities. He was wounded for your transgressions. Surely you will not go to hell with your eyes open and your feet stained with the blood of Christ.

“O, be saved, His grace is free,
O, be saved He died for thee.”

For your own soul's sake, for God's sake, fly to Christ now. Hide from God by hiding in God, and all the wrath and judgment that will engulf the world one of these days will pass over you; for in Christ there is eternal security and safety. Will you not come to Him now?

In the north of Scotland where the main line crosses a great ravine or gully—a fearful-looking abyss—the viaduct that bridged it was one of the wonders of the North. One night a fearful storm raged over the district. The little stream or burn that meandered under the viaduct was turned into a raging mad torrent. A young Highland shepherd

laddie sheltered his sheep as best he could for the night. In the morning, long before dawn, he set out to see how they had fared. As he made his way up the hillside, he noticed to his horror that the central column had gone and that the bridge was broken. He knew that the mail train was due, and that if not warned she would be dashed to pieces and many lives lost. He looked at the raging torrent. He wondered if he could get across. The thought of the danger of so many urged him on. He plunged in, and made his way to the other side. He was battered and baffled and breathless and bleeding when he got to the other side. He made his way up as best he could wondering if he would be in time. As soon as he reached the rails he heard the "Pound, Pound" of the mighty engine. He stood and beckoned wildly, but all he saw was the hand of the engineer beckoning him out of the way. He was making up lost time. The train came on nearer and nearer, and still he stood beckoning to stop. At last it came to where he was. He flung himself in front of the engine. The driver put on the brakes suddenly and managed to stop the train almost in its own length. The stop was so sudden that the passengers were awakened, and came out to see what was the matter.

When they could see nothing they were very angry, but the driver said, "It has been a close shave this time. We might all have been lost." And when they saw how near they were to the ragged edge of the broken bridge, their faces blanched. The driver said, "Come with me and I will show you the one who saved us to-night." They went with him back along the track a little way, and there they saw the mangled remains of the young Highland shepherd laddie. "If he had not died for us," said the engine-driver, "we would all have perished to-night."

That is what the Lord Jesus did for us on the cross. He flung Himself between us and wrath and hell. He died for us or we would have died. What base ingratitude it would have been if they had not felt grateful for what that lad did for them, but what base ingratitude on your part to spurn His love and make light of His death on the cross. Tell me, you will not rush over His body to hell, will you? Why should you perish? There is no need. God loves you and desires your salvation. Jesus died for you to save you from sin and hell. Accept Him. Trust Him. Believe Him, and you shall never perish. But if you spurn His love and mercy, you will surely perish. May God incline your hearts to come to Him now.

GOD'S HEAVEN

"In My Father's house are many mansions, if it were not so, I would have told you."—JOHN xiv. 2.

THERE is no other subject that inflames the heart and fires the imagination more than the subject of Heaven. After being away from home and loved ones for a time, the very thought of going home again fills the heart with joy. Could it not be the same when we think of our Heavenly Home?

There are three reasons why every Christian should delight in this theme.

First. We are surely going there. "None perish that trust Him." When we are thinking of visiting any other country or city, we like to find out all we can about it, so that when we get there we will know what is most interesting and where to look for it, and thus get the most and best out of our visit. Shall we do otherwise about Heaven? When the Lord Jesus has taken the trouble to go and prepare a place for us, and has given us much information about the place, should we not take time to find out all we can about it, so that when we get there we shall not feel as if we were strangers or foreigners. We shall feel at

home. There are many Christians who know more about the Continent of Europe or Great Britain or America than they do about Heaven. This should not be.

THE BRIDE'S HOME

Second. It is to be the bride's home. That is why the Lord Jesus—the Bridegroom—is away from us now. He said, "I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again, and receive you onto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." Since He has told us this, surely it would be a slight to Him if we were unconcerned about the place or the preparations. The joy of any bridegroom when he is making ready the home for his bride, is her joyful interest in all that is being done for her. If she were indifferent or uninterested in all that was being done for her, it would be very sore on the bridegroom and a slight on his love. So when we are showing any interest in this theme we are showing in some measure our appreciation of all He is preparing for us and rejoicing His heart in the doing of it.

MONOTONY CHANGED TO GLADNESS

Third. Meditation upon this theme will change monotony and drudgery into glory and gladness.

Are we in sorrow? Some loved one left us for the better land? Surely the thought that they are only on the other side, and that soon we shall be with them and meet to part no more, should bring us great comfort in our sorrow. Are we weary and tired with life's battles and struggles? Isn't it grand to know that soon we shall be where there will never be another fight or struggle, and where we can never be weary again? What strength it gives us to go on and never give in! Then when we think that we may be there any moment! "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye!" Hallelujah! The last sorrow or pain felt! The last burden or care carried! The last struggle ended! The last fight past! Done for ever with the drudgery of our common lives! The last floor washed, the last garment mended, the last meal cooked! The common round and daily toil ended for ever! Surely such a hope as that gladdens and lightens our hearts and nerves us on to fresh endeavours.

HALF NEVER TOLD

However long we may meditate on this theme or however diligently, we will never be able to exhaust it. "Eye hath not seen, ear hath not

heard." I remember reading of a child born blind. He had never seen the beauties or the glories of Nature. His loved ones had done their best to make him see by describing them to him; but however well we may describe these things we can never tell them as they really are.

So it was with him. They heard about some clever oculist who had performed some very remarkable operations, and they took the lad to him. He examined him very carefully, and then said that he thought an operation would give the boy his sight, but they were not to be too sure; that he would do his best, and if he did not succeed, the boy would be none the worse afterwards, and they would have the satisfaction of knowing that all possible had been done for the lad. The operation was performed. The lad was to keep the bandages on for some days after. At last the day came to take them off, and then it would be known whether the operation had been successful. The excitement was intense. The mother and father and some friends were there. The bandages were removed. The room was darkened. The light was admitted very slowly at first, and then fully. What joy there was when they saw that the lad had his sight. He

was taken over to the window of the ward and shown the glories of the early spring. He was silent, and they wondered what was wrong. They looked into his face and saw the tears running down his cheeks. In answer to their questionings he said, "Why did you not tell me what a lovely place I was living in?"

They had done their best, but they had failed to give him any adequate conception of the beauties of Nature. So it will be when we get to Heaven. We will say: "The half was never told." Who could adequately describe the glories and the felicities of the Home above, where all is love? There is one thing true, and that is, that all that is best and most precious here is most plentiful there. The hearts of all are filled with love. The songs are all glad, and the streets are all gold. How rare such things are here! Still there is much in God's Word that can thrill us and cheer our hearts. Let us consider some of the things told us about Heaven.

HEAVEN, A PLACE

The Bible describes Heaven as a place. John xiv, verse 2, says, "In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so I would have told you; I go to prepare a place for you." It is not a state,

but a place. As real a place as any place we know of on this earth. Where it is we cannot tell, but the Bible always speaks of it as being up. It is somewhere other than this world, but it is as really a place, and we can tell from the Word of God what the place is like.

IT IS A PLACE OF BRIGHTNESS

We know that it is bright there, not so much by the things that are mentioned that will be there, but by the things mentioned that won't be there.

There will be no Night there. It is one long eternal day. The sun never sets. The Lord is the Light of Heaven. I don't know how you feel about it, but to me this fact fills me with joy. I cannot say I am afraid of the night, but I am never comfortable or happy in the dark. We always associate every evil and horrible thing with the dark. Accidents and calamities mostly occur at night. Storms and sickness usually begin and break out at night. Homes are robbed and murders are committed at night. So it is only natural that we don't like the night. When we get to Heaven we will never have this dread, for there will be no night there.

There will be no Death in that place of brightness. They never die nor grow old. No funeral has ever

darkened its streets. There are no cemeteries there. A dying woman said to her brother, who was about to take his leave of her without any hope of meeting her again in this world, "Brother, I trust we shall meet in the land of the living. We are now in the land of the dying." How true it is. How different things will be there from this world, for we cannot get away from the fact of death here. We may not believe very much, or deny everything, but there is one thing we all must believe in and cannot deny, and that is Death. Glory to God ! that spectre will never darken the brightness of that land of life.

Again, the brightness has never been dimmed by sorrow. The world is full of it now. It is almost impossible to find a home here where sorrow has not entered. Every life has its share of it. As you look over a crowd of people, it is striking to notice how many there are who are dressed in black, mourning the loss of some loved one or ones. They are dressed in garments of white up there. There are many shining faces down here, but behind that shining face there is a heart filled with sorrow. What a variety and quantity there is of sorrow; the most of it never seen or known.

Pain is unknown there. None escape it here.

Pain is the common lot of all. Many a woman would be glad to die that she might be free from the pain that is almost unbearable ; she has hardly known an hour for years that she has not been racked with pain. Many have pain at the heart far sorer than any physical pain. A child gone astray in sin. Can anyone fathom the pain such a mother endures? Thank God ! there will be none of this there.

Then it is so bright there that no eye will ever be dimmed by Tears. " This world is full of sighs, full of sad and weeping eyes." A tear has never dimmed the eye there. I don't know what you women will do when you get there, for tears are your friends in many a time of trouble. I have known many a woman say that she frequently went away and had a good cry to herself. Her tears acted like a sort of safety-valve for her. Then what a weapon it is in the hands of women. Just start them flowing, and what man or argument could stand before them? The Lord will see that up there there will be no occasion for them, so they won't be needed. Glory to God ! not only unclouded skies, but undimmed eyes for all who gather there.

And again, so bright will it be, there will be no Curse there. How many are cursed by sin here.

The sin of their parents or friends. Twisted limbs, weak minds, blighted lives, ruined constitutions. Oh! the amount of curse there is here. Thank God! we are going to a world where the curse and blight of sin are for ever done away with. These things will give us some idea of the brightness of that world.

HAPPINESS FOUND THERE

It is also a place of Happiness. There is nothing gloomy or sad in that land. We read of choirs singing and the redeemed singing their blood-passion song. "Unto Him who loved us and loosed us from our sins in His own blood." One of the minor prophets, with prophetic vision, tells us that the streets are full of children playing, not crying. What happiness the children bring to the home, and it seems to me that is one of the reasons why so many die in childhood; the Lord would have Heaven as bright and happy as He can make it. They never know envy or jealousy or hatred or malice or wars there. These are the things that curse our lives and land here. We shall dwell in the happiness of eternal and perfect love. Some places here are sour, and some people, too, but nothing of the kind is known there.

Dr. Guthrie, of Edinburgh, says, "Heaven is greatly made up of little children—sweet buds that have never blown, or which death has plucked from a mother's bosom to lay on his own cold breast, just when they were expanding, flower-like, and opening their engaging beauties in the budding time and the springtime of life. 'Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.' How soothing these words by the cradle of a dying infant! They fall like balm-drops on our bleeding hearts; when we watch the ebbing of that young life, as wave after wave breaks feebler, and the sinking breath gets lower and lower, till, with a gentle sigh, and a passing quiver of the lip, our sweet child leaves its body lying like an angel asleep, and ascends to the beatitudes of Heaven and the bosom of its God.

Perhaps God does with His Heavenly garden as we do with our own. He may chiefly take it from nurseries, and select for transplanting what is yet in its young and tender age—flowers before they have bloomed, and trees ere they begin to bear."

CONSCIOUSNESS

It is also a place of Consciousness. So many are perplexed and wonder whether they will know the

loved ones who have gone before. The Word of God is very clear about this. We read, "For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face." What sort of a place would it be if we did not recognise each other? Here we know each other very imperfectly. Shall we know each other less there? Nay; we shall know each other better when the mists have rolled away. Peter recognised Moses and Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration. They were not changed, and that is why he recognised them. How often, when someone is entering death, they have seen someone loved long since but lost awhile! When good Queen Victoria was dying she was heard to say, "Albert, Albert." Her husband, who had died years before, was near her. I knew a lady who told me that when her little child was passing away, she seemed to wake up and her face light up, and she cried, "Papa, Papa." The father had gone before some time. Are we not to believe all this evidence? What makes any place dear to us? Is it not the presence of loved ones there? If we will not know each other we will not know the Lord Jesus. No, no, that could never be. The recognition of the one ensures the recognition of the other. Surely there shall no knowledge

cease which now we have, but only that which implies our imperfection. And what imperfection can this imply? Nay, our present knowledge shall be increased beyond belief. It shall indeed be done away, but as the light of the candle, or the light of the stars is done away by the rising sun; which is more a doing away of our ignorance than of our knowledge.

I must confess, as the experience of my soul, that the expectation of loving my friends in Heaven kindles my love to them on earth. If I thought I should never know them after this life is ended, I should, in reason, number them with temporal things, and love them as such; but I now delightfully converse with any pious friends, in a firm persuasion that I shall converse with them for ever; and I take comfort in those of them who are dead or absent, as believing I shall shortly meet them in Heaven, and love them with a love which shall then be perfected.

However much we may long to see the loved ones, we will want far more to see the ONE who saved us and loved as with a dying and undying love. "HIM whom having not seen, we love." When the little boy who was operated on successfully, saw, the first thing he asked for was that he might see the one who had given him his sight.

It will be the same with us when we get there. It is not a sleep after death ; for to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord and loved ones. When we die we shall awake in His likeness. We will then know everything perfectly. The problems and the perplexities here will all be solved. The knowledge that we longed for here will be ours there. No more mysteries or uncertainties. We shall know perfectly.

HEAVEN, A KINGDOM

Then Heaven is not only a place, but it is a Kingdom. It is as real as any earthly kingdom, but what a difference from the kingdoms of this world. Here we have rulers and kings, but at the best they are only sinners with crowns on their heads. It is necessary for them to be guarded everywhere they go, and they have to maintain large armies and navies, or they would be dethroned ; but in that Kingdom there will be nothing but perfect love between subject and sovereign and among all the people. Neither wars nor rumours of wars are known there. Everyone will have perfect light. None will be crippled or deformed or stunted. Our knowledge will be perfected, the mists will have for ever passed away.

HEAVEN, A CITY

Heaven is also a City. What a city that will be ! No slums or saloons there. No hospitals or gaols. No poor or oppressed ones. The very things that curse our great cities here will be absent. The city which God hath prepared is as imperishable in its inhabitants as its materials. Its pearl, its jasper, its pure gold, are only immortal to frame the abode of immortals. No cry of death is in any of its dwellings. No funerals darken any of its ways. No sepulchres of the holiest relics gleam among the everlasting hills. Its streets are pure gold. Its homes are mansions, its inhabitants are holy and happy. A city that never was built with hands, nor hoary with the years of time ; a city whose inhabitants no census has numbered ; a city through whose streets no tide of business runs ; a city without griefs or graves, without sins or sorrows, without births or burials, without marriage or mournings ; a city which glories in having Jesus for its King, angels for its guards, saints for its citizens ; whose walls are salvation, and whose gates are praise.

HEAVEN, OUR HOME

Heaven is to be our Home. This view appeals to us most. It is impossible to define home, but we all know what it means. Home, oh, how sweet is that word! What beautiful and tender associations cluster around it! Compared with it, house, mansion, palace, are cold, heartless terms. But Home! that word quickens the pulse, warms the heart, stirs the soul to its depths, makes age feel young again, rouses apathy into energy, sustains and inspires and imparts patient endurance. We delight to think of it. A friend bending over a dying saint was expressing his sorrow to see him so low. With the radiant countenance rather of one who had just left Heaven than one about to enter it, he raised and clasped his hands and exclaimed in ecstasy, "I am going home." I can imagine some mother here whose life has been all toil and labour, say to herself that the thought of Heaven being a home does not appeal to her much, for home to her here, while having so many joys, has had much toil and weariness. It is the mother who is the last to bed and the first to rise. When any are sick she is there day and night. She is always planning and arranging for

the others. The thought of a home is not altogether pleasant to her, but God's home is a home of rest. There are no tired limbs or weary minds in it.

I remember a mother leaving her family and going to a sanatorium for a rest ; after she had been there for some time, she wrote home to the loved ones and said that she felt as if she were in Heaven. She had nothing to do or bother about ; all was done for her. Do you mean to tell me that men can make a place where weary and tired mothers can have rest and God not do better ? That could never be. As the body when it is buried in the grave rests there, free from the fear of disease and death ; free from alarm and accident ; free from hunger and thirst ; free from assault and war ; resting as an impregnable fortress, dreading no hunger or thirst or alarms or death or disease ; so the soul, when it enters through the portals of the Home above, rests from its labours, cares, anxieties, temptations, enemies ; rests in the peace, purity, joy, happiness, protection, and endless benedictions of God.

HEAVEN, AN INHERITANCE

Heaven is also an inheritance. It is incorruptible and undefiled, and never passes away. How many

there are who are selling such an inheritance for a few corruptible acres of land here which they cannot take away with them. Our inheritance is ours sure, for it is being reserved in Heaven for us who are kept by the power of God through faith. There is no fear of our being done out of it by either friend or foe. It will be worthy of our Heavenly Father's wealth.

NO SEA THERE

I have been trying to show you some of the glories of that land that is fairer than day, but there is one thing that is mentioned that will not be there, that I, for one, will sadly miss. It is this, "There was no more sea." I have lived by the sea all my life; I have sailed on it for years. I love its roar and roll. Its noise is music. Three-fourths of this world is sea. What a want there will be there! But we must not take these words literally, but symbolically. What is the sea the symbol of? What does it suggest to our minds? There are four things at least that the sea speaks to us about.

STORMS

The sea suggests to us Storms. What a stormy life John had lived! He was an old man and lived for the testimony of Christ. What storms he had

passed through, storms of persecution again and again! He has been baffled and beaten by them, and now he is wearied and tired, and as he sat there on that rock-bound Isle of Patmos that Lord's Day, he was in the spirit, and he began to think of the home over there. The Lord gave him a look in, and the very thing that was shrieking and roaring in his ears then was not to be seen there. There were no more storms. Are not our lives like that, too? It does not matter how quietly we may have lived, we have had our storms to encounter. If we are truly His and living out and out for Him, we shall surely suffer persecution. The world has not changed in its attitude to the Lord, and because we bear His name, the world will give us a very stormy time. Praise God! when we leave this realm we will never have any more storms. We have had storms of temptation and trial and sorrow, again and again, until we have thought at times that our frail barque would be overwhelmed.

Let us ever remember that we have the Lord of sea and sky with us, and we can never be lost with Him on board. What a cyclone of passion we have come through, we have almost been sucked into its fatal centre! Sun and stars at times seemed to have ceased

to shine, so dark was the night. We have weathered them all and will until we reach the other shore, where the storms of life will be over. Every storm is a fair wind to the child of God, for He is working all things together for our good. They but blow us on our way home.

RESTLESSNESS

The sea also speaks of Restlessness. You never saw the sea perfectly still. It is always in motion. It has a twofold motion, it fluctuates and undulates. It rises and falls and goes to and fro. Isn't that like our lives? What restless creatures we are. We are never satisfied here and never will be until we awake in His likeness. We are always consumed with restless longings, and yearnings. Aims and ambitions have come and gone. To-day, we have been up the hill of hope, joy, and faith; to-morrow, we are down in the valley of the shadow of death. Like Noah's dove, we can find no rest on the troubled waters of this life; but we are making for the haven of rest, where we shall forever be at rest and satisfied.

SEPARATION

The sea speaks to us of Separation. How quickly the family is scattered! We are separated by the

sea. How easily we might meet each other, but there is the great sea, with its dread and danger. There will be no separation there; we will meet to part no more. We also live very lonely and separated lives. We talk about companionships in life, and they certainly are very sweet. There is immeasurable helpfulness in strong, true friendships. Still it is true that however many, faithful and sympathetic our friends may be, we must enter and pass through life's crises alone. Everyone of us really lives a solitary life. We do not fight in companies and battalions and regiments, but as individuals. Each one must live his own life. "Every one must bear his own burden." We are mysteries to each other. It is because we do not understand each other that we often offend or are offended. It becomes irksome to us at times, and the sense of our solitude is almost unbearable. It is grand to know that we are making for a country where there is no separation. How truly the poet has written :—

"Not understood. We move along asunder,
Our paths grow wider as the seasons creep
Along the years; we marvel and we wonder
Why life is life; and then we fall asleep—
Not understood.

Not understood. We gather false impressions,
And hug them closer as the years go by,
Till virtues almost seem to us transgressions ;
And thus men rise and fall, and live and die—
Not understood.

Not understood. Poor souls with stunted vision,
Oft measure giants by the narrow gauge ;
The poisoned shafts of falsehood and derision
Are oft impelled 'gainst those who mould the age—
Not understood.

Not understood. The secret springs of action,
Which lie beneath the surface and the show,
Are disregarded ; with self-satisfaction
We judge our neighbours, and they often go—
Not understood.

Not understood. How trifles often change us—
The thoughtless sentence or the fancied slight
Destroy long years of friendship, and estrange us,
And on our souls there falls a freezing blight—
Not understood.

Not understood. How many breasts are aching
For lack of sympathy ! Ah, day by day
How many cheerless hearts are breaking !
How many noble spirits pass away
Not understood.

O God ! that men would see a little clearer,
Or judge less harshly where they cannot see ;
O God ! that men would draw a little nearer
To one another ; they'd be nearer Thee
And understood."

The gulf that is fixed between us here will then be gone for ever, and we shall know each other perfectly and love all the same.

Then we have many who have crossed the bar before us and entered into their rest and home. They have left us here mourning their loss. The chair is vacant. The voice is silent. They are separated from us by the sea of death. How hopeless we would be and how little comfort we would have if we had no hope of a reunion again. It is this hope that helps to dry our tears and makes us strong to bear the separation. A missionary out in India had two little children—a boy and a girl.

The little girl of three took ill and passed away in a few days ; then the little boy took ill also. They saw that it was diptheria. They were many miles away from the doctor. They heard that one had come to a village some miles away from them. They took up the little fellow and journeyed many miles through the jungle to the village, only to find when they got there that he had gone. All they could do was to watch the little life flicker away. Then they journeyed back again to their station, and laid the two wee darlings in the one grave. The mother said that she never seemed to feel the sorrow until

it was all over ; then when she came into the home and put away for the last time their toys and garments, it was too much for her. She collapsed. She lay for some days ill ; but, speaking about it afterwards, she said the thought that gave her strength and comfort was that she was only separated from them for a short time ; she would meet them again and never part. She was able to get up and go about her work again, this glorious truth singing in her heart, Oh, thank God ! we are only parted for a time. Cheer up, mourning one. There is no more sea there.

“ There are whips and tops and pieces of string,
And shoes that no little feet ever wear ;
There are bits of ribbon and broken wings,
And tresses of golden hair ;
There are dainty jackets that are never worn,
There are toys and models of ships ;
There are books and pictures, all faded and torn
And marked by finger tips.
Of dimpled hands that have fallen to dust
Yet we strive to think that the Lord is just.
But we think our dear ones dead,
Our children, who never grow old,
And how they are waiting and watching for us
In the City with streets of gold ;
And how they are safe through all the years
From sickness and want and wear.
We thank the great God with falling tears
For the things in the cabinet drawer.”

CLEANSING

The sea also speaks to us of Cleansing. What a matchless cleanser the sea is. Think of all the filth and the dirt that flows into it every day all over the world, and still it is so pure. What a hotbed of disease it would become if it failed to absorb this. The reason there will be no more sea there is because there is no filth there. All are pure and spotless, and have no need of cleansing any more.

Are we all on the way? I fear there are those who hope to be there, but they have not started. When are you going to make a start? You must make a start if you are ever to see the loved ones who have gone before. Remember, there is only one way there, and that is the narrow way. Jesus is the way, and no man can come to the Father but by HIM. If you reject Him you shut the door of glory in your own face and open the door to hell. It is a prepared place, and you must be prepared for it by being washed in the Blood of the Lamb. Nothing that defileth entereth in there. All are pure and perfect. The conditions of going there are :—

Take your place as a guilty, lost, helpless, hopeless,

condemned already sinner, without one plea. Cast yourself unreservedly upon Christ and Christ alone for salvation. Confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord and you will never perish, but have everlasting life. You must be the heir, if yonder is your inheritance. You must be the labourer, if yonder is your rest. You must be the candidate, if yonder is your reward. As you now add excellence to excellence, as you are not barren or unfruitful, "so shall an entrance be ministered to you abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ."

"For thee, O dear, dear country
Mine eyes their vigils keep ;
For very love beholding
Thy happy name, they weep ;
The mention of thy glory
Is unction to the breast,
And medicine in sickness,
And love, and life, and rest.

O sweet and blessed country,
The home of God's elect !
O sweet and blessed country,
That eager hearts expect !
Jesus, in mercy bring us
To that dear land of rest,
Who art with God the Father,
And Spirit ever blest."

THE GREAT JUDGMENT DAY

"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment."—HEBREWS ix. 27.

AN old Civil War veteran lay dying. His minister came to see him, and as he sat by the bedside of the dying old warrior he wondered what he might say, or wondered what way he might say it; so he said, "John, are you afraid to die?" The old man raised himself up on his elbow and looked with anger and indignation at the minister, and said, "Look here, sir; I have faced death many a time, on many a bloody battlefield, and never was frightened; I have faced it many a time since, and do you think now that I have come to the last of life, I'll be scared? I'm no coward, and I dare you to insult me in my dying hour." He fell back on his pillow exhausted.

The minister was taken all aback for a time, and wondered what he might say now. After lifting his heart to the Lord he said, "John, are you prepared for what comes after death?" "Oh," he said, "that is what makes me scared." How many there are like him! It isn't the thought or

fact of death that scares them. Many a man has faced death with a laugh on bloody battlefields, but when they think about what comes after death, there isn't a man who is not scared.

CURIOSITY ABOUT THE FUTURE

Isn't it strange how men and women will go to this one and the other, and pay large sums of money, if only they can tell them something about the future? There is that in every one of us that likes to pry into the unknown. That is why spiritualism prospers so well these days, and gypsies and palmists and other emissaries of the devil, with their delusions. People believe their lies, and yet doubt the Word of God. You don't need to go to these frauds, for they are just as wise as you are about the future. You have the Bible in your hand. Go to it, and there you will find accurately all about what comes after death. What is it comes after death? It is judgment. "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment."

I want to speak to you about the Judgment. It is strange the amount of confusion there is in the minds of many about this subject. Some of our hymns are the source of this confusion, I believe.

Many seem to have the notion that there will be one great Judgment Day, when good and bad, saved and unsaved, sheep and goats, will be gathered around the Throne of Judgment. This is not scriptural; for the Bible clearly teaches that there is not only one judgment, but there are four. You can see what confusion there will be if we do not get to see this clearly. Let me try to set them forth in order.

FOUR JUDGMENTS

The Judgment of Sin, which had passed for the believer, Christ having been judged for his sins, and he himself "crucified with Christ." Hence, "He that believeth shall not come into judgment." This judgment took place when the Lord Jesus died on the cross on Calvary, more than nineteen centuries ago. Many of God's dear children are kept in bondage to fear, and have no peace with God, through the supposition that they have yet to be judged for their sins. Such is not the case, blessed be God! For Christ has been judged in their place—"has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself"—and the Holy Ghost says, "Your sins and iniquities will I remember no more." Moreover, the believer is "perfected for

ever" and "shall not come into judgment." All my iniquities were laid on Him—not some of them. All my past and present and future sins have been settled by Jesus when He died on Calvary. The sin question is *for ever* settled for the believer. If this is not so, then every time a believer sins Christ must die or else he will, for God never forgives sin. He forgives the sinner. He always hates sin, and deals in judgment with it. Even when sin was on His Beloved Son He could not look on Him with complacency, but struck Him in judgment, until He cried out, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" The work is finished perfectly.

The second judgment that will take place may take place at any moment—at this moment. Glory to God!—the Judgment of the Redeemed of all ages, when each shall receive his own reward, according to his own labour after they have been caught up to meet the Lord in the air, in their glorified bodies. This will take place before the "judgment seat of Christ." Believers "must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ" to "receive reward" or "suffer loss," according to their works on earth. It will not be a question of heaven or hell, since

they are all previously in heaven in "bodies of glory," but of what reward, if any, they are to get when there. Paul has been with Christ—so has the dying thief—for hundreds of years. How absurd it is then to suppose it has yet to be decided whether they are fit to be there ! If we live here as believers, worldly, pleasure-loving, selfish lives, it will be like hay, wood and stubble, and when the fire hits it, it will go up in a puff of smoke ; but if we have lived for the Lord and done our best to win souls, then it will be like gold, silver, precious stones, that will endure the fire and be to our reward and God's glory through all eternity.

There are different degrees of glory in heaven, as there are different degrees of torment in hell ! I don't know anything like this truth for inspiring one in this life to be out and out for the Lord. How many that day will have only faded leaves instead of ripened fruit.

The third judgment to take place is the Judgment of the *Living Nations* on the earth, divided like sheep and goats, according to their treatment of the faithful Jewish "Remnant," whom the Lord calls "My brethren." This will take place at the commencement of the Millennium, or Christ's reign

of 1,000 years, in the Valley of Jehoshaphat, at the base of the Mount of Olives. By a careful study of Matthew xxv 31-46, and a comparison with Joel iii. 3-16, and with Zechariah xiv. 1-9, it will be seen that this judgment is confined to the Living Nations (Gentiles) on the earth, when the Lord Jesus returns to reign. This is important to grasp, as it is generally confounded with the fourth judgment, which takes place at least 1,000 years later.

The fourth and last judgment is the subject I wish to take up with you to-day—the Judgment of the “Unconverted Dead.” This takes place after the close of the Millennium, or Christ’s reign of 1,000 years, before the Great White Throne, after the earth and heaven have fled away. This judgment is confined to the only remaining class, viz., the unconverted dead of all ages, who are condemned to their awful doom in the Lake of Fire for eternity.

WHICH JUDGMENT?

Your decision to-day may determine what judgment you will be at in eternity. If you accept Him now as your personal Saviour, you will never come to the judgment of the great White Throne, but you will be judged for the deeds done in the body

as a believer at the Judgment Seat of Christ ; but if you reject Him, then, just as sure as God has said it, you will appear before the great White Throne of pure unadulterated justice and judgment.

Your decision to-day will determine which resurrection you will be at—whether the first resurrection unto everlasting glory, or the second resurrection unto eternal perdition and damnation.

There are four things I want to say to-day concerning judgment :

First—The Certainty of this Judgment.

Second—The Day itself.

Third—The Judge.

Fourth—Who are the Judged?

CERTAINTY OF JUDGMENT

Judgment is going on on every hand to-day. You cannot violate any law of nature without suffering for it now. Nature never forgives ; she demands the utmost farthing every time and all the time. There is no mercy in the sun, or the moon, or the stars, or anywhere in nature, but in God. Our hospitals are filled with men and women who are paying for their sins, or the sins of others, but they are suffering in judgment.

Put your finger in the fire and it will burn you. Lie, and you become a liar. Steal, and you become a thief. While there will be future judgment, still there is judgment, going on right now, for "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap," and more than he sowed, too ; but everyone of us will reap *if we sow*. There is nothing surer than this. You may deny or doubt the fact of coming judgment, but you cannot deny or doubt the fact of it now. There are men to-day and they are suffering the tortures of hell for one night's debauchery. You can make up your mind that you will suffer if you sin, and suffer here as well as hereafter. It makes sinning easy for some ; for they think that the judgment day is far ahead, that it has lost its terrors for them, and they think it mightn't be true ; so they can sin with an easy conscience and light spirit. Don't forget there is a harvest going on *now*.

But I am also sure there is a judgment day coming, for common sense demands one. In every civilized land here you have justice of some sort or another. Even amongst the lowest races there is some sort of sense that demands justice. They try their law-breakers and deal with them. It is more so in

civilized lands. We have our various courts and judges and law officers. Why? Because we demand judgment or justice. You couldn't get a couple of men fighting, who do not demand from each other a square deal, and the crowd that gathers sees they get it. It is in us, that "something" that cries out for judgment. Where did we get that? We got it from the One who created us. Has He created us like that and He Himself devoid of it? Just as sure as we feel like this, so God will see there is judgment by and by.

Do you mean to tell me that there is no judgment for the distiller and brewer, the publicans and spirit merchants?—these pariahs who are fattening on the ruin of their species. Every penny they have is stained with human blood and tears. Their prosperity has been the ruin of their fellows. They thrived on ruined homes, broken hearts, blighted lives, starving children, and damned souls.

Although licensed by the Government, do you think that this will stop God from dealing with them in judgment? Nay, verily. Just as sure as God lives, they will give an account for every tear shed, and every throb of pain felt by poor women and mothers, for the cry of starving children for

bread ; and as God dealt with Pharaoh in judgment for his treatment of His people, so God will deal with these monsters, who can live in luxury while their victims live and die in misery. Is there no judgment for the moral leper who ruins young women and sacrifices them on the altar of lust, and then runs away with a laugh and evades the law here ? It seems to me that such a rascal is too bad for hell itself ; but, just as sure as God lives, He will bring him into judgment. Is there to be no judgment for the man or woman who won't give up their Church or the world, but will, by their worldliness, ruin the Church ? Is Judas the only one to go "to his own place ?" Can men to-day sin with impunity in the Church, and because they are there will they escape the wrath of God ?

Judas sold Jesus for a decent price, but the Judases to-day don't think Him worthy of even that ; but they will sit down at His table and take the oath of loyalty and love, and then go right out and sell Him for a glass of whisky or a game of cards, or a dance or picture show or theatre. They do more to hurt the Church than all the sinners on the outside of her ; in fact, they keep them out because

of their inconsistencies and worldliness, and do you think there will be no judgment for them?

If God damned Ananias and Sapphira when they lied to the Holy Ghost, has He lost the power to execute judgment to-day? I would a million times rather meet God out of the Church than meet Him in judgment as a Church member who played the hypocrite or the Judas Iscariot. Is there no judgment for the minister who can stand in the pulpit, and in the name of scholarship or for the sake of notoriety deny the inspiration of the Bible and the deity and authority of Christ, and thus ruin the faith of many and hurt the Church bought with His blood? Or the theological professor who robs young men of the faith of the fathers and turns them out ministerial infidels? I would far rather a man inoculated my boy with some deadly disease and sent him to his grave than have any man rob him of his faith in God and God's Word. The sad thing is that these men are living on the funds of orthodox people. They had neither the morality nor decency to leave their lucrative jobs and come out and earn an honest living. If they have lost faith in what the Church stands for and believes in and what they are paid to teach, let them do this, and

everybody will have respect for them and feel sorry for them ; but while they hold down their jobs at the sacrifice of morality, then they are outside the respect and sympathy and support of every believing man—or ought to be.

But just as sure as God lives and has said it, they will stand before Him in that day and give an account to Him for the young men and women whose faith they have ruined. What a day that will be ! I would rather meet God as a highwayman than as one who robbed men of their faith and damned their souls. Men may escape judgment here from man, but none can escape from God. In the midst of all the ruin, pain, injustice, and hypocrisy that abounds to-day in spite of the law of the land and God, this one thought brings peace and comfort ; that God will bring everyone into judgment, where there will be pure unadorned justice.

THE BIBLE TEACHES IT

But supposing we had none of these reasons for believing that there will be a Judgment Day, we have the sure Word of God, and that settles it for many of us. No man can go to the Bible and not be convinced there is a judgment. It seems to

me that a man must have a queer notion of the Lord Jesus when he thinks that He is all love and not justice. I could not trust a God like that. A minister said to an old Scotch saint as she lay dying, "What is it gives you comfort in your dying hour? Is it the love or God?" "Oh, no," she said. He was surprised, and said, "Is it the mercy of God?" "No," she said again; "I have no right to either His love or mercy." "Then what is it gives you comfort in your dying hour?" "It is the righteousness of God," she said, for "He is just, and the justifier of everyone that believeth." God is not a capricious God. God is stern, inexorable, just as well as loving; and if you will not bend, you will break; if you will not turn, you will burn. Hear God's Word: "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thine heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment."

Again, "God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or evil." God hath appointed a day in which He shall judge the world. God thrust out Adam and

Eve when they fell. God branded Cain after he killed his brother. God drowned a world with flood, and burnt up the cities of the plain, and overthrew many nations on account of their sin. Has He changed to-day? Is He scared to execute judgment on man because this is "Man's Day"? You would almost think He was by the way men live and talk to-day. But he says: "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."

An infidel dying said, "I could die in peace if I could believe the Bible wasn't true." Some of you could live in sin easier if you could believe this, too; but just as sure as you live and God lives, you will be brought into judgment if you don't repent and believe now. Turn from the notions of men and from your own notions, and take the Word of God for what you believe. You will find it safer here and hereafter.

JUDGMENT IS APPOINTED

What kind of a day will the Judgment Day be? We are told in the Word of God, it will be an appointed day. "God hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness."

There is no luck with God, there is no chance, as people talk about ; there is no accident with God ; there is no evasion. God has appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness. Many a man overtaken in crime who has been let out on bail has cleared the country and evaded judgment. Brother, you may be very smart and you may evade every judgment of your land, and you may clear out from every court of justice in your land, but here is one that you will not get rid of. God's appointments are always kept.

God appointed the seasons—spring, summer, autumn, winter—and you never heard of them failing. God appointed night and day, and you never heard of a day when the sun forgot to rise. God appointed these heavenly bodies and you never heard of them going wrong, did you ? I once sailed for five months and nineteen days and never saw land, and yet so regularly did the sun rise and set that we reached our desired haven in perfect safety ; and, if in natural things God's appointments are kept, He will be just as faithful in keeping this one, whether you like it or not ; whether you are willing or not ; whether you are young or old.

Thus saith the Lord, "If ye can break My covenant of the day and My covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season, then may also My covenant be broken." When God's appointed day comes you will keep that appointment. You will not be able to get a substitute then ; there will be no excuses accepted. God's appointments are made to be kept, and He will make sure that they are kept.

THIS IS MAN'S DAY

There is a great day coming—Christ's day. But "this is man's day," and a wonderful day it is—a day of inventions, a day of improvements, but it is man's day.

"Our Lord is now rejected,
And by the world disowned ;
By the many still neglected,
And by the few enthroned.

But soon He'll come in glory,
The hour is drawing nigh,
For the Judgment Day is coming
By and by."

Take your innings, brother ; this is your day. You can spit in His face to-day, you can trample

His blood under your feet to-day ; you can mock Him to His face. Go ahead ; it is a short day at best you have got ; take it. His day is coming. He is the Man of Sorrows to-day ; He is the bleeding, tender, gentle Saviour to-day. That day, He will be the crowned Christ ; He will be clothed with glory and majesty. It will be His day. Your day will have ended. To-day you may laugh Him to scorn, ridicule His claims, mock His Kingdom and cross, but His day is coming when every enemy will be under His feet and you will be there if you continue rejecting.

DAY OF WRATH

And not only is it Christ's day, it is a day of wrath. Thank God, this is a day of grace. There is not one single doubt about that, it is a day of grace to-day. But, man, when the Judgment Day dawns upon your dark and doomed spirit, you will cry out, and from that anguished heart of yours will rise a most agonising prayer, but there is no mercy. Mercy is ended ; the day of grace is gone ; the Judgment has begun. Wrath and fiery indignation are at that great White Throne ; your prayers and your tears will be unavailing there. Your

anguish will have no effect then. You will stand before the Christ you are mocking to-day.

THE LAST DAY

And then we are told it will be the last day. Time will have ceased ; the great bell and the knell of your time will have sounded ; saints will be in everlasting and celestial bliss and glory, and you will stand at that pure White Throne to be judged and then damned through all eternity. No time again ; all time gone ; and the eternal ages beginning to roll. Thank God, you are in time to-day, and in the day of grace.

THE JUDGE

Who is the Judge ? I want to say several things concerning this Judge, Jesus Christ. It is a good thing to know the judge before whom you will be tried. In England there used to be a judge whom they called the "Hanging Judge," and there was not a criminal in the land but who feared going before him. He dealt out justice, and he got most of the criminal cases to try. The Judge you will meet in that day is omnipresent ; His eyes run to and fro throughout all the earth ; He is everywhere.

And when you stand at the great White Throne of Justice that Judge will be able to say, "I was there when you did it; the darkness could not hide it from me." The judges of our land, although many of them are wise men, often make mistakes, but there will be no wrong condemnation then.

Many a time a judge in our day has to condemn a man on circumstantial evidence, but not so with Jesus. You will stand in the presence of One before Whom you lived your life. Every thought He knows, every feeling He understands, everything you did and everywhere you went, however dark or secret, He was there.

An infidel was lying on his bed dying, and he thought he would like to see his little daughter (she had been sent away to school) before he died, and the daughter came; but she did not seem to realise the condition her father was in, and she began to tell how well she was getting on at school. He pointed over to a card on the wall and asked her to read, and it was this: "God is nowhere." She read "G-o-d God, i-s is, n-o-w now, h-e-r-e here." And that poor man tried to shut out God. You cannot get away from Him. He is the unavoidable Christ. You were never in a bar but

He was there. You were never in any bed of sin, but He was there. He is omnipresent. He is everywhere.

He is omniscient. That is, not only is He everywhere present, but He is perfect in knowledge, and when you stand in His presence and look in His face, and when judgment is passed upon you, you will say, "Lord that is true, perfectly true." Perfect in knowledge. All the judges in our land are limited in their knowledge, but here is the One before whom you are going to stand who is all-wise and knows everything perfectly.

And the last thing I want to say about the Judge is this: He is omnipotent; almighty; not only everywhere, not only all-wise, but all-powerful. I have been in South America, South Africa, and other parts of the world, and I have sat and worked with men who have evaded the law of their land. If they went back to England, the law would grip them immediately; and there they are in other countries, evading the law. Why? Because the law is not almighty. It is mighty, but not almighty. There are men in your country to-day, and if the law could only catch them it would bring them to justice.

The old Puritans used to say, in their quaint way, that "though God should burn the world, He would sift the ashes and bring every sinner into judgment." "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes, but know thou that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment."

You may mock God and deride Him to His face to-day. I heard a man stand up and say, "If there is a God, let Him strike me dead in five minutes' time," as if that would be any evidence there was a God. You may brazen God to His face, but, brother, there is a time coming when He will break you. You will not bend to His pleading and love to-day, but when He grips you, you will break. His arm is strong to save. It will be just as strong to bring you to judgment then, and, although you might evade every judge and all earthly judges, you will never evade this Judge, for He is almighty.

THE JUDGED

Who are the judged? "They whose names were not written in the Lamb's Book of Life were cast into the lake of fire." Although your name is on

the communion roll of your church, though you are living a very moral and good life, and are a professor of religion, but not a vital possessor of life, having a form of godliness, but denying its power, my dear brothers, whenever the end comes you will stand at that great White Throne of Justice and from there be cast into the Lake of Fire. Drunkards and murderers, harlots and blasphemers, as well as rich and poor, the moral and the pure and religious, all will stand there.

It does not matter how good a moral life you may have lived, it does not matter how many prayers you may have uttered, it does not matter how much money you may have given to the poor, how strenuously you may have wrought for social reform, if your name has not been written in the Lamb's Book of Life, then you will stand at that great White Throne to be judged and damned.

MERCY STILL

I do not know how you may feel, but these are awful things for any man to have to say, and if I studied my own heart and my own feelings, I would not talk of them. I cherish the Love of God as well as any man. It thrills and fires my heart as nothing

else can ; but I would be untrue to you if I did not tell you the other side. It is the love of God that reveals the other side, and, my dear brother, if you will not repent, if you will not seek the Lord, if you will not turn to Jesus Christ in this day of grace, you must meet Him in judgment. You have the option of meeting Him in grace to-day, but you will not have the option of meeting Him that day ; you must. Thank God, the great White Throne is still vacant. There is another throne, blood-stained and crimson—a throne of grace whereby we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in every time of need. Dear man, you will not rush into the judgment, will you ? Will you not be wise to-day and come to the throne of grace, crimson with His blood, and obtain mercy ? There is great mercy with the Lord, although you have trampled His blood under foot for years. Although you may have raked in the very kennels of hell, there is mercy with the Lord.

RECONCILIATION

In the North of England there was a family—one of the most respectable and respected families, and one of the oldest families in the county. They

had only one boy, and when he grew up to years of responsibility he developed habits of gambling and drinking. His father was a Christian man and a Member for Parliament for that district. This son, by his drunken habits, brought his name to shame and disgrace. His father had again and again redeemed him, paid his debts, and got him out of trouble; but at last, broken-hearted, he said, "John, if you stop this life and live as you ought to live, this home is yours. But if you intend to live as you have been living, I have paid your debts for the last time. There is the door." And the young fellow picked up his hat and left the home. A father is not like a mother, and although the father grew impatient, the mother's love was never exhausted. She became sad-hearted and faded away, and in spite of all that was done to lift her spirits, she sank into decline. They took her to physician after physician, and from health resort to health resort, and after years of trouble, and expense she came home to die.

The doctor said, "Madam, I fear you will pass away to-day." And when the doctor came out the husband said, "Well?" And the doctor said, "This is her last day here." The husband went to

his wife's bedside. She was lying there white and weak, and with her emaciated hands she took his and said, "You know what is bringing me to a premature grave. I am dying, and would like to look into the face of my child once more. Oh, grant me this dying request. My heart is hungry, withered, and broken ; but now it is the end. John, I will never have another petition to ask ; but I would like to see my boy, to look on his face again before I die. It would ease my deathbed and make it bright."

They discovered the boy was in Newcastle-on-Tyne, and they wired for him. He got the wire, and almost with a broken heart he read the message. You will find a tender heart under many a prodigal's breast. I have many a time sat yonder in the Salvation Army barracks at Mafeking, in South Africa, with the tears running down my cheeks. Though we would not listen to the preaching, we used to listen to the singing, and there was one woman who used to sing :

"Your mother still prays for you, Jack,
Your mother still prays for you, Jack,
In that land far away o'er the ocean,
Your mother still prays for you."

I have seen three hundred of us sitting there sobbing ; we all had good mothers. When this young fellow got the wire telling him his mother was dying, it seemed as if the trains were too slow ; and when he came to the door he did not knock, he did not need to ask which was her room. In that bedroom he had seen the light of the world. There he had learned to pray. Once he was fair as the morning dew as he knelt at his mother's knee. But now, sin-stained and marred, he came home. Kneeling down, he began, " Oh, mother, my sin has broken your heart, is bringing you to a premature grave. My God, to think that I am the murderer of my mother ! Is there forgiveness with you or with God ? " And she said, " John, I have never ceased to love you. While it is true your sin and conduct have broken my heart, it is true that my love has followed you all the years ; and John, if your mother never ceases to love you, and if your mother is so willing to forgive you, what must God be towards you ? Oh, John, I am dying, but it seems to me I will have to tell Jesus my heaven will be no heaven if you do not come there. Will you promise me, my boy, that you will meet me yonder, that you will take Christ as your Saviour

to-night, and then meet mother in the realms of glory?" "Yes, mother, by the grace of God, I will follow Christ." And she turned round to her husband and said, "John, our life has been happy. God has given us this child, and now I will make another request. I want you to be reconciled to him. He has given himself to Christ, and by God's grace will never bring shame on your name again. Will you not be reconciled to your boy?"

She raised herself in her bed, and, taking her husband's hand in hers, and her son's hand in the other, she brought the two together in a clasp, and then fell back on her pillow a lifeless corpse. The two men, grasping each other's hands, looked in each other's eyes, and then into the face of the mother and wife, and with the tears blinding their eyes they were reconciled over the dead mother.

Men, to-day will you be reconciled to God over the broken body of Jesus? He puts His nail-pierced hand out to you, and He says, "Oh, be ye reconciled to God." Will you put your hand in His and obtain mercy? God help you!

THE UNPARDONABLE SIN

"Wherefore, I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men, but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come."—MATTHEW xii. 31-32.

I HAVE been preaching to you, night after night, the "forgiveness of sin." I have endeavoured to show you God's willingness to forgive and save, and as I have made my way home after the service I have wondered what the angels thought of my message and the manner of delivering it. How cold and careless when compared to the greatness of His love, and the glory of the message of full and free forgiveness. Then I wondered what they thought of the reception given to the message by the hearers. Some believed, but the many treated it lightly, or deliberately refused it, although sorely needing forgiveness. What a wonder it must be to the angels.

I am not preaching to-night the "forgiveness of sin," but the "Sin that has no forgiveness in this world or the world to come."

MUCH CONFUSION

It is strange the amount of confusion there is concerning this sin. Some say and think that it could only have been committed when our Lord was here on earth in the days of His flesh. We know it was committed then. You remember our Lord said to the Pharisees: "Ye would not come." That is past tense. Towards the middle of His earthly ministry He said to the same people: "Ye will not come to Me." This is present tense, and is the reason why every unsaved man is unsaved. You may blame everybody and everything, but it is only your will that keeps you from coming to Christ. There is not a devil in hell or a man or a circumstance on earth that can keep you from Christ, if you will come. Then, towards the end of His ministry, He told them: "Ye cannot come; ye shall die in your sins."

COMMON TO-DAY

Others tell us that it is rarely, if ever, committed to-day. I question such a statement. I believe that it is as common, and maybe more so, to-day than it was in the days of our Lord. If it was possible

then, how much more to-day? I believe if I had angels' eyes I would get a vision, here and now, that would unfit me for preaching to you. There are those here to-night and they are as surely damned as any damned soul in hell. They are as sure of being there as if they were already there. In their bodies they carry a doomed and damned soul. Their day of grace has come and gone, and gone for ever. If I could lift the skin off their foreheads I would see the brand of Cain and the curse of God, for on the forehead God has set indelibly a mark, unseen by man, for man is blind and in the dark.

There never was a day when Satan was more intent on damning men by deluding them into thinking that they can be saved just when and where they like. That they can live as long as they like in sin, and then when they feel they can do nothing else they may call on God, and the God they have spurned will be there to save and bless. There isn't a single word in the Bible that gives an unsaved man any such hope or says that he might not be in hell next moment.

All the promises are Yea and Amen IN Christ ; but you are out of Christ, and without hope and without God in this world. "Be not deceived,

God is not mocked." You cannot make a convenience of God. You cannot live in sin and die in grace. How can we explain why so many are religiously going to hell, and yet they have the Bible in their hands and have it read to them? They mock God day by day, and yet have a hope that God will not let them die in their sins and go to hell. What delusion this is! God commands every man to repent, and it is at the risk of your soul that you refuse.

A man said to me once, "What about the dying thief?" I said to him, "WHICH ONE?" There were two. One saved that none might despair. One damned that none might presume. "Which One?"

Just as truly as the Lord told the Pharisees that they would die in their sins if they believed not that He was the Christ, so truly will you die in yours if you won't believe, or put off believing till some more convenient time. NOW is the accepted time. NOW is the day of salvation. Tomorrow may be too late; not that you might die just now, but your day of grace may end, and in that living body of yours you will carry a doomed soul.

There are others who say they have committed

this sin. Their minds are filled with gloomy foreboding, and their hearts with despair and darkness. They are unfit for the service of God and the society of men. Friend, let me tell you, on the authority of God's Word, that you have not committed this sin. Your very distress of mind and uneasiness of conscience is the surest sign that you have not crossed the line between God's patience and His wrath. When a man has sinned away his day of grace by committing this sin, he isn't bothered as you are. He thinks and feels that all is well, and every fear is calmed. He has no anxiety about his soul. He thinks that he is just as sure of heaven as anybody. But you are in sore distress. It is because you are still the object of the strivings of the Spirit of God. He has not ceased to strive with you.

If you will come to Christ now He will in no wise cast you out. Don't let Satan keep you back from Christ any longer.

SCRIPTURAL

Although there is confusion about this sin, let us remember that there is such a sin. You cannot be saved when you like. You cannot repent and believe just when you think the time is opportune.

I met a man the other day, and I was urging him to beware of committing this sin, and invited him to come to Christ now. He said, "Not now, but I will some day." I said, "How do you know that you will be saved when you come?" He said:

"While the lamp holds out to burn,
The greatest sinner may return."

I said, "Where did you get that?" He said, "You get that in the paraphrases." Just imagine a man risking his soul on such a flimsy thread as that. The paraphrases are no more inspired than any other poetry. Many are being deceived and damned along the same line to-day.

Let us see some of the passages.

Genesis, vi. 3: "And the Lord said, MY Spirit shall not always strive with man."

Proverbs, i. 22: "How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorers delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge? Turn you at My reproof; behold I will pour out My Spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you. Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all My counsel, and would

none of my reproof; I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind." Herod was impressed when John the Baptist preached, and in some sense longed to meet with Christ. The day came when his desire was gratified. Pilate sent Jesus to him, and Herod was glad, and Pilate and he became friends that day. But Herod's day of grace had come and gone. Jesus never opened His lips to him.

It wasn't long after this that Herod died under the finger of the angel of God, consumed with worms. Pilate met Jesus face to face, and was sore perplexed what to do with Him. He knew in his own conscience what he should do. His wife helped him to that decision, but the mob scared him. He almost decided to release Jesus, for he asked Him: "What is truth?" But he never waited for the answer. He went and washed his hands in water, as if that relieved him from his responsibility. He sinned away his day of grace, and some years afterwards, exiled by his master, whom he tried to please, he died a suicide's death and perished. O! it was common then all right.

They were just as sure of their doom that day as when it came upon them sixty years afterwards.

John vii. 34 : "Ye shall seek Me and shall not find Me : and where I am thither ye CANNOT come."

John viii. 21 : "Then said Jesus again unto them, I go My way, and ye shall seek Me, and shall die in your sins ; whither I go ye CANNOT come." Verse 24 : "I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins ; for if ye believe not that I am HE, ye shall die in your sins."

Romans i. 24 : "Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness." Verse 26 : "For this cause God gave them up to vile affections." Verse 28 : "God gave them over to a reprobate mind."

Hebrews iii. 12 : "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called to-day ; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."

Hebrews iv. 7 : "Again He limiteth a certain day, saying in David, to-day, after so long a time ; as it is said, To-day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts."

Hebrews vi. 4 : "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance ; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame."

Hebrews x. 26 : "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses : of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing ; and hath done despite unto the Spirit of Grace."

2 Peter ii. 20 : "For if ever they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning ; for it had

been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they had known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them; but it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."

1 John v. 16: "If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death; I do not say that he shall pray for it."

But not only have we this clear word of God upon this matter, but we have the record of many men in the Bible who committed this sin. Some would give you the idea that there was little or nothing about this sin in the Bible at all, but you will see from the Word we have already read that it has a large place in it; and now when we see the men who crossed this line, I trust it will rid you of the delusion of the devil that you can be saved any time or when you like.

Let us turn to some of the men who crossed the dead line mentioned in the Bible.

MEN WHO COMMITTED THIS SIN

The Word of God not only gives us words of warning, but incidents of men who committed this sin. Pharaoh was dealt with by God, and he said: "Who is God that I should obey Him?" Twelve times God sent His servant to him, until God refused to deal with him any more, only in judgment.

BALAAM

Balaam was a preacher. He prophesied the coming of the Lord. You say, "Can a man be a preacher and commit this sin?" I am not saved because I am a preacher; I am a preacher because I am saved. A man may be a preacher and yet unsaved. He may have gifts and not grace. Three times God dealt with Balaam. The first time in a broad place where it was not hard for Balaam to elude God. The second time God met him in a narrow place, and before Balaam managed to get rid of God his foot was crushed. The last time God dealt with him, God pressed him so that he could not pass, but Balaam dealt deceitfully with God, and God said, "Go," and Balaam went out

from God as a wandering star, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever. Take care, friend, that God is not dealing with you for the last time.

NOAH'S CARPENTERS

Noah believed and obeyed God and built an ark. He had many helpers during the 120 years, but they would not believe, although Noah preached to them for 120 years. The day came when they were ordered into the ark, but refused, and that Unseen Hand shut the door. The rains and floods came, and all were lost. Their last chance had come, and they refused. You may be a Church officer, a Sunday School teacher, a singer in the choir, an active Christian worker, helping to advance Christ's Kingdom, and yet be unsaved, and when the judgment of God comes, be engulfed and damned.

JUDAS

Judas forsook all and followed Christ. It wasn't fashionable then. It involved a good deal of suffering and loss. When it came to the close of Christ's earthly ministry, Jesus said to him over the communion table, "What you are doing, do quickly."

Judas looked into those eyes of love and rose up from the table and went out ; and as John records the scene, he writes with a shudder, " It was night." And the light never dawned upon his doomed and darkened spirit again. Take care. You have sat at the Lord's Table and kissed Him again and again. Oh, take care, take care. If you refuse to repent and believe, it may be recorded of you, " He went out and it was night," and the light of Christ's Gospel never again lighten and warm your doomed and damned spirit.

PILATE

Pilate played with Christ and conscience until Christ stood silent in his presence, and Pilate sinned away his day of grace ; and history tells us that he died by his own hand in exile. His body lies in a suicide's grave and his soul in a suicide's hell.

HEROD

Herod tried to turn the Son of God into a county fair buffoon, and thought He would perform some tricks to amuse him. He died by the touch of the angel of God, blaspheming God. These are cases recorded for our warning ; I pray you may not go on in sin, expecting to be saved when you like.

“There is a time we know not when,
A place we know not where,
That seals the destiny of men
For glory or despair.
There is a line by us unseen,
That crosses every path,
The hidden boundary between
God’s patience and His wrath.

To cross that line it is to die,
To die as if by stealth,
It does not dull the beaming eye
Or pale the glow of health.
The conscience may be still at ease,
The spirit light and gay;
That which is pleasing, still may please,
And fears be thrust away.

But on the forehead God has set
Indelibly a mark,
Unseen by man, for man as yet
Is blind and in the dark.
But angels know the fatal sign,
And tremble at the sight,
And devils trace the lurid line
With desperate delight.

And yet the doomed man’s path below,
Like Eden may have bloomed;
He does not, will not, feel or know
Or think that he is doomed.
He thinks, he feels that all is well,
And every fear is calmed;
He lives, he dies, he wakes in hell,
Not only doomed but damned.

Oh, where is this mysterious bourne
By which our path is crossed,
Beyond which God Himself hath sworn
That he who goes is lost?
How far may we go on in sin?
How long will God forbear?
Where does hope end, and where begin
The confines of despair?

An answer from the skies is sent:
'Ye that from God depart,
While it is called "To-day" repent,
And harden not your heart.'

FOUR QUESTIONS

There are four questions I will try to answer concerning the Unpardonable Sin:

First—What is the nature of this sin?

Second—Who usually commits this sin?

Third—What are the symptoms of one who has committed this sin?

Fourth—Why is it an unpardonable sin?

ITS NATURE

You will notice from the words of the Lord that it is no ordinary sin. He says, "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men, but——" However many or great your sins may be, there is pardon with the Lord for every one of them,

but for this sin—there is no forgiveness here or hereafter. A young man came to me after one of our meetings and said, "I have committed the Unpardonable Sin." He looked as if he had, too, for he was the very picture of sorrow. I said to him, "Tell me what sin you have committed, or what you have done that makes you think that you have committed this sin?" He said, "I have broken the Seventh Commandment." "Well, supposing you have, and I am not making light of your sin, but listen to the words of Christ, 'ALL MANNER of sin' shall be forgiven unto men. Surely this includes the sin you mention, too." Thank God, he saw the light.

I remember another man coming to me and saying he had committed this sin. He, too, looked as if he had, for the look of the man scared me. His hair was long and unkempt, his beard long and filthy, and his face dirty and bloated, his clothes greasy and dirty. He was the picture of incarnate sin and iniquity. He told me that he had been brought up in the Highlands of Scotland. His father was a godly man and elder of the church; the family respected in the district. He was fond of poaching, and one night, while out on the moors, he came

suddenly upon the gamekeeper, and without thinking he took the butt-end of his rifle and killed him. He got twenty years for manslaughter. He told me that he never knew a day or night that he couldn't feel the blood of that man on his hands and face. He had been out of gaol for five years and never been sober, trying to drown the scene, but all in vain. He told me there was no hope for him. "I have committed the unpardonable sin." I turned him to the Word of the Lord, "ALL MANNER of sin shall be forgiven unto men."

Murder or any other sin, but this sin mentioned here, shall be forgiven. He got the light, and entered into peace through believing. No, no, it isn't that, great as that sin is.

When I was a young man serving my time at sea, we had a third mate on the vessel. He was an awful blasphemer, and never cursed except in the name of the Holy Ghost. He could make the blood run cold in your veins. We used to say, in our ignorance, that he had committed the Unpardonable Sin. Oh, no; for when we read these words of the Lord we see that "*all manner* of sin and BLASPHEMY shall be forgiven unto men." It is just as big a sin to take the name of God or Jesus

in vain as it is to take the name of the Holy Ghost in vain. So that isn't the sin.

In its nature it is against the Holy Ghost. Many times it is recorded that the Pharisees attributed the power of Christ to the devil. They said He cast out devils by the Prince of the Devils. He revealed His deity and the truth of His mission and message by the life He lived, and by the words He spake, and the miracles He performed. He said, "Believe Me for the work's sake." But in spite of this evidence they denied Him.

Have we any sin like this to-day? When men deny His deity and make light of His authority, and try to make out that the Word of God is not infallible; when they attribute the Spirit's power to the power of man; or when they make light of the necessity of regeneration and say that all man needs is a better environment or better knowledge. Take care, man, that you don't commit this sin. You are on tender ground. In its nature it is wilful and deliberate.

They made up their minds about Him. They held council meetings about Him, and what they would do with Him, and they wilfully and deliberately rejected Him. You have again and again

resisted the strivings of the Spirit. You have stifled His voice. You have quenched the burning convictions He set alight in you. You have had a hard time doing all this. Take care you don't succeed in sinning away your day of grace and damning your soul. It is also in its nature a sin against clearest Gospel light. It is not a sin of ignorance. The Lord said, "And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him." That is, they might have mistaken His deity because of His humanity.

If they did they would be forgiven, for it was on account of their ignorance. His deity was veiled by His humanity. He would allow for that; but to deny the open heaven and the descending dove; to deny the voice from Heaven saying, "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased"—to doubt that was to shut their eyes to the light.

To deny the miracle of His sinless and unique life and the manifestations of Divine power in His miracles, was to seal their doom and ensure their damnation. Friends, if it was possible in that dim, dark, distant day to commit this sin, how much more possible in this day of such light and privilege,

with the light of two thousand years shining on and from that Life. You have been raised in the lap of Christianity, and yet you shut your eyes to the light. Take heed ; to continue to do so is to succeed in sinning away your day of grace and damning your soul.

KICKING OUT THE LIGHT

It is a law of Nature that what you do not use you lose.

The faculty that God gave you, and gives every human creature when he is born, will surely atrophy and wither away if not used ; and there comes a time when you would long to be able to perceive and believe, but you have lost the power by non-use. A collector of stalactites heard of wonderful specimens to be had in one of the Mammoth Caves of Kentucky, but access to the cave was difficult and dangerous. He determined to have a try, so he tied a cord on the outside of the cave, and with a candle made his way in, paying out the cord as he entered. At last he succeeded in getting to the place. The sight of such specimens excited him. He carelessly laid down the light and cord and began to gather the specimens. In his excitement he

kicked the light out. He was dazed for a time, and then began to search for the cord. His friends missed him for many days, but could not find him, until one happened to see the cord, and knowing his friend's hobby, immediately suspected where he was. He got another friend, and they both followed the cord until they came to the cave. What a sight met their gaze ! There was the decomposing corpse of their friend, and some few inches away from his hands was the end of the cord. They could trace the marks where he had groped and crawled hour after hour, round and round the cave, searching for the cord. To find it meant life, sunshine and friends. He groped in vain. Oh, the agony of that man's mind ! How he would bewail his carelessness ! How eagerly he would long and look for the cord ! It was all in vain. He perished.

There may come a day in your life if you continue resisting the Holy Spirit, when you will seek and not find, when you will call aloud for mercy and get no response. How you will bewail your sinful and wilful folly ! Oh, beware ; do not kick the light out in groping for life's pleasures and possessions.

“Light obeyed increaseth light;
Light resisted bringeth night;
Who shall give me will to choose
If the love of life I lose?
Speed, my soul, this instant yield;
Let the light its sceptre wield;
While thy God prolongs His grace,
Haste thee to His Holy Face.”

THE GUILTY ONES

The people who are guilty of this sin are usually the religious and respectable people. It was the élite of religious society in the days of our Lord's flesh who committed it. There is more danger of the one who has had privilege and opportunity than the one who has had little or none. “Woe unto thee, Chorazin. Woe unto thee, Bethsaida.” Why? Because they have been exalted with privilege and opportunity. Is this not true of many here? Yet in spite of all this, you have rejected His call and claim, or courteously ignored them. “How shall we escape if we neglect?” A sin-seared conscience is an awful thing. Take heed lest ye be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. The Gospel either softens or hardens. It is either a savour of life or of death. The wax is melted by the fire, the clay hardened. So with the Gospel

in its action upon us. If we resist the Spirit we become hardened, until there comes a time when every approach of the Spirit towards us is useless. Better never to have been born than allow yourself to become hardened by your continued resistance to the Holy Spirit.

SYMPTOMS

The symptoms are definite and clear in the one who has succeeded in sinning away his day of grace. They may not all be evident at the one time and in the one person. There is no response to the Gospel message. If I sound out the thunder of Sinai, you deride and call me antiquated and fanatical. There is no fear or dread. If I sound out the silvery wooing notes of Calvary, you are pleased and continue to presume upon the mercy of God by rejecting Christ and remaining in your sins. Golgotha's rocks rent asunder when our Lord was dying, and when they heard His dying wail, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" But your adamant heart has never broken. Why? You have sinned away your day of grace.

Another symptom: There is no recognition of need. You wrap yourself around in carnal security and smug complacency, and persuade yourself and

try to persuade others that you are all right. You say, "Well, I do my best to live a good life. I go to church, say prayers, pay my dues, and live honestly." Say, friend, would you dare to offer the already condemned deeds of the body for the sin of your soul? It is the blood that atones for the soul. God says: "When I see the blood I will pass over you." Not when I see your earnestness, zeal, or religiosity, or morality; but the blood. What daring insult to God to substitute your deeds for the precious blood of Christ; the filthy rags of your righteousness for the seamless, spotless robe of Christ's righteousness.

A true child of God despairs of every virtue or merit, only the merit and virtue of his Saviour. He works out his own salvation with fear and trembling, but you have nothing but a false, presumptuous, blasphemous confidence. Why is this? You have spurned God's remedy for sin until the offer has been withdrawn from you.

Then another symptom. There is no repentance on account of sin. You are only sorry for your sin when it is found out. You laugh and mock at sin. You revel and riot in it. The child of God is in the pains of hell and great sorrow and heaviness of spirit when conscious of sin, and never rests until he has come under

the cleansing power of the peace-speaking blood of Christ. You make light of your sin and laugh at it.

Another symptom is : There is no realisation of danger. You laugh at hell as if it were not a reality, or as if you were not on the way there. How can you ? Others by your side are in great fear, even horror, because of their danger. You have no such feeling. You sit unmoved, and often asleep, under every appeal. The accidents and deaths around you are warnings falling upon deaf ears. Yet if you were to die now, you would be damned in hell for all eternity, but you do not realise it. Even when some come to die they have no bands in their death. They die fearless, but none the less doomed and damned. Who would think that hell is opening under your feet, and there is only a step between you and damnation. It is an awful state to be in—to have no concern about your danger.

I mention another symptom : Bitter rage against the Gospel and Gospel preachers. What cruel and unjust things some of you have been saying about me ! Have I told lies ? Have I deceived you ? Have I not been true to your soul ? You know I have declared the whole counsel of God without fear or favour. Why, then, are you angry ? Others

have been led to repentance and submission, and others have been confirmed in their faith, but you are only more embittered and enraged. This is always the result of sinning against the Holy Ghost. Are any of these symptoms in your life? If you are in some measure tender of conscience, I beseech you, repent and believe.

WHY UNPARDONABLE?

Why is this sin unpardonable? Is there not virtue in the blessed blood of Christ? Can God not forgive? Listen, there must always be two parties to forgiveness, the forgiver and the one to be forgiven. If the one needing forgiveness will not receive it or be forgiven, then he cannot be forgiven—not that there was no forgiveness, but that he refused it. Friend, God has forgiven you, and offers forgiveness to you now, and He has been doing so all along but you have deliberately and wilfully rejected or ignored it. How can you be forgiven if you will not?

The unpardonable sin is the continued and obstinate rejection of Christ until there comes a time when His Spirit ceases to strive and the offer of mercy and forgiveness is withdrawn, and you are left to your doom and damnation. I most lovingly and earnestly entreat you, who are not

impervious to this appeal, but feel your need and danger, do not refuse God's offer of forgiveness, but confess and forsake your sins, and He will forgive, sanctify, and glorify. I feel there are some here now who are on the verge of yielding. How I wish I could help you to yield now! If I dismiss the service and you leave, your conversation may take away your impressions, and you will harden your conscience and endanger your soul. But if you could be led to decide now while you are awakened and alarmed, by any act of mine, how gladly I will do it.

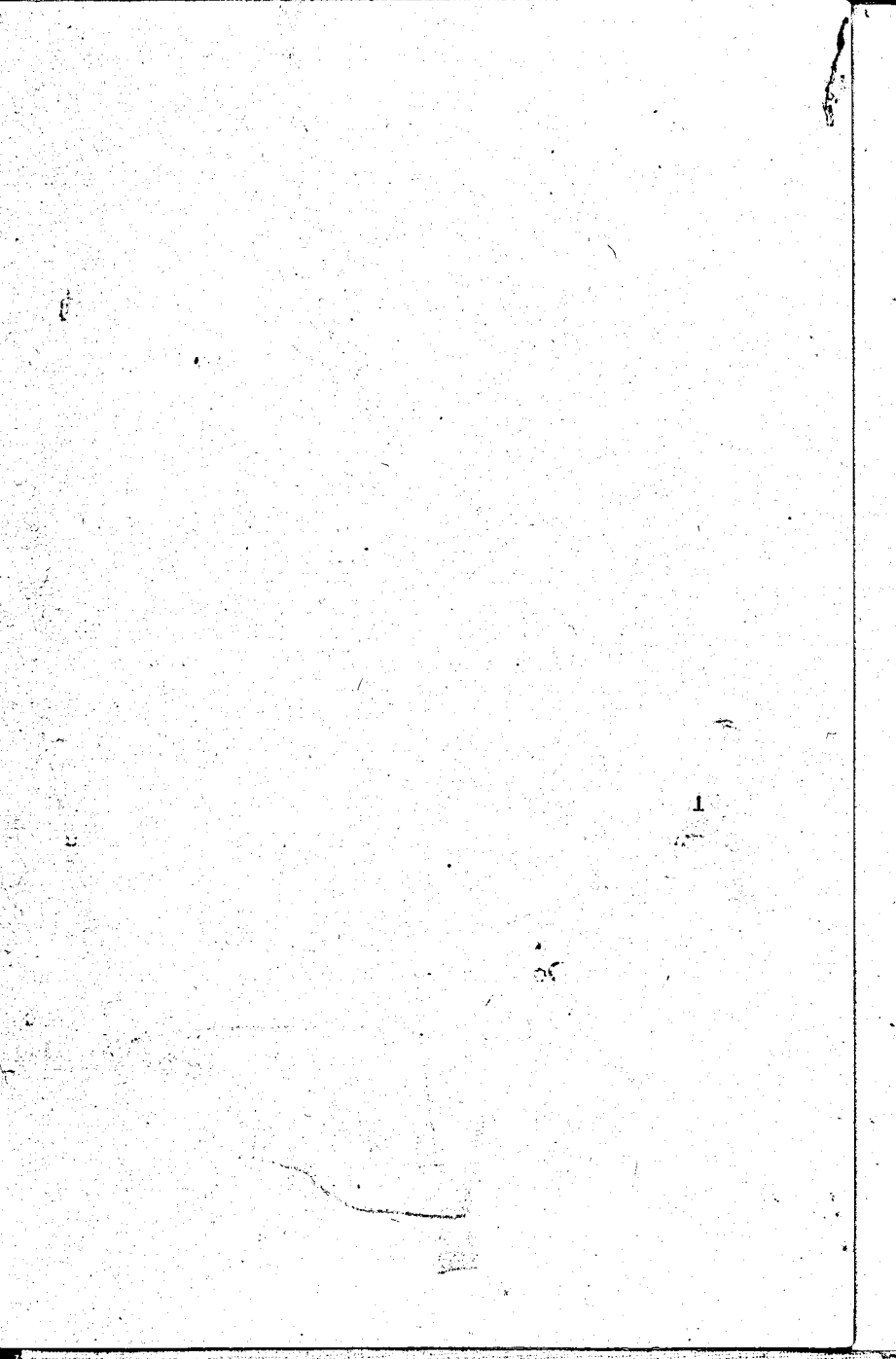
GOD'S HAND UPON YOU

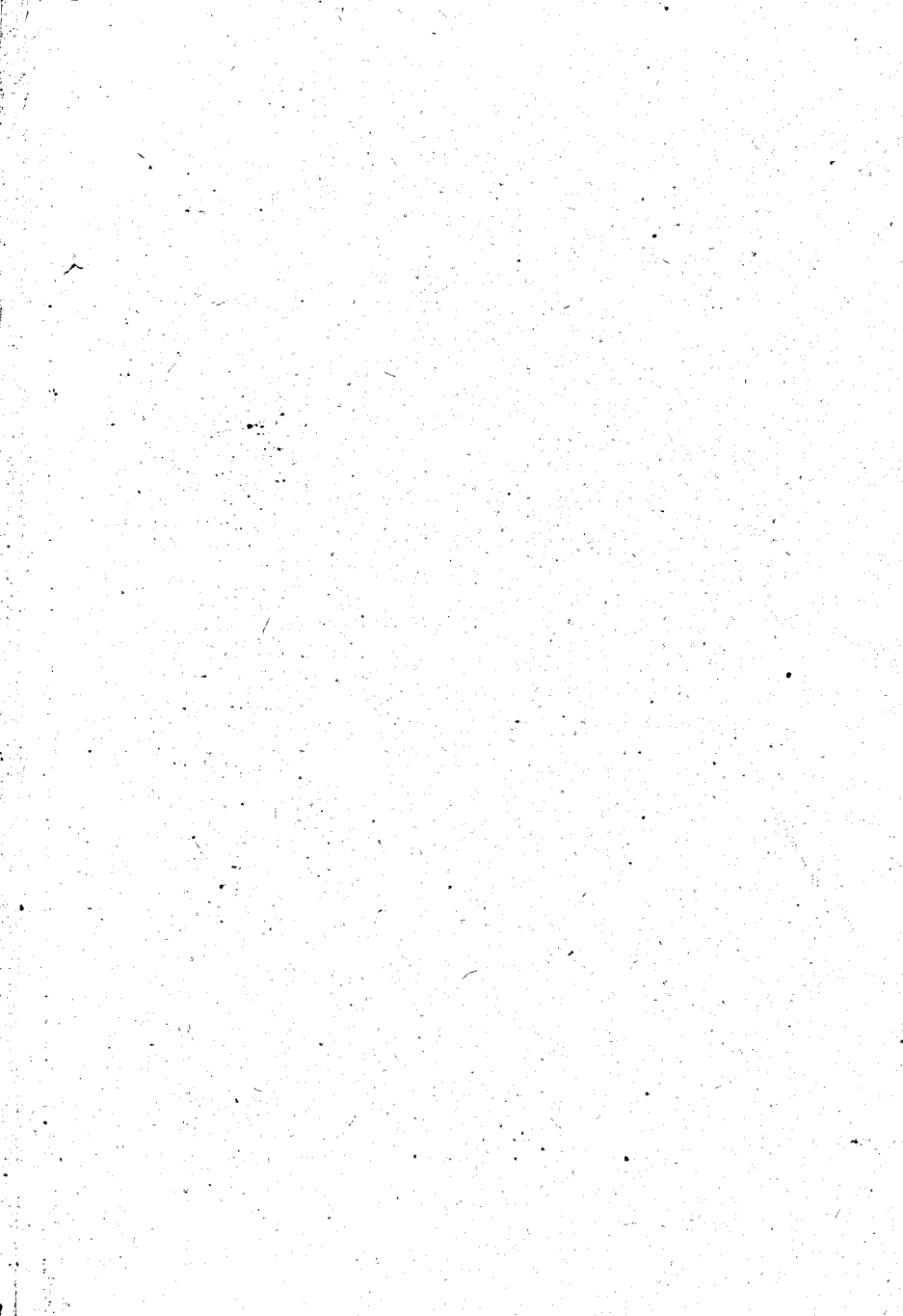
I fear to let you go. I feel like the nurse in a hospital during the Civil War. A young lad had his arm and shoulder fearfully shattered by a shell. They did their best for him, but the limb and body were so shattered that they could not very securely tie up the arteries. The nurse was given orders to see that the wounded lad was not allowed to move. The nurse sat by his side as he moaned and talked in his delirium. Toward morning he quietened down. One of the other patients demanded her services, and she thought, as the lad was so quiet, she could leave him and attend to the others.

When she returned she discovered, to her horror that the lad had moved, and the blood was oozing through bandages and bed to the floor. She stripped off the bandages, and seizing the artery, sent for the physician. When he came he said she might as well let go, as he must die. Nothing could be done. The bleeding had brought the lad to consciousness, and he heard the doctor's words of doom. Looking up into the nurse's face, he pleaded with her not to let go, as he was unfit and unready to die. He had run away from mother and home. She turned away her head, and when she looked again he had gone into eternity. God has placed you under my hand to-day. You are conscious of your danger. I have my hand still upon you. Will you not now decide? Oh, I pray you, do not delay. I cannot hold you much longer. I pray God that my letting you go now may not mean your death and damnation.

"Sinner, how thy heart is troubled,
God is drawing very near,
Do not hide thy deep emotion,
Do not check that falling tear.
Come at once, accept His mercy—
He is waiting—come to-day."

"Oh, be saved; His grace is free!
Oh, be saved; He died for thee."





7/11/11

