

PART FIRST

THE RUDIMENTS OF THE WORLD

CHAPTER IV

THE SENTENCE OF DEATH—THE RUIN OF THE OLD WORLD, AND THE PRESERVATION OF A REMNANT.

The trial of the Transgressors—Of the Literal and the Allegorical—The sentence upon the Serpent particularized—The “Peace and Safety” cry—Jesus came not to send peace, but a sword—The Peace Society the enemy of God—Cain, Abel, and Seth—Atheism defined—Cain rejected as the progenitor of the Woman’s Seed, and Seth appointed—The Antediluvian apostasy—The Cainites and Sethites distinct Societies—Their union the ruin of the old world of which eight sons of Seth only survive—The Foundation of the World—The sentence upon Woman—Her social position defined—The sentence upon Adam—The Constitution of Sin—Of sin as a physical quality of the flesh—Of the hereditary nature of Sin—Of “original sin”—Men, sinners in a two-fold sense—The Constitution of Righteousness—Men become saints by adoption—The Three Witnesses—The “new birth” explained—The Two Principles—Of “the light within”—The scripture revelation the divine principle of illumination—The awful condition of “the church”—Of the Hidden Man of the Heart.

IN the previous chapter, I have treated of the introduction of sin into the world; its immediate effects upon the transgressors; and of some of its remoter consequences upon their posterity. We left Adam and his companion hid among the trees of the garden, greatly alarmed at the voice of God; and overwhelmed with shame at the condition to which they had reduced themselves. But, though hid, as they supposed, they soon found the truth of the saying that is written, that “there is not any creature that is not manifest in his sight; but all things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do”. When the Lord God called to Adam, he said, in answer to the question, “Where art thou?” “I was *afraid*, because I was *naked*; and I *hid* myself”.

This was the truth as far as it went; but it was not the whole truth. Fear, shame, and concealment are plainly avowed; but why he was ashamed he was not ingenuous enough to confess. The Lord God, however, knowing from the mental constitution He had bestowed upon him, that man could not be ashamed unless his conscience was defiled by transgression of His law in fact or supposition, directed His next inquiry so as at once to elicit a confession of the whole truth. “Who told thee”, said He, “that thou wast naked?” Did I tell thee, or did any of the Elohim? Or, “Hast thou eaten of the tree whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?” Thou hast no cause to be afraid of Me, or ashamed of thine appearance as I have formed thee; unless thou hast sinned against Me by transgressing My law. Thou hast heard My voice, and stood upright and naked in My presence before, and weft not

ashamed; what hast thou done? Why coverest thou thy transgression by hiding thine iniquity in thy bosom?

But Adam, still unwilling to be blamed according to his demerits, in confessing reflected upon the Lord God, and turned evidence against Eve. "The woman", said he, "whom *thou* gavest to be with me, *she* gave me of the tree, and I did eat." As much as to say, If thou hadst not put her in my way, and I had been left to myself, I should not have done it. It is she who is chiefly to blame; for she not only ate herself, but tempted me.

The offence being traced to Eve, the Lord Elohim said to her, "What is this that *thou* hast done?" But her ingenuousness was no more conspicuous than Adam's. She confessed that she had eaten, but excused herself on the ground of a deception having been practised upon her by the serpent: "The serpent beguiled me", said she, "and I did eat."

There is no evidence that the Serpent either touched the tree, or ate of its fruit. Indeed, if he had he would have committed no offence; for the law was not given to him, but to Adam and Eve only; and "where there is no law there is no transgression". Besides, Paul says Eve was the first in the transgression. The Lord God, therefore, did not interrogate the Serpent as He had the others. He had, by his clumsy interpretation of what he had seen and heard, corrupted Eve's mind from the simplicity of faith, and obedience to the divine law; but he was incapable of showing upon what moral grounds he had called in question its *literality*. He *thought* they would not surely die; because he *thought* they could as well eat of the tree of life as of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. He thought nothing of the immorality of the Lord God's solemnly declaring a thing, and not performing it. Cognizance of the morality of thoughts and actions was beyond the sphere of his mentality. With all his superior shrewdness, he was neither responsible, nor able to give an account.

All the evidence in the case being elicited, the Lord God proceeded to pass sentence upon the accused in the order of their conviction. Being incriminated by Eve, and having, in effect, accused God of lying, the Lord began with him, and said, "Because thou hast *done* this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life; and *I* will put *enmity* between *thee* and the *woman*, and between *thy seed* and *her seed*: He shall bruise *thy head*, and thou shalt bruise *his heel*." This sentence was both *literal* and *allegorical*, like the rest of the things exhibited in the Mosaic account; being "representations of the knowledge and the truth". For the information of the unlearned reader I remark, that to allegorize is to speak in such a way that something else is intended than is contained in the words literally construed. The historical allegory has a *double sense*, namely, the *literal* and the *figurative*; and the latter is as *real*, as the former is essential to its existence. Thus, the *literal* serpent was *allegorical* of "sin in the flesh"; which is therefore figuratively styled the serpent, etc., as before explained. The literal formation of Eve out of Adam's side was allegorical of the formation of the church out of him, of whom Adam was the figure; therefore, the church is the figurative Eve, and its temptation illustrated by that of the literal one. The examples of this are almost infinite. That of Abraham, Sarah and Hagar as allegorized by Paul in the text below, is a beautiful illustration of the relation between the literal and the figurative, as they are employed in the scriptures of truth. The discernment of the due limit between them is acquired, not by rules, but by much and diligent study of the word.

The literal is the exact construction of the sentence as it reads, and is found in strict accordance with their natural habit, and mutual antipathy between serpents and mankind. They go upon the belly, and lick the dust; and by the deadly quality of their venom, or "sting", they are esteemed more hateful

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than any other creatures. In walking *with a naked foot* one would be bitten in the *heel*, whose retaliation would be instinctively to bruise the reptile's *head*. This is all perfectly natural; but what does it suggest?

Much that might be said upon the allegorical meaning of this passage is already before the reader. I shall add, therefore, by way of summary, the following particulars:—

1. The Serpent as the author of sin is allegorical of “sin in the flesh”; which is therefore called ὁ πονηρός “the Wicked One”; and symbolized in its personal and political agency by “the Serpent”.

2. The putting of “enmity” between the Serpent and the woman is allegorical of the establishment of enmity between sin, incorporate in the institutions of the world, or the serpent: and the obedience of faith, embodied in the congregation of the Lord, which is the woman.

3. The “*seed of the Serpent*” is allegorical of those over whom sin reigns, as evinced in their obeying it in the lusts thereof. They are styled “*the servants of sin*”; or, “the tares”.

4. The “*seed of the woman*” is allegorical of “*the children of the kingdom,*” or “the servants of righteousness”. They are also termed “the good seed”, who hear and understand the word of the kingdom, sown in their hearts as “incorruptible seed”.

5. The seed of the Serpent, and the seed of the woman, are phrases to be taken in the singular and plural numbers. Plurally, in the sense of the fourth particular. and singularly, *of two separate hostile personages*.

6. The serpent-bruiser of the heel is the sixth, or Imperial, head of the Dragon, to be crushed at the period of its binding, in the person of the last of the Autocrats.

7. The head-bruiser of the dragon, the old serpent, surnamed the Devil and Satan, is emphatically the Seed of the woman, but not of the man.

The allegorical reading of the text founded upon these particulars is as follows: “I will put the enmity of that mode of thinking thou hast elicited in Eve and her husband against My law, between the powers that shall be hereafter, in consequence of what thou hast done, and the faithful and unblemished corporation I shall constitute: and I will put this enmity of the spirit against the flesh, and of the flesh against the spirit, between all who obey the lusts of the flesh which thou hast excited, and those of My institution who shall serve me: their Chief shall bear away the world's sin which thou hast originated, and shall destroy all the works that have grown out of it: and the sin-power shall wound him to death; but he shall recover it, and accomplish the work I now pre-ordain him to do.”

THE PEACE AND SAFETY CRY.

“There is no peace to the wicked, saith God.”

The allegorical signification of the sentence became the plan of “the foundation of the world”, under the altered circumstances which sin had introduced. It constitutes the earth the arena of a terrible strife between two hostile powers, which was not to terminate until His law gained the ascendancy over the sin of the world, and but one sovereign will be obeyed by the sons of men. The enmity He put between these parties was not a mere unfriendly verbal disputation, but one which

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reeked of blood. It began with the dispute which caused Abel to lose his life, and has continued unto this day. For nearly 6,000 years has this enmity made the earth a field of blood, and yet the war is not ended. The sin-power still lords it over the world, and is marshalling its forces for a last decisive blow. The “powers that be” have laid low the saints of God in all the countries of their dominion; they have bruised them in the heel; and are now taking up their positions, and preparing themselves to arbitrate their relative and future destiny by the sword. They have forgotten, or are indifferent to, the enormities of the past. They know not that the righteous blood they have shed upon the earth cries loudly for vengeance in the ears of God. Truth, justice, and equity their souls hate; and all that they propose is to destroy the liberty and happiness of mankind; and to make eternal their own vicious and hateful rule.

But God is as just as He is full of goodness, mercy, and truth. “The death of his saints is precious in the sight of the Lord”: and He will not permit them to go unavenged. The “powers that be” can, therefore, no more perpetually exist than convicted robbers and murderers can escape the punishment due to their crimes. The law of retribution to which God has assigned the adjudication of their punishment says, “Give them blood to drink, for they are deserving; *because they have shed the blood of saints and prophets*”; “Reward them even as they have rewarded you, and double unto them double according to their works; in the cup which they have filled, fill to them double.”

But, though the scriptures of truth are so explicit with respect to the blasphemous and felonious character of the governments of the world; though they denounce the judgments of war, pestilence, and famine upon the nations subject to them; though they declare that the wicked are the Lord’s sword to execute his judgments upon one another; though they most emphatically and solemnly aver that God says “there shall be no peace to the wicked”; and though men see, and *profess* to deplore, the whoredoms and witch-crafts of the Roman Jezebel, and the enormities of the cruel tyrants who pour out their victims’ blood like water to uphold her: notwithstanding all this, there are multitudes of people who pretend to take the Bible as the rule of their faith. who claim to be “pious”, and class themselves among the saints of the Lord: I say, men of these pretensions, headed by political and spiritual guides, are clamouring for the abolition of war, and the settlement of all inter-national differences by arbitration!

Such persons may be very benevolent, or very covetous; but they are certainly not very wise. Their outcry about “peace” evinces their ignorance of the nature of “sinful flesh”, and of the testimony of God; or, if cognizant of them, their infidelity, and shallowness of mind. Before peace can be established in the world, “the enmity” which God has put between good and evil, in word and deed, must be abolished. Peace is to be deprecated as a calamity by the faithful, so long as the Roman Jezebel and her paramours are found among the living. “What peace, so long as her whoredoms and witchcrafts are so many?” Will they destroy the divisions among powers and people, which God’s truth is ever calculated to make where it is received in whole or part? Arbitration indeed! And who are to be the arbitrators? The popes, cardinals, priests, emperors, and kings of the nations? Can justice, integrity, and good faith, proceed from such reprobates? Do the Quakers, and financial, or acquisitive, reformers imagine that a righteous arbitration could emanate from them upon any question in which the interests of nations as opposed to theirs were concerned? Really, the conceit of pious infidelity is egregiously presumptuous. If this peace mama be a specimen of “*the light within*”, alas! how great is the darkness of that place which professes to be enlightened by it.

But the most absurd thing imaginable is that the arbitrationists profess to advocate peace upon scriptural grounds! Because one of the titles of the Lord is “the Prince of Peace”, they argue that war

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is displeasing to God. and that Jesus came to establish peace as the result of preaching. But war is not displeasing to God any more than a rod is displeasing to him that uses it for correction. *God instituted war when he put enmity between the serpent and the woman.* It is a divine institution for the punishment of the transgressors of His law; and a most beneficent one too: for all the little liberty the world enjoys is attributable to the controversy of the tongue, the pen, and the sword. What would have been the fate of the thirteen trans-Atlantic Colonies, if they had been left to the arbitrate justice of George the Third's contemporaries? The heel of spiritual tyranny backed by the civil power, would have trampled upon them to this moment. The weak who contend for liberty and truth, have everything to dread from arbitration. With sword in hand, they may extort justice from the strong but, if under the necessity of expecting it at the conscience and tender mercies of "the powers that be", the award will be a mockery of justice, and an insult to the sufferings of the oppressed.

Yes, verily, the Lord Jesus is "the *Prince of Peace*"; and therefore, no peace society can give peace to the world. It is he alone who can establish "peace on earth and good will among men"; for he only is morally fit and potentially competent to do it. The peace of the arbitrationists is peace based upon the transgression of the divine law; and the hostility of the covenanters to the gospel of the kingdom. It is an impure peace; peace with the serpent power reigning over the blood-stained earth. Such a peace as this avaunt! Eternal war is better for the world than such a compromise with sin. The peace Messiah brings is "*first pure*". It is a peace the result of conquest; the tranquillity which succeeds the bruising of the Serpent's head. It is consequent upon the establishment of God's sovereignty over the nations, by the hand of him whom he hath prepared to "break in pieces the oppressor", and let the oppressed go free. "*In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endures. His enemies shall lick the dust; all nations shall serve him, and call him blessed.*" Then shall he judge among them, and rebuke them, and speak peace to them; and "they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

But the Father did not send Jesus with the idea of bringing about this mighty revolution among the nations by preaching the gospel; neither did He propose to effect it in the absence of His Son. *When he appeared in humiliation he came to take away peace from the earth,* as both his words and history prove. "Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division. I am come to send fire upon the earth; and what will I if it be already kindled?" "I come not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set man at variance against his nearest and dearest relations. So that man's foes shall be they of his own household." This is the way the Prince of Peace spoke when on earth. The doctrine he taught is distasteful to the natural mind; and, by the purity of its principles, and astonishing nature of its promises, excites the enmity and incredulity of the flesh. Loving sin and hating righteousness, the carnal mind becomes the enemy and persecutor of those who advocate it. The enmity on the part of the faithless is inveterate: and where they have the power, they stir up war even at the domestic hearth. If the believer will agree to be silent, or to renounce his faith, there will then be "peace and love" such as the world, that "loves its own", is able to afford. But the true believers are not permitted to make any compromise of the kind. They are commanded to "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints", and so long as they do this, they may lay their account with tribulation of various kinds. There is a vast deal of this false peace and spurious charity in the Protestant world. Men have become traitors to Christ, and betray him with their lips. They say, "O how we love the Lord!" and were he here they would doubtless kiss him; but, like Judas, they have colleague with his enemies, and are as popular with the world as its god can possibly desire.

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The truth is, judging from their arguments, the peace-mongers are not so man-loving as they pretend. The cry for peace is a piece of ventriloquism emanating from the pocket. Their strongest argument against war is based upon its cost. The taxes are burdensome because of the extravagance and warlike habits of past governments. This pinches them in the iron chest; and diminishes the profits of trade; and curtails the means of indulging the lusts of their flesh, of their eyes, and the pride of life. It is well these mammon-worshippers should feel the pinch. They are the enemies of God, and oblivious of His slaughtered saints, and, therefore, richly deserving of all the punishment the recklessness of the powers has entailed upon the world. Those who escape the sword and the famine groan under the expense of *punishing the wicked at their own cost*. Thus, the punishment re-acts upon all classes. I say, these peace-criers are the enemies of God; for with all their profession of piety, they are at peace with the world, and in high esteem and friendship with it; and “*whosoever*”, says the scripture, “*is a friend of the world is the enemy of God*”.

Look at the peace congress at Paris, composed of popish priests, dissenting ministers, French politicians, self-illuminati of the Quaker School, English radicals, American priests of all colours, rationalists, infidels, etc., etc.; all in such high favour with the *liberticide dynasty* of France, as to be let into “*Egypt and Sodom*” without passports, or custom-house scrutiny; and to be *fêted* by one of the state officials. In what way can the world show its friendship to the Peace Society more palpably; or the Society its reciprocity of feeling with the most godless and Christless portion of it? The Peace Society is the world’s beloved friend. The world wants peace, that it may find a respite from the judgments of God for its iniquity; and that it may enrich itself by commerce, and enjoy itself in all the good things of life. The Society is the world’s *employee*; its zealous, utopian, missionary; and, therefore, individually and collectively “*the enemy of God*”.

Still, even out of so impious a speculation as this Peace Society, “the wise who understand” may extract encouragement. They will discern a providence in the foundation of the Quaker sect. The unscriptural cry of “peace and safety” emanated from them. They have gained wealth in the temple of their god; and this, with their friend “the world”, is a sufficient guarantee of their worth and respectability. Whatever they were in the beginning matters not; they are now the most popular of all religionists with the masses; to please whom a man must pander to their propensities. All sorts of anti-government factions colleague with the Quakers in their cry of peace; not because they love peace for its own sake; but by curtailing the resources of the state, and so necessitating the reduction of armies, they think they can the more easily supersede the existing tyrannies by a still worse one of their own, as it would doubtless prove. This unhallowed coalition proclaims its outcry to be “*the world’s cry*”.

We accept it as such. It is the cry of the world, which echoes in tones of thunder in the ears of the true believers. It is a cry, in the providence of God, which is a great “sign of the times”; announcing that “the Lord standeth at the door and knocks”, and is about quickly and unexpectedly to appear. It is the world’s cry, as the cry of a woman in travail, which has been extorted by sudden and tormenting pains. It blows a trumpet in the wise and understanding ear, sounding the approach of “the day of the Lord as a thief in the night”; for “so it cometh; and *when they shall say, PEACE and SAFETY; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape*”. Such is the divine mission of the Quakers, and their allies the Cobdenite Reformers. Not satisfied with crying peace, they cry “SAFETY” likewise. This is a peculiar feature of Cobdenism, which urges the disbandment of regiments, and the dismantling of ships, on the perverse presumption that danger there is none! Blind leaders of the blind! The groans of nations ascending to heaven on every side; the

kindling embers of war smoking in Rome, Vienna, and Constantinople—and yet ye cry “Peace and safety”; surely ye are incorrigibly demented, and ripe for capture and destruction.

CAIN, ABEL, AND SETH.

“If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?”

The allegorical signification of the sentence upon the Serpent kindled the first scintillation of hope in the human heart of the appearance of One, who should deliver the world from all its ills, and advance it to a higher state. The promise of such a personage, and of such a consummation, was the nucleus of that “faith, which is the assured expectation of things hoped for, and the conviction of things unseen”. The belief, and spiritualizing influence, of this hope, became the ground of acceptance with God in the earliest times. Faith in this promise was established as the principle of classification among the sons of Adam. Belief in what He promises is belief in God; and its influence upon “the fleshy tablet of the heart” is most edifying in its effect, making the subject of it “a partaker of the divine nature”. Atheism in its scriptural import is not the denial of God’s existence. None but a fool would say, “There is no God”. It is Worse than this. It is to believe that He exists, and yet to treat Him as a liar. To do this, is not to believe His promises; and he that is faithless of these, is “*without God*”, ἄθεος—*i.e.*, an atheist in the world.

In the beginning, this kind of atheism soon manifested itself in the family of Adam. Cain, who was conceived in sin, true to his paternity, was as faithless of God’s word as the Serpent; while Abel believed on God. Hence, the apostle says, “*By faith* Abel offered unto God *a fuller sacrifice* (πλείονα θυσίαν) than Cain, *by which* he obtained witness that *he was righteous*, God testifying of his gifts; and by it he being dead yet speaketh”. This is an important intimation, importing that no religious services are acceptable to God, which are not predicated on *the belief of His promises*; “for without faith it is impossible to please God”.

This was, therefore, the ground of Cain’s reprobation. “The Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering: but unto Cain and his offering he had not respect”. This made Cain fierce and sullen. He refused to “bring the firstlings of the flock, and of the fat thereof”. He did not believe in its necessity, having no faith in the remission of sins by the shedding of sacrificial blood; nor in the fulfilment of God’s promise concerning him, who, being “bruised in the heel”, or slain as Abel’s accepted lamb, should arise, and “bruise the Serpent’s head”, *in destroying the works of sin*. This is what Cain did not believe; and his faithlessness expressed itself in neglecting to walk in “the way of the Lord.” Nevertheless, he continued “a professor of religion”; for “he brought of the fruit of the ground an offering to the Lord”. But the Lord paid no respect to him or his offering; because, in neglecting the sacrifice, he had set up his judgment against God; and in being faithless had in effect treated God as a liar; for, saith the scripture, “he that believeth not God hath made him a liar”.

But Cain’s sullen anger against God could only wound himself. His refusal to obey Him could not injure the Most High. He insulted God with his “will-worship and voluntary humility”, and convicted himself as an *evil-doer*. Self-condemned and impotent, he vented his rage against his brother, whom God respected and had accepted. He was wroth against him: “because his own works were evil, and his brother’s righteous”. He was now a murderer in principle; and with this fratricidal feeling rankling in his heart, brought his gift to the altar. But God, who “discerns the thoughts and intents of the heart”, called him to account for his lowering aspect, and anger against his brother, and said, “If thou *doest well*, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, a sin-offering lieth at the door. And his

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hope shall be towards thee, and thou shalt rule over him”, or have the excellency as the first-born and progenitor of the Seed. But Cain was a genuine “seed of the Serpent”. The thinking of *the flesh* called by Adam the Serpent, was strong within him. He talked with Abel, who doubtless, pleaded for the things repudiated by Cain. But Cain’s reasonings were perverse; well-doing was not at all to his taste; so that, having no faith in the *promise*, he preferred to follow his own waywardness; and being determined to rid himself of his brother’s expostulations, he mingled his blood with the dust of the ground.

Thus was slain by a brother’s hand the protomartyr of the faith. A righteous man, respected and beloved of God. His only offence was, that, in believing the promises of God and doing well, his brother was reprovèd. The fleshly mind hates righteousness, and those who practise it; so that between the two parties *the truth and righteousness of God* lie as an apple of discord. Abel was the first of Eve’s sons of whom honourable mention is made on account of “the obedience of faith”. As Cain was of the evil one by transgression; so Abel was of God by the obedience of faith, which evinced that “God’s seed remained in him”. Hence though both of them were born of Eve according to the flesh, their spiritual paternity was as opposite as light and darkness. Cain was a man of sin; and Abel an accepted son of God. In these characters, they stood at the head of two divisions of their father’s family; and proximately represented the seed of the Serpent, and the seed of the Woman. Cain bruised his brother’s heel; but God appointed a substitute for Abel in the person of Seth, by whom Cain’s headship was bruised, and his posterity superseded in the earth. Eve, says Moses, “bare a son, and called his name Seth: for, said she, God hath *appointed* ME another seed *instead* of Abel, whom Cain slew”.

She had many other sons, but none of them are mentioned except Cain, Abel, and Seth. When, therefore, we are informed that Seth was “appointed *instead* of Abel”, and trace the posterity of Seth terminating through a certain line in Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God; we are taught that Cain lost his excellency by sin, and was therefore set aside; and Abel provisionally appointed to be the progenitor of the seed, who is to bruise the Serpent’s headship over the world. But, Abel having been bruised in the heel, it became necessary, in order to carry out the divine purpose, and to answer allegorically the indications of the sentence upon the Serpent, to appoint another son of Eve in the place of Abel. According to this arrangement, Abel became the type of Jesus, wounded in the heel; but whose sprinkled blood speaks better things than Abel’s, which cried only for vengeance: while Seth typifies him in his re-appearance among the sons of men to bruise sin under foot, and to exterminate in the course of his reign the Serpent’s seed from the face of the earth.

Notwithstanding his crime Cain was permitted to live. But the seed of evil-doers never gets renown. Sooner or later their deeds of villainy consign their names to reprobation. God hid His face from Cain, and exiled him from the settlements in Eden. He wandered still further to the east, “and dwelt in the land of Nod”. There he founded a city, and called it Enoch. His offspring multiplied, and found out many inventions. They became wandering tribes, dwelling in tents and tending cattle; others of them musicians; and artificers in brass and iron. Their women were beautiful, and as the descendants of Cain, untrained in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, were vain in their imaginations, and demoralizing in their associations.

Seth’s descendants in the direct line ended in Noah and Japheth at the time of the flood. His posterity, in this and the collateral branches, multiplied considerably; but for a time constituted a separate community from the progeny of Cain. During the lifetime of Enos, son of Seth, “they began

to call themselves by the name of the Lord”, or “*sons of God*”: while the faithless and corrupt worshippers of the land of Nod were simply styled “*men*”.

THE ANTEDILUVIAN APOSTASY.

The Sethires and the Camires stood related to one another as the church of God and the world; or, as the Woman and the Serpent. So long as the sons of God maintained their integrity, and walked in “*the way of the Tree of Life*”, the two communities had no religious associations, or family intercourse. The time, however, arrived when the middle wall of partition was about to be laid low by a general apostasy. A spirit of liberalism had arisen among the sons and daughters of Seth, the result of an expiring faith, which predisposed them to a fraternity, or mixed community, with the Cainites; who, like their father, were religionists of a wilful stamp. The Serpent’s seed enjoyed themselves in those days as they do now. They were men of the flesh, grovelling in their tastes, habits, and pursuits; and devoted to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. Their religion sanctified what pleased them best; and doubtless afforded a fair specimen of the same sort of thing in all subsequent ages.

It is probable that the precepts and example of the sons of God had considerably modified the original impiety of the Cainites so as to bring things to a similar state to that observable in our day. Sects, between whom there were no more dealings in their beginning than between the Jews and the Samaritans, are now so liberal that they agree to be silent upon all controversial topics for which they once contended to the death, and to recognize one another as brethren in the Lord! Thus, if they ever had the truth they have suppressed it by a tacit compromise; and have become highly respectable, and singularly amiable and polite; so that they “have need of nothing”, but to enjoy the good things of the world within their reach.

The serpents had become so harmless, and even pious, under the influence abroad, and were withal so fair to look upon, and so enchanting in their ways, that the Sethites took them into their bosoms, and cherished them with the affection of their own flesh.

“They saw”, says Moses, “that the daughters of men were fair; and they took wives of all they chose.” This was a fatal step. Can a man take fire into his bosom and not be burned? The sons of God corrupted themselves in marrying the daughters of Cain. Instead of bringing them over to “*the Way of the Tree of Life*”, they were beguiled into “*the Way of Cain*”. For sons of God to marry daughters of Belial is to jeopardize their fidelity to God. This practice has ever been fruitful of apostasy.

Balaam was well aware of this; and knowing that the only way to bring a curse upon Israel was to involve them in transgression, he therefore taught Balak, the King of Moab, to tempt them with the fair daughters of his people, as the readiest way of beguiling them into the worship of their idols; which would cause God to hate them, and so facilitate their conquest by the Moabites. The policy succeeded but too well for the honour and happiness of Israel. Moses says, “They began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab”. The consequence of this licentiousness was that the women invited Israel unto the sacrifices of their gods: and they did eat, and bowed down to them. And Israel joined himself unto Baal-Peor. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against them; so that He slew four and twenty-thousand of them.

After the same example, the union of the Sethites and Cainites was productive of the worst results. The offspring of this union were “mighty men of renown”, whose wickedness “was great in

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the earth”; for “every imagination of the thoughts of their hearts was only evil continually” Their apostasy, however, was not perfected without remonstrance on the part of God. There was one eminent man of whom it was testified, that “he pleased God”. He “walked with God” in the way of the Tree of Life for three hundred years after the birth of Methuselah. His name is Enoch. The spirit of prophecy was in him; and the gigantic wickedness of the Antediluvians aroused him to reprove their iniquity. Animated by the hope of the promise concerning the woman’s seed, he prophesied of the serpents of his own and future time, saying, “Behold, the Lord cometh with myriads of his saints, to dispense justice towards all, and to convict all that are ungodly among them of their ungodly deeds which they have impiously committed; and of all their hard speeches, which ungodly sinners have spoken against him”. But his expostulation was unheeded; and God graciously “translated him that he should not see death”; “ thus rewarding him for his constancy, and *giving the faithful a notable illustration and earnest* of “The recompense of the reward”, and the certainty of the punishment of the world.

Things went on from bad to worse; “for *all* flesh had corrupted *His Way* upon the earth”; “and the earth was filled with violence”. Before, however, things had come to the worst the Lord made another effort to reclaim the Antediluvians. He had resolved to put an end to the wickedness of man upon the earth; for, said He, “*My Spirit* shall *not always* strive with him because he is but flesh”. This intimates a limit to His forbearance; that it should have an end, but not immediately; for it is added, “Yet his days shall be a hundred and twenty years”

Four hundred and eighty years before the announcement of this determination, a son was born to Lamech, the grandson of Enoch, whom he named Noah; that is, Comfort, saying, “This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed”. This was the hope of those who remained faithful of the sons of Seth. They laboured in hope of a translation into a rest from their labours, when the curse should be removed from the earth. In process of time, Noah was “warned of God of things not seen as yet”. Noah believed them; and “God *by his spirit*” in him, “went and preached to the spirits (now) in prison,” that is, to the Antediluvians “who were disobedient in the days of Noah”. He warned them of the coming flood, which would “destroy them from the earth”; and proved to them his own conviction of its certainty by “preparing an ark for the safety of his own house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith”. But, his faith thus made perfect by his works, made no salutary impression upon his contemporaries. “They were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not till the flood came, and took them all away”; leaving only eight persons *of the sons of Seth* alive.

Thus was the mingled seed of Seth and Cain exterminated from the earth. Cain’s race became utterly extinct, and those only of Seth remained, who were upright in their generations, and who walked with God. The distinction of seeds was temporarily suspended. The generation of vipers was extinct; but sin in the flesh survived—a principle, destined in after times to produce the most hideous and terrible results.

THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD.

“Inherit the Kingdom prepared from the Foundation of the World.”

As the woman had so wilfully sought the gratification of her flesh, when the Lord God passed sentence upon her He made it the ground of her punishment. “I will”, said He, “greatly multiply thy
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sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children: and thy desire shall be subject to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.” This being her portion as the consequence of sin, the reverse would have been her condition, so long as her animal nature should have continued unchanged, if she had remained obedient. She would have brought forth children without pain, and would have had fewer of them; nor would she have been deprived of that equality she enjoyed in the garden, and consequently she would have escaped that degradation she has experienced in all the countries of the world.

The punishment, however, was not inflicted simply as an individual sorrow. The pain was personal, and the subjection likewise; but the multiplication of woman’s conception became necessary from the altered circumstances of things; which were then being constituted for the ensuing seven thousand years. In the wax divinely instituted between the seeds of the Serpent and the Woman, there would be a great loss of life. The population of the world would be greatly thinned; besides which great havoc would be made by pestilence, famine, and the ordinary diseases of the flesh. To compensate this waste, and still to maintain an increase, so that the earth might be filled, necessitated that part of woman’s punishment involved in the multiplication of the conception, which is a great domestic calamity under the Serpent-dominion of sin.

We hear much in some parts of the world of the political rights and equality of women with men; and of their preaching and teaching in public assemblies. We need wonder at nothing which emanates from the unenlightened thinking of sinful flesh. There is no absurdity too monstrous to be sanctified by unspiritualized animal intellect. Men do not think according to God’s thinking, and therefore it is they run into the most unscriptural conceits; among which may be enumerated the political and social equality of women. Trained to usefulness, of cultivated intellect and with moral sentiments purified and ennobled by the nurture and admonition of the Lord’s truth, women are “helps meet” for the Elohim; and much too good for men of ordinary stamp. The sex is susceptible of this exaltation; though I despair of witnessing it in many instances till “the Age to come”. But, even women of this excellency of mind and disposition, were it possible for such to do so, would be guilty of indiscretion, presumption, and rebellion against God’s law, in assuming equality of rank, equality of rights, and authority over man, which is implied in teaching and preaching. It is the old ambition of the sex to be equal to the gods; but in taking steps to attain it, they involved themselves in subjection to men. Preaching, and lecturing, women are but species of actresses, who exhibit upon the boards for the amusement of sinful and foolish men. They aim at an equality for which they are not physically constituted; they degrade themselves by the exhibition, and in proportion as they rise in assurance, they sink in all that really adorns a woman.

The law, which forms a part of the foundation of the world, says to the woman, “*He shall reign over thee*”. The nature of this subjection is well exhibited in the Mosaic law. A daughter being yet in her youth in her father’s house, could only make a vow subject to his will. If he held his peace, and said nothing for or against, she was bound by her word; but if when he heard it, he disallowed it, she was not bound to perform; and the Lord forgave the failure of the vow. The same law applied to a wife. A widow, or divorced woman, were both bound to fulfil; unless their husbands had made them void before separation. If not, being subject to God, they had no release.

This throws light upon the apostle’s instructions concerning women. “They are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law.” And “Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to *usurp* authority over man, but to be in silence”. The reason he gives for imposing silence and subjection, is remarkable. He adduces the priority of Adam’s

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formation; and the unhappy consequences of Eve's talkativeness and leadership in transgression; as it is written, "Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression" first. And then, as to their public ministrations, he says, "Let women keep silence in the congregations; for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but to be under obedience, as saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the congregation". It is true, that in another place the apostle says, "Let the aged women be teachers of good things"; but then this teaching is not to be in the congregation, or in the brazen attitude of a public oratrix. They are to exercise their gift of teaching privately among their own sex, "that they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God (which they profess), be not blasphemed".

Christian women should not copy after the god-aspiring Eve, but after Sarah, the faithful mother of Israel, who submitted herself in all things to Abraham, "calling him lord". Nor should their obedience be restricted to Christian husbands only. They should also obey them "*without the word*"; that is, those who have not submitted to it, in order that they may be won over to the faith when they behold the chaste and respectful behaviour of their wives, produced by a belief of the truth.

Such are the statutory provisions enacted in the world's constitution at the beginning, with respect to the position of women in the body social and political. Any attempt to alter the arrangement is rebellion against God, and usurpation of the rights of men to whom God has subjected them. Their wisdom is to be quiet, and to make their influence felt by their excellent qualities. They will then rule in the hearts of their rulers, and so ameliorate their own subjection as to convert it into a desirable and sovereign obedience.

A man should never permit the words of a woman to intervene between him and the laws of God. This is a rock upon which myriads have made shipwreck of the faith. Adam sinned in consequence of listening to Eve's silvery discourse. No temptation has proved more irresistible to the flesh than the enticing words of woman's lips. "They drop as a honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil: but her end is bitter as wormwood, and sharp as a two-edged sword. Her feet go down to death; and her steps take hold on hell." Adam was a striking illustration of this truth, as appears from the sentence pronounced upon him. "Because", said the Lord God, "thou hast hearkened to the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake: in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field: in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it was thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Thus, having passed sentence upon the serpent, the woman, and the man, the Lord appointed them *a new law*, and expelled them from the garden He had made.

These three sentences; and the New Law, constitute *the foundation of the world*. This is a phrase which occurs in various passages of the Bible. It occupies a prominent place in the following text: "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world". The words in the Greek are ἀπὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου, which, more literally rendered, signify, *from laying the world's foundation*. The globe is the platform; the world that which is constituted, or built, upon it; and the Builder is God; for "he that built all things is God". Now, the world was not built out of nothing. The materials had been prepared by the work of the six days; and by the moral phenomena of the fall. At this crisis, there appeared a natural system of things, with two transgressors, in whom sin had enthroned itself; and Thomas, D. J. (1990). *Elpis Israel: an exposition of the Kingdom of God* (electronic ed.). Part First Chapter 4. Birmingham, UK: The Christadelphian.

who were endued with the power of multiplying such as themselves to an unlimited extent. This population, then, was either to act for itself under the uncontrolled dominion of sin; or, things must be so constituted as to bring it into order and subjection to the sovereignty of God. The result of the former alternative would have been to barbarize mankind, and to fill the earth with violence. This is demonstrated by what actually occurred before the flood when the divine constitution of things was corrupted and abolished by the world. *Man when left to himself never improves*. God made man upright; but look at the wretched specimens of humanity which are presented in those regions where God has left them to their natural tendency, under the impulse of their uncontrolled propensities. Man thus abandoned of God, degenerates into an ignorant savage, ferocious as the beasts of prey.

If the Lord God had renounced all interest in the earth, this would have been the consummation of His work. Man by his vices would have destroyed his own race. But, though transgression upon transgression marked his career, “God so loved the world”, that He determined that it should not perish, but should be rescued from evil in spite of itself. This He purposed to do in such a way as to make man reflect the divine nature in his character: and to display his own wisdom, glory, and power in the earth. But chance could not bring this to pass. Human life, therefore, was not to be a mere chapter of accidents; but the result of a well-digested and unvarying plan. Things, then, were to be arranged according to this purpose; so that in their original constitution should be contained *the rudiments* of a “glorious manifestation”; which, as a grain of mustard seed, should so unfold themselves under the fostering hand of God as to become “a tree, which is the greatest among herbs”, in whose branches the family of man might be refreshed.

In the acorn, it is said, can be traced by aid of the microscope the branches of the future oak. So in “the Rudiments of the World” are traceable the things of the future Kingdom of God. These rudiments, or elements, are exhibited in the sentences upon the serpent, the woman, and the man; and in that institution styled, “The Way of the Tree of Life”. Out of these things was afterwards to arise the Kingdom of God; so that in constituting them, *a foundation was laid* upon which “the world to come” should be built; even that world of which Abraham was constituted the heir; and which, when finished at the end of six days of a thousand years each, will manifest the woman’s Seed triumphant over the Serpent-power; resting from his work in the Sabbatism which remains for the people of God.

The things laid, or fixed, in the rudimental constitution of the world, may be summarily stated in the following particulars:—

1. Sin in the flesh, the enemy of God, contending for the dominion of the world.
2. Mankind in a state of nature, subject to the propensities; and to pain, trouble and death.
3. Labour and toil the condition of existence in the present state.
4. The subjection of woman to the lordship of man.

To these things was established a divine antagonism, by which they might be controlled; and a system of things elaborated in conformity with the purpose of God. This part of the foundation may be stated as:

1. The law and truth of God as expressed in “His Way”, demanding unreserved submission to its authority.

2. Mankind under the influence of this truth assuredly believed, contending for it.
3. Divine power exhibited in the punishment of men, and in the performance of His promises.

The action and re-action of these agencies upon one another was to produce:

1. An enmity and war in the earth between the Sin-power and the Institution opposed to it.
2. A bloody persecution of the adherents of the truth.
3. The destruction of the Sin-power by a personage to be manifested for the purpose; and
4. The consequent victory of divine truth, and establishment of the Kingdom of God.

That *the crisis of the fall was the period of laying the foundation of the world*, in its civil, social, and spiritual relations, appears from the use of the phrase in the apostolic writings. The Lord Jesus, speaking of what was about to come upon the generation then living in Judea, said, “The blood of all the prophets shed from the foundation of the world shall be required of this generation”; and to show to what period of the world he referred, he added by way of explanation, “from the blood of Abel”, the prophet of his day. The phrase is also applied by the apostle to the work of the six days; that is, as the bash, or substratum, in or upon which the social and political system was constituted. There is further proof of the judgment of the transgressors being the institutional foundation of the world, in the words, “all that dwell upon the earth shall do homage to him”, the ten-horned papal Beast, “whose names are not written in the Book of Life of the Lamb *slain from the laying of the world’s foundations*”. By this is signified that, when the Lord God appointed coats of skins to cover the man’s and woman’s shame, lambs were slain, which they were taught to understand were representative of the Seed, who should be slain for the sins of all the faithful; and with whose righteousness they should be clothed, after the type of their covering by the skins of their sacrifices. Thus, from the institution of sacrifice in Paradise till the death of Jesus on the cross, he was typically slain; and the *accepted* worshippers, being full of faith in the divine promise, like Abel and Enoch, understood to what the slaughtered lambs referred. Their names were consequently written in the remembrance of God, as inheritors of the kingdom; whose foundation was commenced in Paradise, and has been preparing ever since, that when finished it may be manifested “in Eden the garden of the Lord”.

THE CONSTITUTION OF SIN.

“The creature was made subject to evil, not willingly, but by reason of him who subjected it in hope.”

The introduction of *sin* into the world necessitated the constitution of things as they were laid in the beginning. If there had been no sin there would have been no “*enmity*” between God and man; and consequently no antagonism by which to educe good out of evil. Sin and evil are as cause and effect. God is the author of evil, but not of sin; for the evil is the punishment of sin. “I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, *and create evil*: I, the Lord, do all these things.” “Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?” The evil then to which man is subjected is the Lord’s doing. War, famine, pestilence, flood, earthquake, disease, and death, are the terrible evils which God inflicts upon mankind for their transgressions. Nations cannot go to war when they please, any more than they can shake the earth at their will and pleasure; neither can they preserve peace, when He proclaims war. Evil is the artillery with which He combats the enemies of His law, and of His saints;

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consequently, there will be neither peace nor blessedness for the nations, until sin is put down, His people avenged, and truth and righteousness be established in the earth.

This is the constituted order of things. It is the constitution of the world; and as the world is sin's dominion, or the kingdom of the adversary, it is the constitution of the kingdom of sin.

The word *sin* is used in two principal acceptations in the scripture. It signifies in the first place, "*the transgression of the law*"; and in the next, it represents that physical principle of the animal nature, which is the cause of all its diseases, death, and resolution into dust. It is that in the flesh "*which has the power of death*"; and it is called *sin*, because the development, or fixation, of this *evil* in the flesh, was the result of transgression. Inasmuch as this evil principle pervades every part of the flesh, the animal nature is styled "sinful flesh," that is, "*flesh full of sin*"; so that *sin*, in the sacred style, came to stand for the substance called *man*. In human flesh "dwells no good thing"; and all the evil a man does is the result of this principle dwelling in him. Operating upon the brain, it excites the "propensities", and these set the "intellect", and "sentiments" to work. The propensities are blind, and so are the intellect and sentiments in a purely natural state; when therefore, the latter operate under the sole impulse of the propensities, "the understanding is darkened through ignorance, because of the blindness of the heart". The nature of the lower animals is as full of this physical evil principle as the nature of man; though it cannot be styled *sin* with the same expressiveness; because it does not possess them as the result of their own transgression; the name, however, does not alter the nature of the thing.

A defective piece of mechanism cannot do good work. The principle must be perfect, and the adaptation true, for the working to be flawless. Man in his physical constitution is imperfect; and this imperfection is traceable to the physical organization of his flesh, being based on the principle of decay and reproduction from the blood; which, acted upon by the air, becomes the life of his flesh. All the phenomena which pertain to this arrangement of things are summed up in the simple word *sin*; which is, therefore, not an individual abstraction, but a concretion of relations in all animal bodies; and the source of all their physical infirmities. Now, the apostle says, that the flesh thinks—τὸ φρόνημα τῆς σαρκός—that is, the brain, as all who think are well assured from their own consciousness. If, then, this thinking organ be commanded not to do what is natural for it to do under blind impulse, will it not naturally disobey? Now this disobedience is wrong, because what God commands to be done is right, and only right; so that "by his law is the knowledge of sin"; and this law requiring an obedience which is not natural, flesh is sure to think in opposition to it. The philosophy of superstition is—*religion in harmony with the thinking of the flesh*; while true religion is religion in accordance with the thoughts of God as expressed in His law. Hence, it need excite no astonishment that religion and superstition are so hostile; and that all the world should uphold the latter; while so few are to be found who are identified with the religion of God. They are as opposite as flesh and spirit.

Sin, I say, is a synonym for human nature. Hence, the flesh is invariably regarded as *unclean*. It is therefore written, "How can he be clean who is born of a woman?" "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one." "What is man that he should be clean? And he which is born of a woman that he should be righteous? Behold, God putteth no trust in his saints; yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight. How much more abominable and filthy is man, who drinketh iniquity like water?" This view of sin in the flesh is enlightening in the things concerning Jesus. The apostle says, "God *made him to be sin* for us, who knew no sin"; and this he explains in another place by saying, that "He sent his own son *in the likeness of sinful flesh*, and for sin, condemned *sin in the flesh*" in the offering of Thomas, D. J. (1990). *Elpis Israel: an exposition of the Kingdom of God* (electronic ed.). Part First Chapter 4. Birmingham, UK: The Christadelphian.

his body once. Sin could not have been condemned in the body of Jesus, if it had not existed there. His body was as unclean as the bodies of those for whom he died; for he was born of a woman, and “not one” can bring a clean body out of a defiled body; for “that”, says Jesus himself, “which is born of the flesh is flesh”.

According to this physical law, the Seed of the woman was born into the world. The nature of Mary was as unclean as that of other women; and therefore could give birth only to “*a body*” like her own, though especially “*prepared of God*”. Had Mary’s nature been immaculate, as her idolatrous worshippers contend, an immaculate body would have been born of her; which, therefore, would not have answered the purpose of God; which was to condemn sin in the flesh; a thing that could not have been accomplished, if there were no sin there.

Speaking of the conception and preparation of the Seed, the prophet as a typical person, says, “Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me”. This is nothing more than affirming that he was born of sinful flesh: and not of the pure and incorruptible angelic nature.

Sinful flesh being the hereditary nature of the Lord Jesus, he was a fit and proper sacrifice for sin; especially as he was himself “innocent of the great transgression”, having been obedient in all things. Appearing in the nature of the seed of Abraham, he was subject to all the emotions by which we are troubled; so that he was enabled to sympathize with our infirmities, being “made *in all things* like unto his brethren”. But, when he was “born of the Spirit”, in the quickening of his mortal body by the spirit, he became a spirit; for “that which is born of the spirit *is spirit*”. Hence, he is “the Lord the Spirit”, incorruptible flesh and bones.

Sin in the flesh is hereditary; and entailed upon mankind as the consequence of Adam’s violation of the Eden law. The “*original sin*” was such as I have shown in previous pages. Adam and Eve committed it; and their posterity are suffering the consequence of it. The tribe of Levi paid tithes to Melchisedec many years before Levi was born. The apostle says, “Levi who receiveth tithes, paid tithes in Abraham”. Upon the same federal principle, all mankind ate of the forbidden fruit, being in the loins of Adam when he transgressed. This is the only way men can by any possibility be guilty of the original sin. Because they sinned in Adam, therefore they return to the dust from which Adam came—ἐφ’ ᾧ says the apostle, “*in whom* all sinned”. There is much foolishness spoken and written about “original sin”. Infants are made the subjects of a religious to regenerate them because of original sin; on account of which, according to Geneva philosophy they are liable to the flames of hell for ever! If original sin, which is in fact sin in the flesh, were neutralized, then all “baptismally regenerated” babes ought to live for ever, as Adam would have done had he eaten of the Tree of Life after he had sinned. But they die; which is a proof that the “regeneration ceremony” does not “cure their souls”; and is, therefore, mere theological quackery.

Mankind being born of the flesh, and of the will of man, are born into the world under the constitution of sin. That is, they are the natural born citizens of Satan’s kingdom. By their fleshly birth, they are entitled to all that *sin* can impart to them. What creates the distinction of bodies politic among the sons of Adam? It is constitution, or covenant. By constitution, then, one man is English, and another American. The former is British because he is born of the flesh under the British constitution. In this case, he is worthy of neither praise nor blame. He was made subject to the constitution, not willingly, but by reason of them who chose that he should be born under it. But when he comes of age, the same man may become an American. He may put off the old man of the political flesh, and put on the new man, which is created by the constitution of the United States; so that by

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constitution, he becomes an American in every particular but the accident of birth. This will be exact enough to illustrate what I am about to say.

There are two states or kingdoms, in God's arrangements, which are distinguished by constitution. These are the Kingdom of Satan and the Kingdom of God. The citizens of the former are all *sinner*s; the heirs of the latter are *saint*s. Men cannot be born heirs by the will of the flesh; for natural birth confers no right to God's Kingdom. Men must be born sinners before they can become saints; even as one must be born a foreigner before he can be an *adopted* citizen of the States. It is absurd to say that children are born holy, except in the sense of their being legitimate. None are born holy, but such as are born of the Spirit into the Kingdom of God. Children are born sinners or unclean, because they are born of sinful flesh; and "that which is born of the flesh is flesh", or sin. This is a misfortune, not a crime. They did not will to be born sinners. They have no choice in the case; for it is written, "The creature was *made subject*, τῆ ματαιότητι *to the evil*, not willingly, but by reason of him who subjected it *in hope*". Hence, the apostle says, "By Adam's disobedience the many were *made sinners*"; that is, they were endowed with a nature like his, which had become unclean, as the result of disobedience; and by the constitution of the economy into which they were introduced by the will of the flesh, they were constituted transgressors before they were able to discern between right and wrong.

Upon this principle, he that is born of sinful flesh is a sinner; as he that is born of English parents is an English child. Such a sinner is an heir of all that is derivable from sin. Hence, new-born babes suffer all the evil of the peculiar department of Satan, or sin's kingdom, to which they belong. Thus, in the case of the Amalekites, when the divine vengeance fell upon them, the decree was—"Utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, *infant and suckling*, ox and sheep, camel and ass". The destruction of "infants and sucklings" is especially commanded in divers parts of scripture. Not because they were responsible transgressors; but, on the same principle that men not only destroy all adult serpents that come in their way, but the thread-like progeny also; for in these is the germ of venomous and malignant reptiles. Had God spared the infants and sucklings of the Canaanitish nations, when they had attained to manhood, even though they had been trained by Israel, they would have reverted to the iniquities of their fathers. Even Israel itself proved a stiff-necked and perverse race, notwithstanding all the pains bestowed upon their education by the Lord God; how much more perverse would such a seed of evil serpents as the Canaanitish offspring have turned out to be?

It is a law of the flesh that "like produces like". Wild and truthless men reproduce themselves in their sons and daughters. The experiment has been tried on Indian infants. They have been taken from their parents, and carefully educated in the learning and civilization of the white man; but when they have returned to their tribe as men, they have thrown off the habits of their patrons, and adopted the practices of savage life. The same tendency is seen in other animals. Hatch the eggs of the wild turkey under a tame one; and as soon as they are able to shift for themselves they will leave the poultry yard, and associate with the wild species of the woods. So strong is habit, that it becomes a law to the flesh, when continued through generations for a series of years.

But men are not only made, or constituted sinners by the disobedience of Adam, but they become sinners even as he, *by actual transgression*. Having attained the maturity of their nature, they become accountable and responsible creatures. At this crisis, they may be placed by the divine arranging in a relation to His word. It becomes to them a Tree of Life, inviting them to "take, and eat, and live for ever". If, however, they prefer to eat of the world's forbidden fruit, they come under the sentence of Thomas, D. J. (1990). *Elpis Israel: an exposition of the Kingdom of God* (electronic ed.). Part First Chapter 4. Birmingham, UK: The Christadelphian.

death in their own behalf. They are thus doubly condemned. They are “condemned already” to the dust as natural born sinners; and, secondarily, condemned to a resurrection to judgment for rejecting the gospel of the kingdom of God: by which they become obnoxious to “*the SECOND Death*”.

Thus men are sinners in a twofold sense; first, by natural birth; and next, by transgression. In the former sense, it is manifest they could not help themselves. They will not be condemned to the Second Death because they were born sinners; nor to any other pains and penalties than those which are the common lot of humanity in the present life. They are simply under that provision of the constitution of sin which says, “Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return”. Now, if the Lord God had made no other arrangement than that expressed in the sentence upon the woman and the man, they and all their posterity in all their generations would have incessantly gone to dust and there have remained for ever. “The wages of sin is death.” Sinful flesh confers no good thing upon its offspring; for holiness, righteousness, incorruptibility, and life for ever are not hereditary. None of these are inherent in animal flesh. Sinners *can only acquire* them by a conformity to the law of God; who offers them freely to all who thirst after the water of life eternal.

THE CONSTITUTION OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.

“Constituted the righteousness of God in Christ.”

The former things being admitted, if men would be righteous in God’s esteem, they must become such *by constitution* also. The “good actions” of a pious sinner are mere “dead works”; for the actions of a sinner to be of any worth in relation to the future state, he must be “constituted righteous”; and this can only be by his coming under a constitution made and provided for the purpose. A stranger and foreigner from the commonwealth of the States, can only become a fellow-citizen with Americans, by taking the oath of abjuration, fulfilling the time of his probation, and taking the oath of allegiance according to the provisions of the constitution.

Now, the Kingdom of God has a constitution as well as the Kingdom of Satan, or that province of it styled the United States. Before sinners come under it, they are characterized as “without Christ, being aliens from the *Commonwealth of Israel*, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God (ἄθεοι, *atheists*) in the world”. They are termed “far off”, “strangers and foreigners” “walking in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart”. But, mark the sacred style descriptive of sinners after they have been placed under the constitution of Israel’s Commonwealth, which is the Kingdom of God. “You that were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ”; “through him you have access by one spirit to the Father; and are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God”—“fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of God’s promise *in Christ by the gospel*”. In this remarkable contrast is discoverable a great change in *state* and *character* predicated of the same persons. How was this transformation effected? This question is answered by the phrase, “*In Christ by the gospel*”. The “*in*” expresses the state; the “*by*” the instrumentality by which the state and character are changed.

As the constitution of sin hath its root in the disobedience of the First Adam, so also hath the constitution of righteousness root in the obedience of the Second Adam. Hence, the apostle says, “As through one offence (sentence was pronounced) upon all men unto condemnation; so also through one righteousness (sentence was pronounced) upon all men (that is, Jews and Gentiles) unto a *justification of life*. For as through the disobedience of the one man *the many were constituted* (χατεστάθησαν) Thomas, D. J. (1990). *Elpis Israel: an exposition of the Kingdom of God* (electronic ed.). Part First Chapter 4. Birmingham, UK: The Christadelphian.

*sinner*s; so also through the obedience of the one the many shall be *constituted righteous*“. The two Adams are *two federal chiefs*; the first being figurative of the second in these relations. All sinners are *in* the first Adam; and all the righteous *in* the second, only on a different principle. Sinners were in the loins of the former when he transgressed; but not in the loins of the latter, when he was obedient unto death; therefore, “the flesh profiteth nothing”. For this cause, then, for sons of Adam to become sons of God, they must be the subjects of an *adoption*, which is attainable only by some divinely appointed means.

The apostle then brings to light *two sentences*, which are coextensive, but not co-etaneous in their bearing upon mankind. The one is the sentence of condemnation, which consigns “*the many*”, both believing Jews and Gentiles, to the dust of the ground; the other is a sentence which affects the same “*many*”, and brings them out of the ground again to return thither no more. Hence, of the saints it is said, “The body is dead because of sin; but the spirit (gives) life because of righteousness”; for “since by man came death, by a man also came a resurrection of dead persons (ἀνάστασις νεκρῶν). For as in Adam they all die, so also in Christ shall they all be made alive. But every one in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward *they that are Christ’s* at his coming”. It is obvious that the apostle is not writing of all the individuals of the human race; but only of that portion of them that become the subject of “*a justification of life*”, διχαίωσις ζωῆς. It is true, that all men do die; but it is not true that they are all the subjects of justification. Those who are justified are “the many”, οἱ πολλοί, who are sentenced to live for ever. Of the rest we shall speak hereafter.

The sentence to justification of life is through Jesus Christ. In being made a sacrifice for sin by the pouring out of his blood upon the cross, he was set forth as *a blood-sprinkled mercy seat* to all believers of the gospel of the kingdom, who have faith in this remission of sins through the shedding of his blood. “He was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification”; that is, for the pardon of those *who believe in the gospel*; as it is written, “He that believeth the gospel and is baptized shall be saved”. Hence, “*the obedience of faith*” is made the condition of righteousness; and this obedience implies the existence of a “*law of faith*”, as attested by that of Moses, which is “*the law of works*”. The law of faith says to him who believes the gospel of the kingdom, “Be renewed, and be ye every one of you baptized in the name (ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι) of Jesus Christ for remission of sins”.

Here is a command which meets a man as a dividing line between *the State of Sin* and *the State of Righteousness*. The obedience of faith finds expression *in the name of Jesus* as “the mercy seat through faith in his blood”. Hence the apostle says to the disciples in Corinth, “Know ye not that *the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God*? Be not deceived; neither fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, effeminate, abusers of themselves with mankind, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners; shall inherit the kingdom of God. And *such were some of you*: but ye were *washed, sanctified, and made righteous (ἐδιχαίωθητε) in the name (ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι) of the Lord Jesus, and in the spirit (ἐν τῷ πνεύματι) of our God*”. Thus, the spirit, which is put for the gospel of the kingdom and name, renewed these profligates; the divine law and testimony attested by the spirit with signs, and wonders, and divers miracles, and gifts, and believed with a full assurance of conviction that worked in them by love to will and to do—caused them to be “*washed in the name*”, to be “*sanctified in the name*”, and to be “*made righteous in the name of Jesus Christ*”.

It must be clear to any man, unspoiled by a vain and deceitful philosophy, that to be washed in a name is impossible, unless the individual have *faith in the name*, and be subjected to the use of a fluid in some way. Now when a man is “washed in the name of Jesus Christ”, there are three witnesses to the fact, by whose testimony everything is established. These are the spirit, the water, and the blood, Thomas, D. J. (1990). *Elpis Israel: an exposition of the Kingdom of God* (electronic ed.). Part First Chapter 4. Birmingham, UK: The Christadelphian.

and they all agree in one statement. Jesus Christ was made manifest *by water* at his baptism; and *by blood* in his death; and *by the spirit* in his resurrection: therefore, the spirit *who is the truth* (τὸ πνεῦμά ἐστιν ἡ ἀλήθεια), and the water, and the blood, or the truth concerning the Messiahship, sacrificial character, and resurrection of Jesus, are constituted the witnesses who bear testimony to a man's being the subject of "the righteousness of God" set forth in the gospel of His Kingdom. The testimony of these witnesses is termed "the witness of God", which every believer of the Kingdom and Name hath as "*the witness in himself*".

Water, then, is the medium in which the washing occurs. But, although water is so accessible in all parts of the world where the gospel has been preached, it is one of the most difficult things under heaven to use it so as to *wash* a man *in the name of Jesus Christ*. What! says one, is it difficult to get a man to be dipped in water as a religious action? No; it is very easy. Thousands in society go into the water on very slender grounds. But going into the water, and having certain words pronounced over the subject, is not washing in the name. The difficulty lies, not in getting men to be dipped, but in *first* getting them to believe "the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ"; or "the exceeding great and precious promises", by the faith of which they can alone become the "partakers of the divine nature". Without faith in these things, there is no true washing, no sanctification, or purification, from moral defilement, and no constitution of righteousness by the name of Jesus for the sons of men; for, says the scripture. "without faith it is impossible to please God"

It was the renewing efficacy of the exceeding great and precious promises of God assuredly believed, that changed the gay and profligate Corinthians into "the sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints"; of whom it is testified that "hearing, they believed and were baptized". Now, to these baptized believers he writes, and tells them that "God *made* (ἐποίησεν) Jesus, who knew not sin, to be sin (that is, sinful flesh) for them, that they might be *constituted* (γινώσται) God's righteousness *in Him*"; so that, being introduced into Him (for an individual cannot be *in* a federal person unless *introduced into Him*) the crucified and resurrected Jesus became "the Lord their righteousness"; as it is written, "Of Him, Corinthians, are ye *IN* Christ Jesus, who of God was *constituted* (ἐγενήθη) for us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption." So that, whosoever is in him, is said to be "*complete in him*"; in whom he is circumcised "*in putting off THE BODY OF THE SINS of the flesh*"; that is, *all past sins*; being buried with Christ in the baptism, in which also he rises with him through the belief of the power of God evinced in raising him from among the dead.

Now, because the unconstituted, or unrighteous, cannot inherit the kingdom of God, the law is revealed which says, "*Ye must be born again*"; for says the King, "Except a man be born again he cannot behold the kingdom of God". This saying is unintelligible to men whose thinking is guided by the flesh. They cannot comprehend "how these things can be": and, though they *profess* to be "teachers of Israel", "Masters of Arts", and "Bachelors", and "Doctors of Divinity", and of "Canon and Civil Law", they are as mystified upon the subject of "the new birth" as Nicodemus himself. But to those who understand "the word of the kingdom" these "heavenly things" are distinguished by the obviousness and simplicity of truth. To be born again, as the Lord Jesus expounds it, is to be "born of the water and the spirit"; as it is written, "Except a man be born *out of water* (ἐξ ὕδατος) and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God". This is surely very explicit and very intelligible; who can misunderstand it, unless it be against his will to receive it?

The New Birth, like the old one of the flesh, is not an abstract principle, but a process. It begins with the begetting and ends with the having been born. A son of God is a character, which is developed Thomas, D. J. (1990). *Elpis Israel: an exposition of the Kingdom of God* (electronic ed.). Part First Chapter 4. Birmingham, UK: The Christadelphian.

out of the “incorruptible seed” of God, sown into the fleshy table of the heart. When this seed, or word of the Kingdom, is received, it begins to work in a man until he becomes a believer of the truth. When things have come to this pass, he is a changed man. He has acquired a new mode of thinking; for he thinks in harmony with the thoughts of God as revealed in His law and testimony. He sees himself, and the world around him, in a new light. He is convinced of sin; and experiences an aversion to the things in which he formerly delighted. His views, disposition, temper, and affections are transformed. He is humble, child-like, teachable, and obediently disposed; and his simple anxiety is to know what God would have him to do. Having ascertained this, he does it; and in doing it is “*born out of the water*”. Having been begotten by the Father by the word of truth, and born of water, the first stage of the process is completed. He is *constitutionally* “in Christ”.

When a child is born, the next thing is to train him up in the way he should go, that when he is old he may not depart from it. This is also the arrangement of God in relation to those who are born out of water into His family on earth. He disciplines and tries them, that He may “exalt them in due time”. Having believed the gospel and been baptized, such a person is required to “walk worthy of the vocation”, or calling, “wherewith he has been called”, that by so doing he may be “accounted worthy” of being “born of spirit”, that he may become “spirit”, or a spiritual body; and so enter the kingdom of God, crowned with “glory, honour, incorruptibility, and life”. When, therefore, such a believer comes *out of the ground* by a resurrection from among the dead, the spirit of God, worked by the Lord Jesus, first opens the grave, and forms him in the image, and after the likeness of Christ; and then gives him life. He is then an incorruptible and living man, “equal to the angels”; and like them capable of reflecting the glory of Him that made him. This is the end of the process. He is like Jesus himself, the great exemplar of God’s family, born out of water by the moral power of the truth; and out of the grave by the physical power of spirit; but all things of God through Jesus Christ the Lord.

In the way described, sinners are transformed into saints; and it is the only way; their conversion being the result of the transforming influence of “the testimony of God”. Those who are ignorant of “the law and the testimony”, and who yet claim to be saints, and “teachers of divine mysteries”, may demur *in toto* to this conclusion, because “in saying this thou condemnest us also”. But truth knows no respect of persons; and while the oracles of God declare, that men are “renewed by knowledge”, and “alienated from the life of God through ignorance”, I feel entrenched impregably in the position here assumed. According to the constitution of the human intellect, the knowledge of truth must precede the belief of it. There is no exception to this. If cases be cited as exceptions, the faith is spurious, and not that with which God is pleased. It is credulity; the faith of opinion, such as characterizes the spiritual philosophy of the age.

Lastly, the *act* demanded of a *renewed* sinner by the constitution of righteousness, that he may be inducted into Christ, and so “constituted the righteousness of God in him”, is a *burial in water into death*. The energy of the word of truth is twofold. It makes a man “*dead to sin*” and “*alive to God*”. Now, as Christ died to sin once and was buried, so the believer, having become dead to sin, must be buried also; for after death, burial. The death and burial of the believer is connected with the death and burial of Christ by the individual’s faith in the testimony concerning them. Hence, he is said to be “dead with Christ”, and to be “buried with Christ”; but, how buried? “*By baptism into death*”, saith the scripture.

But is this all? By no means; for the object of the burial in water is not to extinguish animal life; but, by preserving it to afford the believer scope to “walk in newness of life”, moral and intellectual. He is, therefore, *raised up* out of the water. This action is representative of his *faith* in the resurrection Thomas, D. J. (1990). *Elpis Israel: an exposition of the Kingdom of God* (electronic ed.). Part First Chapter 4. Birmingham, UK: The Christadelphian.

of Jesus; and of his *hope*, that as he had been planted with him in the similitude of his death, he shall hereafter be also in the likeness of his resurrection, and so enter the kingdom of God. To such persons the scripture saith, “Ye are all sons of God *in Christ Jesus through the faith*”; and the ground of this honourable and divine relationship is assigned in these words: “*For as many of you as have been baptized INTO Christ have put on Christ; and if ye be Christ’s, then are ye the seed of Abraham, and heirs according to the promise*”. They have thus received the spirit of adoption by which they can address God as their Father who is in heaven.

THE TWO PRINCIPLES.

“With the mind I myself serve the Law of God; but with the flesh the Law of Sin.”

Although a sinner may have been “delivered from the power of darkness”, or ignorance, and have been “translated into” the hope of “the Kingdom of God and of his Christ”, by faith in the divine testimony and baptism into Christ—yet, if he turn his thoughts back into his own heart, and note the impulses which work there, he will perceive a something that, if he were to yield to it, would impel him to the violation of the divine law. These impulses are styled “*the motions of sins*”. Before he was enlightened, they “worked in his members”, until they were manifested in evil action, or sin; which is termed, “bringing forth fruit unto death”. The remote cause of these “motions” is that physical principle, or quality, of the flesh, styled indwelling sin, which returns the mortal body to the dust; and that which excites the latent disposition is the law of God forbidding to do thus and so; for, “I had not known sin, but by the law”.

Now, while a righteous man feels this law involuntarily at work in his members, the law of sin, or of nature within him; he also perceives there a something which condemns “the motions of sins”, and suppresses them; so that they shall not impel him to do what he ought not to do. The best of men—and I quote Paul as an illustration of the class—are conscious of the co-existence of these hostile principles within them. “I find”, says he, “a law that, when I would do good, *evil* is present with me” Yes; *the principle of evil* and *the principle of good* are the two laws which abide in the saints of God so long as they continue subject to mortality.

The reader is invited to re-peruse pages eighty-nine and ninety on the subject of these laws, as it will prevent repetition in this place.

The law of sin and death is *hereditary*, and derived from the federal sinner of the race; but the law of the mind is an intellectual and moral *acquisition*. The law of sin pervades every particle of the flesh; but in the thinking flesh it reigns especially in the propensities. In the savage, it is the only law to which he is subject; so that with his flesh, he serves only the law of sin and death. This is to him “*the light within*”; which is best illustrated by the darkness of Egypt, which might be felt. It was this internal light which illuminated “the princes of the world, who crucified the Lord of glory”. It shined forth in the philosophy of Plato, and in the logic of Aristotle, who walked in it while “dwelling in the land of the shadow of death” and it is “the light within” all babes who are born of blood, of the will of the flesh, and of man under the constitution of sin, in all countries of the world.

Now, the scripture saith, “The commandment of God is a lamp; and his law is light”; so that the prophet says, “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path”. And to this agrees the saying of the apostle, that the sure word of prophecy is “a light that shineth in a dark place”. Now, Isaiah testifies, that the Word is made up of God’s law and testimony, and that those who do not speak

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according to it, have no light in them. This is the reason that the savage has no light in him; because he is intensely ignorant of the law of God. Light does not emanate from within; for sin, blood, and flesh can give out none. It can only reflect it after the fashion of a mirror. The light is not in the mirror; but its surface is so constituted that when light falls upon it, it can throw it back, or reflect it, according to the law of light, that the images of objects are seen on the surface, whence the light proceeding from the objects is last reflected to the eye. Neither is light innate in the heart. This is simply *a tablet*; a polished tablet, or mirror, in some; but a tarnished, rusty tablet in others. It is called “the fleshy tablet of the heart”. It was polished in the beginning, when God formed man after His likeness; but sin, “the god of this world”, hath so tarnished it that there are but few who reflect His similitude.

No; it is a mere conceit of the fleshly mind that man is born into the world with the light within; which requires only to be cherished to be sufficient to guide him in the right way. God only is the source of light; He is the glorious illuminator of the moral universe; and He transmits His enlightening radiance through the medium, sometimes of angels, sometimes of prophets, and at others through that of His Son and the apostles, by His all-pervading Spirit. Hence it is that the scripture saith, “God is light”, whose truth “enlightens the eyes”. But what is the truth? It is “the light of the glorious gospel of Christ”, who is the polished incorruptible fleshy mirror, which reflects the Image of God—an image, at present, but obscurely impressed upon the fleshy tablets of our hearts; because we know only in part, perceiving things by the eye of faith, until hope shall disappear in the possession of the prize.

God, then, is the *source* of light; the gospel of the kingdom in the name of Jesus is *the light*; and Christ is the *medium* through which it shines; hence he is styled THE SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS; also, “the true, light, which enlighteneth every man, that cometh into the world”; “a light to enlighten the Gentiles, and the glory of his people Israel”. Now, the enlightening of every man is thus explained by the apostle: “God”, saith he, “who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, is he who hath shined into our (the saints’) hearts, with the illumination of *the knowledge* (πρὸς φωτισμὸν τῆς γνώσεως) of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ”. But “every man” is not enlightened by this glorious knowledge; for to some it is hid. The tablets of their hearts are so corroded and encrusted with opaque and sordid matter that they are destitute of all reflecting power. Light will not shine in a black surface. Hence, saith the apostle, “If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of the world hath blinded the minds of them who believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine into them”. He darkens the tablets of their hearts by “the care of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches”; and thus prevents them from opening their ears to hear the words of eternal life.

If a man have light, then, it is very evident that it is *acquired from without*, and not an hereditary spark within. When the Lord Jesus appeared in Israel “he shined in the darkness”. This nation was so darkened by the propensities and human tradition, that they did not perceive the light when it shined among them; “the darkness comprehended it not”. If this were the condition of Israel, how intensely dark must have been the world at large. Still, the Gentile mind was not so totally eclipsed as that of the savage. The nations of the Four Empires had been greatly mixed up with the Israelites in their history; so that the light of their law must have been considerably diffused among them; though not given to them for their obedience. Hence, “the work of the law was written upon their hearts” to some extent; and created in them “a conscience, by the thoughts of which they accused or excused one another”.

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This shining of the truth in the darkness of the nations was considerably increased by the apostolic labours; for “their sound went into all the land, and their words unto the end of the habitable” (τῆς οἰκουμένης, or *Roman Empire*). Now, although this light was almost extinguished by the apostasy, lamps were still kept burning in its presence; so that the eclipse was not so total that the darkness of the Gentile mind was reduced to a savage state. When the scriptures were again disseminated in the tongues of the nations in the sixteenth century, the light of truth began again to stream in upon them. The scriptures were then like a book just fallen from heaven. The world was astonished at their contents; but “comprehended them not”. Men discussed it, tortured it, perverted it, fought about it; until the stronger party established the foundation of the world as at present constituted.

This world, called “Christendom”, is much after the order of things in the days of Jesus. Were he to appear now, he would “shine in the darkness” as when among the Jews. These professed to know God, while in works they denied Him. Their clergy said, “*We see*”; but Jesus characterized them as “blind leaders of the blind”; therefore, “their sin remained”. They boasted in the law; yet through breaking it, dishonoured God. They professed to be more conscientious and pious than Jesus; but he charged them with being hypocrites and serpents. They strained out gnats, and swallowed camels; and gave tithe of mint and cummin, and despoiled the fatherless and the widow. And, “like priest, like people”. They crowded to the synagogues and the temple in splendid apparel. The bejewelled worshippers exhibited themselves in conspicuous seats; while the poor stood, or if seated, sat on footstools near the door. They made a great show of piety, sang the psalms of David with holy rapture, devoutly listened to the reading of the law and the prophets; and expelled Jesus and his apostles with great fury from their midst, when they showed the meaning of them. With the worship of God they combined the worship of Mammon. They heaped up gold and silver, and apparel till it was moth eaten; oppressed the hirelings in his wages; and ground the faces of the poor.

Such was the state of “the church” when Jesus and his apostles were members of it; and such is its condition now that “he standeth at the door, and knocks”. “*The Church*” of the 20th century (by which I understand, not the “*One Body*”; but that thousand-headed monster presented by the ecclesiastical aggregate of “Christendom”) is that Laodicean antitype which is neither cold nor hot, but lukewarm, and which saith, “I am rich, and increased in goods, and have need of nothing; but knows not that it is wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked”; the sputa once “spewed out of the Lord’s mouth”. Its eyes are blinded by the god of the world. Its zeal for faction: its devotion to Mammon; its ignorance of the scriptures; and its subjection to the dogmas and commandments of men—have made its heart fat, its ears heavy, and closed its eyes. “The people of the Lord, the people of the Lord are we!” ascends as its cry to heaven from myriads of throats; but in the tablets of their hearts the light of the glorious gospel of Christ’s kingdom and name finds no surface of reflection. Many who mean well lament “the decline of spirituality in the Churches”; but they fail to perceive the cause. The scriptures have fallen into comparative disuse among them. They are superseded by shallow speculations—mere unintelligible pulpit disquisitions, the contradictory thinking of the flesh, trained to excogitate the creedism of the community that glorifies itself in the orator of its choice. *The gospel is neither believed nor preached in the churches*. In fact, it is hid from their eyes; and the time is come to break off the wild olive branch for its saplessness; to cut off these churches for their unbelief.

The principle, or spirit, that works in these children of disobedience, is neither the law of sin as exhibited in the savage; nor the law of God as it appears in the genuine disciples of Christ. It is a blending of the two; so as to make of none effect the little truth believed, as far as inheriting the Kingdom of God is concerned. This proportion of truth in the public mind is the measure of its

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morality, and exegetical of its conscience; and constitutes that scintillation, or “light within”, which is struck out by the collision of ideas in the world around. Educational bias makes men what they are—sinners, whose habitude of thought and action is “pious”, or impious, civilized or savage, according to the school in which their young ideas have been taught to shoot. The divine law and testimony alone can turn these into reflectors of the moral image and similitude of God.

The “*intellect*” and “*sentiments*” of the apostle’s brain, constituting “the fleshly tablet of his heart”, had been inscribed by the Spirit of the living God, in a way that all believers are not the subject of. He was inspired; and consequently received much of “the light of the knowledge of the glory of God” by divine suggestion, or revelation; others receive the same knowledge, in words spoken, or written, by “earthen vessels” like himself, in whom “this treasure” was deposited. The means by which the knowledge is communicated matters not, so that it is written on the heart. When it gets possession of this, it forms that “*mind*” or *mode of thinking or feeling* (νοῦς) with which the apostle said he “served the Law of God”. Being renewed by the divine testimony, his intellect and sentiments were sure to think and feel in harmony with the thoughts of God. Nevertheless, his “propensities” were only checked in their emotions. He kept his body under. This was all that he could do; for no spiritual perfection of thought and feeling could eradicate from the particles of his flesh the all-pervading principle of its corruption. While, therefore, with his mind he served the Law of God, his flesh obeyed the law of sin, which finally mingled it with its parent dust.

This *new mode of thinking and feeling* created in a true believer by the divine law and testimony, is variously designated in scripture. It is styled “a clean heart and a right spirit”; “a new spirit” and “a heart of flesh”; the “inward man”; “new creature” “the new man created in righteousness and true holiness”; and “renewed unto knowledge after the image of him that created him”; the “hidden man of the heart”; and so forth. This new and hidden man is manifested in the life, which is virtuous as becomes the gospel. He delights in the law of the Lord, and speaks often of His testimonies. He denies himself of all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and walks soberly, righteously and godly in the world. His hope is the glorious manifestation of Jesus Christ, with the crown of righteousness, even glory, honour, and immortality, promised to all who look for him, and “*love his appearing*”, and desire his kingdom. Nevertheless, the law of sin, through the weakness of the flesh, fails not to remind him of imperfection. Being delivered from the fear of death, he looks forward to it as to the period of his change, knowing that, when he falls asleep in the dust, he will afterwards be delivered from the principle of evil by a resurrection to incorruptibility and unalloyed existence in the Paradise of God.