

CONSEQUENTS OF DIVINE JUDGMENTS.

As it is with the antecedents of Divine Judgment so it is with the process, and as it is with the process so it is with the consequents. If the antecedents of divine judgment are kept in view an adequate idea of the process may be obtained; but it is impossible to obtain an adequate idea of any part of divine judgment if its antecedent part is not kept in view. The first stage of divine judgment made it clear that "the first man" was then unfit for endless life, and the consequents thereof keep that lesson before the human mind from generation to generation. God does not judge man by some permission granted, request made, or wish expressed; nor does he judge him by some impulse of the human heart, conviction of the human mind, or dictate of the human conscience: he judges him by a definite law enforced by an adequate penalty. The penalty for sin is the sum of the consequents of divine judgment; and the consequents of divine judgment are the sum of the sentence which was pronounced upon man. In considering them it is safest to observe the order in which they are recorded.

THE SENTENCE.

"Unto the woman he [the Lord God] said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children; and thy desire shall be subject [margin] to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." – Gen. 3:16.

The sentence is one of sorrow all around, only sorrow, and that of the bitterest kind. Even the multiplication of her children, which naturally to the mother would have been the multiplication of her joy, becomes to her the [R1476 : page 361] multiplication of her sorrow. There is no place left for individual equality or individual freedom; the wife is placed in subordination and in subjection to her husband. The position might become incentive to

treatment of the most cruel and brutal nature; and as a matter of fact it has become so very extensively. The duration of the sorrow is the duration of the life: it is sorrow even unto death. Under this sentence "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now" (Rom. 8:22); and no part of creation is subjected to intenser pain than is woman, who is its tenderest and fairest part. "A woman in travail" has been a symbol of agony throughout all ages. It would be difficult to exaggerate her manifold and harrowing sufferings, and all attempts to belittle them either distort or ignore the dire facts of the case.

"And unto Adam he [the Lord God] said, Because thou hast hearkened unto 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 unto 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 thou wast taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."
– Gen. 3:17-19.

In this sentence pointed reference is made to the fact that Jehovah made man of the dust of the ground, and to the prohibition which he distinctly placed before him at his creation. (Gen. 2:7,17.) This sentence is a curse from beginning to end. The curse pronounced is the curse of the law of the first life. Cursedness is the antithesis of blessedness. So long as man conformed to the Divine Law he was blessed, and as soon as he refused to conform to that law he was cursed. The curse is formulated in the sentence, and it is a formidable one. Instead of the spontaneous production of either the luxuries or the necessaries of life, strenuous and protracted efforts become indispensable; instead of joy dominating those efforts, they become dominated by sorrow; and instead of the sorrow being either trivial or brief it becomes profound and co-extensive with the life. In addition to "the herb of the field" being

obtainable only by strenuous and protracted labor, there were to be "thorns and thistles" obtainable without any labor at all. The latter naturally choke the former, which increases and intensifies the toil, so that man's food is not obtainable without "sweat" being wrung from his face; and this hard, grinding, crushing toil continues until he is brought down to "the dust" again. All that man eats, all that man drinks, all that he wears and all that he breathes spring out of the ground, or are [R1477 : page 361] affected by it; so that in the curse pronounced upon the ground man is cursed in his entirety. Cursed in person and in environment, always cursed, and the curse is so heavy that sooner or later it reduces man into his original elements. It is sometimes quite complacently stated that "no curse" was passed upon man. In the face of this sentence such statements are most extraordinary. In its culmination this curse is the concentration of all curses.

THE EXECUTION.

"And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died." – Gen. 5:5.

The execution of the sentence which was passed upon Adam is thus recorded in the oldest Registrar of Births and Deaths that is known to us. The death of Adam is recorded in conjunction with that of seven of his descendants, whose lives are all now considered to have been of extraordinary length. The shortest of the eight lives was 777, and the longest was 969 years, but in each case the record ends with these unvarying and significant words – "*and he died.*" The record of Adam's death is in perfect keeping with the sentence which was passed upon him, and also with the sanction of the law of life which was given to him. When Jehovah said to Adam: "Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" or (as it is in the margin) "dying thou shalt die" (Gen. 2:17), that was *not* equivalent to saying: Dying thou shalt die *in*

twenty-four hours. And when Jehovah [R1476 : page 362] said to Adam: "Dust thou art, and unto dust shall thou return" (Gen. 3:19), that was *not* equivalent to saying, Unto dust shalt thou return *in twenty-four hours*. A "day" may be of twenty-four hours, or of one thousand years, or of any intermediate duration. In neither the law given nor the sentence pronounced has anything definite been found touching the element of time. It appears to have been purposely left indefinite, and that no doubt for adequate reasons. Throughout the whole Bible the term "day" is very largely used to express an indefinite period of time. "The day of temptation," "the day of visitation," "the day of prosperity," "the day of adversity," "the day of Egypt," "the day of Jerusalem," etc., may be taken as examples of this usage. The sin of Adam forfeited his life, and therefore his death was certain. Whether Adam died instantaneously or not for one thousand years could not affect either the nature of the penalty or the certainty of its infliction; but it could affect, and it did affect, many other things. In human jurisprudence mistakes are often made and criminals often escape, but in divine jurisprudence no mistake is ever made nor does any criminal ever escape. Ultimately these three small but significant words – "*and he died*" – were recorded respecting Adam, and his death had been inevitable from the moment in which he sinned.

There are some points which require special emphasis here: –

(1) In the Law, the Sentence, and the Execution of the Sentence, the death mentioned is the death of *the man*. The record of man's formation stands thus: "The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." (Gen. 2:7.) This is the earliest record that there is of man, and throughout the Bible his component parts are spoken of in accordance with it. In the Law it is *not* said, thy *body* shall surely die, *nor* thy *spirit* shall surely die, *nor* thy *soul* shall surely die; but it *is* said, "*Thou* shalt surely die." In the sentence it is *not* said, unto dust shall

thy *body* return, *nor* unto dust shall thy *spirit* return, *nor* unto dust shall thy *soul* return; but it is said, "Unto dust shalt *thou* return. And in the record of Adam's death it is *not* said, his *body* died, *nor* his *spirit* died, *nor* his *soul* died; but it is said, "*he died.*" It is not this, that, or the other part of the man that is spoken of, but *the man* from first to last. The annihilation of this, that, or the other part of the man is not under consideration here. That may be possible or it may be impossible, but it has nothing whatever to do with the present subject. The subject under consideration here is the death pronounced in the sentence, and that is the death of the man.

(2) In the Law, the Sentence, and the Execution of the Sentence, the death mentioned is *the first* death. In the Law Jehovah did *not* say unto Adam, Thou shalt surely *twice* die; but he *did* say, "Thou shalt surely *die.*" In the Sentence Jehovah did not say unto Adam, Unto dust shalt thou *twice* return; but he *did* say, "Unto dust shalt thou *return.*" And in the record of Adam's death it is *not* said, he *twice* died; but it *is* said, "*he died.*" Had two deaths been intended two deaths would have been stated. The one statement could have been made as easily as the other. The fact that two deaths are not once mentioned here makes it quite clear that two deaths were never intended to be inflicted, as far as the first stage of divine judgment is concerned.

In England the law is that a murderer shall be put to death; the judge in passing sentence on the convicted murderer generally says that he shall hang by the neck until he is dead; and after the execution the coroner's jury generally brings in a verdict that he died according to the sentence pronounced. After that, were any sheriff to conceive that the convict had to die twice, and to attempt to execute him the second time, what would be the result? Instead of being any longer fit for his office, rational men would consider him fit for a lunatic asylum. Were he able to carry out his intention that would not mitigate his folly; and the fact that he could not do

so would merely enhance it. The dogma of two deaths to one life as the penalty of sin is unmitigated folly. A more fiendish dogma can be found, but a more foolish one it is scarcely possible to find. [R1477 : page 363]

(3) In the Law, the Sentence, and the Execution of the Sentence, the death mentioned is *hereditary* death. When God said to Adam, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth" (Gen. 1:28), he spoke of the extension of hereditary life. When Adam sinned he forfeited life. That life was poisoned in its head before it was extended at all. It was impregnated with the seed of death, and became a dying life, before it left Adam. Adam could *not* extend what he no longer had for himself – *untainted* life. He extended what he had – *tainted* life – life which inevitably ends in death; and that (tainted) life has been extended from sire to son, from generation to generation, and from age to age ever since. In addition to observation and experience there is inspired testimony clear and distinct on this point: "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, in whom [margin] all have sinned." "By one man's offence death reigned by one." "The creation was made subject to vanity, not willingly." "In Adam all die." (Rom. 5:12,17; 8:20; 1 Cor. 15:22.) Individual sin, except in the first man, has nothing to do with hereditary death. It extends to all mankind, not merely to the hoary-headed sinners, but to the new-born and unborn babes as well.

(4) In the Law, the Sentence, and the Execution of the sentence, the death mentioned is *not endless torment*. Such is the perversity of human nature that it is still necessary to reiterate this. Torment is a consequent of human transgression, and also a consequent of divine judgment, but *not endless torment*. Transgression and torment are inseparable, but *neither is endless*. In the Law Jehovah said, "Thou shalt surely *die*;" but he did *not say*, Thou shalt surely be *always tormented*. In the Sentence Jehovah said, "Unto *dust* shalt thou *return*;" but he did *not say*,

Unto *endless torment* shalt thou *return*. And in the record of Adam's death it is said, "he *died*;" but it is *not* said, he entered into *endless torment*. As it was in the law given to Adam, the sentence passed upon him, and the execution of that sentence, so it is throughout the whole Bible: there is no countenance whatever given to the hideous dogma that endless torment is either the penalty of human transgression or the consequent of divine judgment.

Where death is the "capital punishment," were any sheriff to attempt to substitute torment for death he would be met by a howl of execration throughout the length and breadth of the land. The tormentor himself would very speedily become the tormented. Were endless torment possible its inflictor would of all be the most deserving of it. Infidels have uttered many blasphemies against God, but of all blasphemies that which represents God as inflicting endless torment is the most infamous. It may truly be said that endless torment is the sum of all fiendishness; and to represent it as either the penalty of human sin or the consequent of divine judgment is the sum of all blasphemy against the character of God.

"THE SECOND DEATH."

"These things saith the first and the last, which was dead and is alive." "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee *a crown of life*." "He that overcometh shall not be hurt of *the second death*." "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in *the first resurrection*; on such *the second death* hath no power." "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is *the book of life*; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hades (R.V.) delivered up the dead which were in them; and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hades were cast into the

lake of fire. *This is the second death.* And whosoever was not found written in *the book [R1478 : page 363] of life* was cast into the lake of fire." "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him who is athirst of *the water of life* freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in [R1478 : page 364] the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: *which is the second death.*" – Rev. 2:7-11; 20:6,12-15; 21:6-8.

The first death is recorded in the first part of the Bible, and the present phrase – "the second death" – is never once met with until the last part of the Bible is reached, thousands of years afterwards. This fact is highly suggestive. Before there was any second death there was the second sin (that is, the second "sin unto death"); before there was any second sin there was the second judgment (that is, the second judgment initiated); and before there was any second judgment there was the second life (that is, the second life in its initial stage). To deprecate the use of any of these phrases – the second life, the second judgment, or the second sin – would be to deprecate the use of their cognate phrase – "the second death."

The recipient of the first life was tried and proved unfaithful. The recipients of the second life are being tried and they may individually prove either faithful or unfaithful. Their life is untainted when received, their knowledge is ultimately complete, their environment is appropriate, and their opportunity is ultimately adequate. He who proves faithful does so in accordance with his own will, and he who proves unfaithful does the same. To both is the promise made: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." On the faithful "the second death hath *no* power," they "shall *not* be hurt of the second death," their names will *not* be "blotted out of the book of life," their rank in

resurrection is "*the first*," they are "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father in his throne." – Rev. 3:21.

On the other hand, the opposite of all this is true of the *unfaithful*. The second death *has* power over them, they *shall* be hurt of the second death, their names *shall* be blotted out of the book of life, and they *shall* have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone. Receiving a "crown" and sitting on a "throne" are symbols of the regal, judicial and sacerdotal authority and power of the faithful, and "the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone" is a symbol of the instrumentality which effects the doom of the unfaithful. The sum of the consequents of divine judgment, so far as the faithful are concerned, is endless life, and the sum of the consequents of divine judgment, so far as the unfaithful are concerned, is endless death.

It is very easy for any Universalist to say: "These reprobates of men will have to undergo the horrors of the second death, but will rise again, for there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust." – Acts 24:15.

But how does he know that any man will rise again from the second death? No inspired man has yet said so, and the testimony of an uninspired man in such a case goes for nothing. If there is any inspired testimony on this point why is it not presented? Any child may quote as above, but the Apostle Paul does not even mention the second death in that passage, far less does he give in it any testimony in favor of a resurrection from the second death. "A resurrection of *the dead*" is one thing, and a resurrection of *the twice dead* is quite another thing. Before there can be a resurrection from a second death there must be a second death, before there can be a second death there must be a second life, and before there can be a second life there must be a resurrection from the first death. It

is the resurrection from the first death which the Apostle there affirms, and therefore his affirmation does not favor one jot any Universalist's conclusion. As it is with Paul's noble testimony there, so it is with all other inspired testimonies: they have to be wrested from their original and legitimate uses before they can be made to favor, even in appearance, the groundless dogma of a resurrection from the second death.

"If we sin wilfully after that we have received the [full] knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries."

JOSEPH MOFFITT.

"Let us fear lest any of us come short."

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A STUDY IN THE GOSPEL OF LUKE.

– *INTERNATIONAL S.S. LESSONS.* –

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS DESIGNED TO ASSIST THOSE OF OUR READERS WHO ATTEND BIBLE CLASSES WHERE THESE LESSONS ARE USED; THAT THEY MAY BE ENABLED TO LEAD OTHERS INTO THE FULNESS OF THE GOSPEL. PUBLISHED IN ADVANCE, AT THE REQUEST OF FOREIGN READERS.

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THE BIRTH OF CHRIST.

IV. QUAR., LESSON XIII., DEC. 25, LUKE 2:8-20.

Golden Text – "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy." – Luke 2:10.

The story of this lesson is one so familiar as to require no special comment, and yet in its simple details lies the hope of the whole world. Four thousand years previous the birth of this child was promised, and all the way along during those forty centuries some faithful souls continued to trust in the promises and to look for the salvation to be brought about through him. We may surely take for granted that the humble shepherds to whom the message of the Lord's advent first came were men who thus hoped in the promise of God; for to such, and to such only, the Lord discloses his purposes.

These men were quietly tending their flocks by night when suddenly the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone around about them; and they were sore afraid. (Verse 9.) But their fear was soon overcome by the message of the angel, contained in our golden text, but which, strange to say, our lesson committee has only partially quoted, leaving out one of the grandest features of the message – viz., that it was to be to all people.

The message reads, "Fear not; for, behold, I bring you *good tidings*, of GREAT JOY, which shall be to ALL PEOPLE." It will be observed that the blessedness of these tidings is cumulative: first it is "good tidings;" then it is "great joy;" and then the crowning feature of it is that it is "to all people" – not only to you shepherds who are this night looking for the hope of Israel, but for all your friends and relations and neighbors far and near; and to all their friends and relatives and neighbors, both to those who now live and to those who shall live, as well as to all those who slumber in death.

Blessed tidings! Hearken to the gladsome sound: "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." (Verse 11.) Then he was to be a savior to all people: so the Scriptures clearly affirm, saying that, by the grace of God, he

tasted death for every man, and that he gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time – to all. (Heb. 2:9; 1 Tim. 2:6.) The testimony, however, is quite as necessary to the salvation of the sinner as the fact that Christ gave himself a ransom for all. The favor of salvation will not be forced upon any; but the testimony that it has been provided for every man, on condition of his acceptance of the favor upon God's terms, is to be given to every man, for his acceptance or rejection. And though millions of the race for whom Christ died have gone down to the grave without such testimony, still the fact remains that the testimony shall be given *in due time* – which due time, to all such, must be after their awakening from death.

And to this agree the words of the Lord: "The hour is coming in which all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of man and shall come forth; they that have done good [who during the present life have come into judgment and who have passed their trial successfully], unto the resurrection of life [the full reward of the faithful. Such will be the overcoming Church]: and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of judgment." (John 5:25-29.) That is, the latter class will come forth from the grave to have the truth testified to them then, for their acceptance or rejection; and their final judgment of worthiness or unworthiness of life will be based upon their course under trial after the truth has been testified to them – in the Millennial age. Thus the angel of the Lord preached the good tidings of the restitution of all things to the shepherds on the plain of Bethlehem.

VERSE 12. Then they told where and how they should find this bud of promise, so that when they would see him they might feel doubly assured that this was he.

VERSES 13,14. "Then suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." This

shows how the angels of God are interested in the affairs of men, and how they sympathize with us and rejoice over our prosperity. And this reminds us of other statements to the effect that there is joy in heaven among the angels over one sinner that repenteth (Luke 15:7); and again that they are earnest students of the plan for human salvation; and that they are all ministering spirits sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation. (1 Pet. 1:12; Heb. 1:14.) [R1478 : page 366] Thus we see them to be creatures of God full of loving benevolence even toward a fallen race, and esteeming it a privilege to serve the heirs [R1479 : page 366] of this salvation, although they know, as they studiously look into God's plan, that some of this fallen race are by and by to be highly exalted, even above the angels who never sinned.

Thus we see their humble recognition of the right of the Creator to do what he will with his own, and their cheerful and joyful acquiescence in his perfect will, which they know to be determined by his unerring wisdom and his fathomless love. Oh! what universal joy will prevail when the whole family of God in heaven and in earth is brought into fullest harmony under the headship of Jehovah's Anointed.

VERSES 15,18 show the teachable attitude of the shepherds: they recognized the angels and their message as from the Lord, and, their fears being allayed, their hopes revived and their faith increased, and they felt that they must go at once and see this which had come to pass. And when they had so determined, a strange star (evidently a meteor, as it could not have been a fixed star) appeared, moving in the direction which the angel had told them to go; and they followed the star until they reached Bethlehem, when it stood still over the place where the young child was. And when they saw him they worshiped him and presented to him gold and frankincense and myrrh, recognizing in him the long-promised Messiah. [see "Our Critical Readers" Jan. 15, 1893 Tower - site Editor] And being warned of God in a dream, they disregarded the

request of Herod to inform him of the whereabouts of the new-born king, and so departed into their own country another way. But as they went they published abroad the good tidings which the angels had brought to them, and how they had actually seen him of whom the prophets testified.

VERSE 19. "But Mary [mother-like] kept all these things and pondered them in her heart," doubtless calling to mind also the message of the angel to her. (Luke 1:28-35.) Again and again we seem to hear her say, "My soul doth magnify the Lord;...for he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: ...he that is mighty hath done to me great things, and holy is his name." – Luke 1:46-49.

VERSE 20. The shepherds returned to their flocks, fully assured of the wonderful truth that the promised seed of the woman who was to bruise the serpent's head had really come. And they rejoiced and glorified God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as they were told unto them.
