

[R1716 : page 323]

BISHOP FOSTER'S NEW GOSPEL, NO. 2.

WE do not find fault with the Bishop's *sympathy* for heathendom, nor with his rebellion against an injustice which would consign them to an eternity of woe, mental or physical. Nay, we rejoice that he can see that such procedure is so unjust that it cannot possibly be the truth: it cannot possibly be God's plan. We rejoice that the Bishop is so free from the errors of Calvinism that he cannot believe that the 1,200,000,000 of heathen now living, and the fifty times that number who have died without the knowledge of the only name given under heaven and among men whereby they can be saved, were *predestinated* by God to their present ignorance and to an eternity of woe hereafter.

We rejoice also that he has gotten free from the idea of his own Church, viz., that the power of God for the help of the heathen is confined to this present life and to the present missionary efforts of his children, and that the vast multitudes not so reached and blessed will suffer untold agonies to all eternity; – not because God predestinated that it should be so, but because God and his faithful people are doing all they can for the poor heathen, and can do no more.

All this indicates a breadth and freedom of thought and a sympathy of heart on the part of the Bishop which we greatly appreciate. But we fear for the Bishop and for his flock, because *his* freedom and sympathy are not begotten by the teachings of God's Word. His lengths and [R1717 : page 323] breadths, and heights and depths of good desire for the heathen are not those inspired by God's revelation of his plan. Consequently, the more the Bishop and his followers progress upon these lines, the farther they will get from the true plan of the ages – the lengths and breadths, the heights and depths of the love of God, which surpasses human understanding. – Rom. 11:33-36.

This tendency to depart from God's Word is markedly manifested in other parts of the same discourse, and cannot fail to lead many of the "blind" "into the ditch." – Matt. 15:14.

For instance, we quote as follows from the report of the same discourse, as it appeared in the *Pittsburg Commercial Gazette*.

"Why did not Christ come immediately after the fall of man? Why was not Revelation made at once? Simply because it *could not be*.... In Eden language *took form*, but it was not sufficient for Revelation. Adam probably knew very little, and God treated him accordingly. He did not give him such a law as he gave to Israel at Sinai, but he treated him as you would an infant."

Here we see the effect of the Evolution theory, in which the Bishop is evidently a believer. Since that theory is the very opposite of the Bible theory, conflicts at every point are unavoidable. The Bishop looks at our civilization, then backward along the aisles of history, noting the ignorance of the past upon every subject. He, with all others who lose confidence in the Bible, jumps to the conclusion that Adam was an infant, with whom language *began* to take form. He, however, states the matter *more* agreeably and *more* Scripturally than to say that [R1717 : page 324] Adam was an ape of a high order of development, and that in him the ape chatter began to *take form*, or to become a language.

The Bishop is right in supposing that his words were more acceptable to his hearers than if he had put the matter bluntly, as Darwin and others have done. The Bishop's language, however, is the more dangerous; for it sugar-coats the doctrine and hides its true unscriptural character from some of God's children who would resent, as unscriptural, the idea that Adam was an ape and that his race has "*fallen upward*" for the past six thousand years.

The Scriptural position, briefly stated, is that God, instead of creating Adam down at or near the brute level, created him in his own

image and likeness, and pronounced him, Very good! God does not, however, pronounce the natural man of to-day, Very good. On the contrary, he declares that all have sinned; all are out of the way; all are fallen; there is none righteous, no, not one; and that only under cover of the imputed righteousness of Christ can any be acceptable with God or have communion with him. But Adam had fellowship and communion with God and was called his "son" (Luke 3:38), up to the time of his transgression and sentence.

The Bishop says that Adam's knowledge of language was so crude that God *could not* then make a Revelation. The Scriptures tell us, to the contrary, that God did make revelations to Adam – "talked with him" (Gen. 1:28-30; 2:15-17,23; 3:8-20); – but God does not deign to communicate at all with the modern man, except he become a "believer" in Christ. The flood of Noah's day has left no traces of the early civilization, so far as is now known; but we may safely suppose that the man whom God called a very good man and declared to be in his own image – the man who could talk with God and with his wife, and who could not only name the animals, but control them, and that without brute force, was such a specimen of human nature as we do not see to-day. It does not follow that they had a written language in Adam's day, or that they printed books or had the law written upon tables of stone. Perhaps they had conditions which were preferable. Perhaps they had means of communicating thoughts without writing and printing. We believe they had. The necessity for written language may (we believe does) lie in the fact that Adam's race has *fallen* from the original, perfect state in which he was created.

Our present dependence upon language and books, etc., and the consequent development of these to meet our necessities, may be illustrated as follows: Suppose that a racial weakness of the ankles had set in as the result of the fall, so that none were able to walk without crutches. The crutches at first introduced would probably be very clumsy; but, as time progressed, the shapes and finish and ornamentation of articles so useful would surely progress also. Then

men unguided by the Scriptures would probably philosophise thus: "See how crude, compared with ours, were the crutches in use a few centuries ago; – Adam probably lay around unable to walk at all, or merely crawled about, pulling himself by the roots and branches of trees and bushes. The Bishop, philosophising from the same standpoint of thought, might have changed the expression above and said, "Why did not Christ come immediately after the fall of man? Simply because it was in Eden that locomotion began, and that in a crude form of crawling. The helps or crutches of that time would not have been sufficient to enable him to go about to preach the gospel."

Language and books are merely the crutches which partially make good the defects of the human mental powers incident to the fall – lack of mental perception and lack of memory. Does anyone suppose that in heaven God and the angels are dependent solely upon spoken and written language, books, etc., that some of the angels are printers, and others binders? Neither should we suppose that the perfect man needed such helps or crutches, but that these developed to meet his wants, and that as those wants or imperfections of man disappear during the *times of restitution* – which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets – these will be unnecessary. (Acts 3:19-21.) Undoubtedly, however, language and books will continue among men even after the powers of [R1717 : page 325] *mental discernment and expression* have been restored to them during the Millennium.

In full harmony with this is the promise of the Lord – "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord: I will put my *laws* into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them." (Heb. 8:10; 10:16.) Here the law written upon tables of stone, and given at Sinai, under the typical Covenant, is contrasted with the better arrangement of the New Covenant, which will ignore a written language entirely and write upon the hearts. The context shows that when the law has been *thus* written upon the hearts of all antitypical Israelites, who make this New Covenant with the Lord through Christ,

there will no longer be any teaching, for none will be ignorant of the Lord. – Jer. 31:33,34.

And this condition, which is to be ushered in by the Millennial age or "times of restitution," will correspond exactly to the conditions previous to the fall. The law to Adam was not in book form, nor upon tables of stone, but infinitely better: it was written in his heart and brain – in his very nature. He knew right from wrong by the operation of his perfect brain. Being "very good," a *likeness* of his Creator, he needed no reminders as to God's will. And the law given at Sinai twenty-five centuries later, instead of being a *higher* expression of the divine will, was a very much *inferior* expression, when compared with the perfect mind-and-heart-written law bestowed upon Adam.

The Apostle Paul corroborates all this, and tells us that all men have some traces of this *original* and superior law. Referring to some of the most degraded members of the race, he says, these "show the work [evidences] of *the law written in their hearts.*" (Rom. 2:15.) And in the preceding chapter the Apostle shows how it comes that some of the heathen are so very much more degraded than others, – how the original nature-written law came to be so much more nearly effaced from the hearts and brains of some of earth's families or races than from others. "Because that, *when they knew* God [in the remote past], they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools;...wherefore, God gave them up to uncleanness....And even as they did not like [prefer] to *retain God in their knowledge*, God gave them over to a reprobate mind." – Rom. 1:21,22,24,25,28.

The Apostle's explanation of present degradation is a *fall down* from a height; a failure to retain God in their knowledge – an effacing of the law from their hearts and minds. The Bishop, on the contrary, teaches that the race begun in the infant Adam, one degree above an ape, had not, previous to the coming of Christ, progressed

sufficiently to be able to receive a revelation from God, – human language until then being too imperfect. Which is right? the inspired Apostle or the Bishop? Evidently the worldly-wise theory of the latter respecting Evolution is hindering his study of and faith in the Scriptures. But we must accept the consistent theory of the Scriptures, though it separate us entirely from the philosophies of the worldly-wise.

In speaking of the cause of Adam's ejection from Eden, the Bishop *says* "fall;" but what does he *mean*? Evidently, from the general tenor of his discourse, he means that Adam and his race have been "*falling upward*" for six thousand years. The "infant" Adam, *one* degree superior to an ape, *fell up* to the present civilized *manhood*; – as the result of disobedience to God's commands! Surely any who believe this gospel would be justified in saying, Let us do evil that good may follow!

But those who *prove* the Bishop's words by Scripture, and who seek "to the law and the testimony," will turn from such inconsistency [R1718 : page 325] of human reasoning. Such would ask the Bishop, Where then would be the room for, or necessity, or value of, the *ransom* for all, given by our Redeemer? From *what* could he *redeem* men, if Adam's course were so beneficial? And why should the promise of *restitution* (restoring to Adam's condition) be held out by God at the mouth of *all the holy prophets*? (Acts 3:21.) Surely, restitution of even semi-civilized peoples to a babe condition, one degree above the ape, would be a curse, a retrogression, an injury, a most undesirable thing! [R1718 : page 326]

One error leads naturally to another: consequently we find the following unscriptural statement in the same discourse. The Bishop is reported to have said: –

"We think sin caused death, and we are accustomed to say so. It is not true! Death is God's normal method of the universe! God made the universe for death!"

The vast majority of Christian professors would agree with the Bishop, and could scarcely tell *why* they sometimes have associated death with sin; when they knew all the time that they recognized no relationship. We suggest a reason for this. It is because they sometimes read the Bible, and they find it thus stated therein. But as they get to believe that the race is *falling up*, and that the Bible was written by well-meaning men *far down* below present development – by men who never saw an electric car or a bicycle or a telephone – they will get to have less and less care for what the Bible says upon this or any subject. But let us examine the Bible and note how positively it contradicts the Bishop – or, as the Bible existed first, we should say, how positively the Bishop's expression contradicts the Bible. It says: –

"The soul that sinneth, it shall *die*." – Ezek. 18:4.

"The wages of sin is *death*." – Rom. 6:23.

"By one man's disobedience sin entered into the world, and *death* by [or as a result of] sin." – Rom. 5:12.

"By one man's offense *death* reigned." – Rom. 5:17.

"By the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation [to the wages of sin, *death*]." – Rom. 5:18.

"Sin hath reigned unto *death*." – Rom. 5:21.

"Since by man [Adam] came *death*." – 1 Cor. 15:21.

"In Adam all *die*." – 1 Cor. 15:22.

"The sting of [or which produces] *death* is sin." – 1 Cor. 15:56.

"Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth *death*." – Jas. 1:15.

In harmony with these words of the apostles and prophets was the declaration of God to Adam when he placed him upon trial, in Eden,

"In the day [2 Pet. 3:8] that thou eatest thereof, dying, thou shalt *die*;" and as expressed by Eve, – "God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye *die*." It was Satan that declared, "Ye shall not surely *die*," as the result of transgressing God's command. How strange that the Bishop and so many others place themselves on the side of Satan and join in his contradiction of God's declaration, and with him join in deceiving mankind respecting "the wages of sin." – Gen. 2:17; 3:3,4.

The Bishop's confusion respecting the heathen millions is largely because he fails to see clearly the Bible doctrine of the fall of Adam into condemnation of death, and that the terrible ravages of death (with its attendant features, sickness and pain) which for six thousand years have rested so heavily upon the race are God's "*curse*" – the "wages" or penalty for sin. Failing to see that *hades*, the grave, is the penalty for sin, and an awfully severe, though just, penalty, the Bishop and millions of others have for years looked for and imagined a place where devils will riot in pleasure to all eternity, enjoying the torments they will, by God's will and providence, or by his inability to prevent, inflict upon billions of the human race. Having misconceived the meaning of the words *sheol* and *hades*, rendered "hell" in our common version Bible (Can we really *excuse* an educated man on the score of ignorance as to the meaning and Scriptural use of these words?), and having outgrown the unscriptural eternal torment theories, the Bishop is wandering about looking amongst the most *fallen-up* men for some modern theory that will prove that death, and pain and sickness are blessings, and that the heathen as well as the saints enter by this gateway into a heaven where the few developed Christians will be perfectly happy, surrounded by myriads of characterless heathen, idiots, etc.

If the Bishop would find *the path of life* which God has provided, for there is no other, let him retrace his steps; let him acknowledge that God created man *upright*, but that he sought out various contrary devices and *defiled himself*. (Eccl. 7:29.) Then let him admit the fall

of man *downward* – mentally, morally and physically. Then he will find a place for the *ransom* for all – Christ's *death* – to redeem man from [R1718 : page 327] the *sentence of death*. Then he will find a place for the restitution to their "former estate" of human perfection of all who will receive Christ and obey him. (Acts 3:19-21; Ezek. 16:48-63.) Then he will find a use for the Bible doctrine of *a resurrection* of the dead, which would be an absurdity if there be none dead. Then the Lord's promise that "All that are *in their graves* shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and come forth," will have a meaning (John 5:25-29); and soon he will see that the hope for the heathen of foreign lands, living and dead, and the only hope for the vast majority of civilized lands, will be the great Kingdom of Christ during the Millennium, for which we were taught to pray, "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven;" – a prayer not yet answered. And in connection he will find that the Church is the "little flock" to which it is the Heavenly Father's good pleasure to give this Kingdom – in association with Christ her Head and Bridegroom; – that the Kingdom cannot come until the Church has been completed, – and that not until then can "all the families of the earth be blest" with the promised Millennial blessings and opportunities. – Luke 12:32; Rev. 20:4; Gen. 28:14.

One more point before we close. We quote again from the report of the same sermon: –

GOD FORCING MEN TO SIN.

"God gives *impulses* to reach out and take that which we should not have. But when, to indulge these desires, we step over the law with which he has hedged us about, we commit sin."

Here the Bishop is driven by the other errors he holds to this almost blasphemous statement that God not only places temptations before men, but that he actually impels or forces them to do sin; for this is the significance of the word "*impulse.*" *Webster* defines

it, "*impelling, or driving onward.*" To say that God *impels* or *impulses* or *drives* mankind to choose "that which we should not have," and then "hedges us about" with contrary commands so as to entrap us in sin, would be to give him the character which properly applies to Satan.

If at the time of his trial Adam was ignorant of right and wrong, or if God *impelled* him to do the sin, surely that was not a fair trial. And to so teach is to declare God unjust, not only as to the trial, but still more so in respect to the punishment inflicted because of that failure – *death*, including all sickness, pain and trouble. This view would make God the great and really the only sinner, his penalty a sham, and the Bible doctrine of man's *redemption* with the precious blood of Christ a farce; for if man did not do the sinning, he was not guilty and needed no redemption, and God, who *impulsed* or *impelled* an imperfect creature to sin, was alone blameworthy, properly deserving of punishment.

But how inconsistent all this is when compared with the simple account – the only inspired account. The Bible shows Adam "upright," "very good" in God's sight, an "*image* of God" in flesh. It shows his fair trial, his just sentence, God's sympathetic love for his creature, even in his fallen condition, and his abundant provision for him in the gift of his Son for his redemption and restitution. The Bible theory is consistent with *reason*: other theories are not so.

How clearly the Scriptures contradict the Bishop, saying, "Let no man say, when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil; neither tempteth he any man." – Jas. 1:13.

But the Bishop's argument appears in a still worse light when its different parts are united. For instance, take the suggestion that Adam was an inexperienced "infant," with whom language only began to take *form* and was "insufficient for revelation;" add to this the statement that God *impulsed* or *impelled* him to take the forbidden fruit and thus to break his laws; add, thirdly, the proposition that God

falsified to the "babe" Adam, and told him that he would *die* for his disobedience, while he really meant no such thing (for the Bishop says, sin did not cause death: "Death is the normal [regular, proper] method of the universe"), but intended thus to develop humanity and bring it up to perfection.

Can any one imagine a more nauseating theological compound than this? Verily, as the Lord foretold through the prophet, "The wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be [R1718 : page 328] hid." – Isa. 29:14. Read also verses 9-13, applicable at the present time.

Such teaching, from such a high dignitary, in so popular a church as the Methodist, is sure to have much bad fruit, and that quickly, in the ranks of the ministers, as well as amongst the "laity." Indeed, we were not surprised to learn that within two weeks after this discourse by the Bishop, an M.E. pastor in our city [R1719 : page 328] preached about Adam being a big, ignorant baby, and that his temptation and fall were necessary in order to develop him.

How needful that God's people see the *truth*, to keep them from following such blind guides and stumbling into the pit of unbelief and agnosticism! Those whose eyes have been anointed by the eye-salve of truth, and who now see the real beauty and harmony of God's Word, should not be satisfied to *rest* in the truth and to render thanks therefor. They should "preach the Word," the gospel of salvation by the cross and not by a fall upward (evolution), nor as a reward for ignorance. Those who do not get the *truth* speedily, will get the *error*; for Satan's time is short and his deceptive theories are *many*, while the truth is *one*.

A sure way to test all theories is to square them by the doctrine of the *ransom*. Every theory which asserts that Adam did not fall from perfection of life into death, or which says or implies that his fall and that of his race has been *upward*, denies the *ransom*, whether its advocates so admit or not; for, if nothing was lost, nothing could be *redeemed* or bought back. If it denies that man's *life was forfeited* by

sin, it cannot claim the sacrifice of Christ's life as "a *ransom* [a corresponding PRICE] for all." If *death* be the normal or proper condition, and not the wages of sin, then Christ's *death* could not pay our penalty; and, indeed, from the evolution standpoint, there is no penalty for disobedience, but, on the contrary, a reward – of civilization and development. There is no necessity, no place, for a *ransom* in any such theory. All modern theories thus deny the ransom.

The most insidious and dangerous "enemies of the cross of Christ" are those who, professing to be his servants and to preach his gospel, attack it on the *inside*, by denying that God's work was perfect when he created man (Deut. 32:4); that man *fell* from that perfection and divine likeness; that the right to recover him out of sin and death, to "that which was lost," was purchased of Justice by "the precious blood [shed, – death] of Christ." By whatever ways any may attempt to *climb* into the sheep-fold, they are wrong ways, and their advocates are pronounced to be "thieves and robbers." (John 10:9-11,15.) The keystone to the divine plan is that "the man Christ Jesus gave himself a *ransom* [a corresponding price] for all, to be testified in due time." (1 Tim. 2:6.) Whatever theory does not square with this, absolutely and in every particular, is thus proven to be a false one. – 2 Cor. 11:13-15.

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We will supply our readers with plenty of these criticisms of the Bishop's views, and trust they may do good in the way of opening the eyes of some of the Lord's sheep to see where their trusted, but blind, shepherds are leading them. But do not stop with this: sell or loan or give them speedily other reading matter – especially "*The Plan of the Ages.*" (See second page.) We will loan a copy, post free, to any who will promise a careful, prayerful reading, and to return the book post-paid or twenty-five cents instead.
