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HOPE OF ANOTHER CHANCE.

EXTRACTS FROM DR. TALMAGE'S SERMON AT WASHINGTON CITY,
AUG. 9, '96, WITH COMMENTS.

"IF the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be." – Eccl. 11:3.

"There is a hovering hope in the minds of a vast multitude of people that there will be an opportunity in the next world of correcting the mistakes of this. The object of my sermon is to show you that common sense declares with the text that such an expectation is chimerical. 'If the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be.'

(1) "There are those who say that if the impenitent and unforgiven man enters the next world and sees the disaster, as a result of that disaster he will turn, the distress the cause of his reformation; but we have ten thousand instances all around about us of people who have done wrong and disaster suddenly came upon them – did the disaster heal them? No, they went on. There is a man flung of dissipations. His nerves are all a jangle. From crown of head to sole of foot he is one aching, rasping, crucifying torture. Where is he? He is in hell on earth. Does it stop him? Ah! no. [R2047 : page 241] After a while delirium tremens pours out upon his pillow a whole jungle of hissing reptiles. His screams horrify the neighbors as he dashes out of bed crying: 'Take these things off me!' He is drinking down the comfort of his family, the education of his children, their prospects for this life and perhaps their prospects for the life to come. Pale and convalescent he sits up. Physician says to him: 'Now, my good fellow, I am going to have a plain talk with you. If you ever have an attack of this kind again you will die. I can't save you, and all the doctors in creation can't save you.' The patient gets up, starts out, goes the same round of dissipation and is

down again; but this time medicines do not touch his case. Consultations of physicians say there is no hope. Death ends the scene.

"Pain does not reform. Suffering does not cure. What is true in regard to one sin is true in regard to all sins, and yet men are expecting in the next life there will be opportunity for purgatorial regeneration. Take up the printed reports of the prisons of the United States and find that the vast majority of the criminals were there before, some for two times, three times, four times, six times. Punished again and again, but they go right on. Millions of incidents and instances working the other way, and yet men think that in the next world punishment will work out for them salvable effects. Why, you and I cannot imagine any worse torture from another world than we have seen men in in this world, and without any salutary consequence.

(2) "Furthermore, the prospect of reformation in another world is more improbable than here. Do you not realize the fact that a man starts in this world with the innocence of infancy? In the other case, starting in the other world, he starts with the accumulated bad habits of a lifetime. Is it not to be expected that you could build a better ship out of new timber than out of an old hulk that has been ground up in the breakers? If starting with comparative innocency the man does not become godly, is it possible that starting with sin [R2048 : page 241] a seraph can be evolved? Is there not more prospect that a sculptor will make a finer statue out of a block of pure, white Parian marble than out of a black rock that has been cracked and twisted and split and scarred with the storms of a half century?

"'But,' say some people, 'we ought to have another chance in the next world because our life here is so very brief.'

(3) "My friends, do you know what made the ancient deluge a necessity? It was the longevity of the antediluvians. They were worse in the second century than in the first, and worse when they got three hundred years old, and worse at four hundred, and worse at five hundred, and worse at six hundred, and worse at eight hundred; until

the world had to be washed and scoured and scrubbed and soaked and sunk and anchored a whole month under water before it was fit for decent people to live in. I have seen many pictures of old Time with his scythe to cut, but I never saw any picture of Time with a chest of medicines to heal.

"If eight hundred years of life time could not cure the antediluvians of their iniquity, I undertake to say that all the ages of eternity would be only prolongation of depravity.

(4) "'But,' says some one, 'in the next life the evil surroundings will be withdrawn, and good influences will be substituted, and hence, expurgation, sublimation, glorification.' But you must remember that the righteous, all their sins forgiven, pass right up into a beatific state, not needing any other chance, that will leave all those who have never been forgiven, and who were impenitent, alone, alone! and where are the salvable influences to come from? Can it be that Dr. Duff, who spent his whole life in pointing the Hindoos to heaven, and Dr. Abeel, who spent his life in evangelizing China, and that Judson, who spent his life in preaching the gospel to Burmah – can it be expected that they will be sent down from some celestial missionary society to educate and to save those who wasted their earthly existence? No. We are told distinctly that all missionary and evangelistic influences will be ended forever, and the good, having passed up to their beatific state, all the morally bankrupt will be together; and where are the salvable influences to come from? Will a specked or bad apple put in a barrel of diseased apples make the other apples good? Will one who is down be able to lift others up?

"If a man in this world was surrounded with temptation, in the next world (all the righteous having passed up into the beatific state), the association will be more deteriorating, depreciating and down. You would not send a man to a cholera or yellow fever hospital for his health, and the great lazaretto of the future, in which are gathered the diseased and the plague-struck, will be a poor place for moral recovery.

"I wonder what is the curriculum in the College Inferno, where a man having been prepared by enough sin, enters and goes up from freshman of iniquity to sophomore of abomination, and on up, from sophomore to junior, and from junior to senior, and day of graduation comes, and the diploma is signed by Satan, the president, and all the professional demoniacs attest the fact that the candidate has been a sufficient time under their drill, and then enters heaven. Pandemonium, a preparatory school for celestial admission! Ah, my friends, while Satan and his cohorts have fitted a vast multitude for ruin, they never fitted one soul for happiness – never.

"You see this idea lifts this world from an unimportant way station to a platform of stupendous issues, and makes all eternity whirl around this hour. Oh, my soul! my soul! Only one trial, and all the preparation for that trial to be made in this world, or never made at all. Oh, my soul! my soul! You see this piles up all the emphasis and all the climaxes and all the destinies into this life. No other chance. Oh, how that intensifies the value and the importance of this chance. Alexander and his army used to come around a city and they would kindle a great light, with the understanding that as long as that light was burning the city might surrender, and all would be well, but if they let that light go out, then the battering rams would swing against the walls and there would come disaster and demolition. Oh, my friends, all you and I need to do to prepare for eternal safety is just to surrender to the King and Conqueror, Christ. Surrender hearts, surrender life, surrender everything. The great light keeps burning, light kindled by the wood of the Cross, light flaming up against the dark night of our sin and sorrow. Oh, let us surrender before the light goes out, and with it our last opportunity of making **[R2048 : page 242]** our peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

COMMENTS ON THE FOREGOING.

We publish the foregoing, because, weak as it is, and easily answered by those who have in mind the Scripture teachings, it is

nevertheless the strongest presentation of that side of the subject that has yet come under our observation; and we desire to give, for the benefit of the uninstructed, a proper answer to such reasonings.

First, then, that there may be no mistake, let us say that we fully endorse the statement that whoever hears the message of divine grace should make haste immediately to respond; – to accept justification by faith in the precious blood, and to present himself with every talent a living sacrifice in God's service; and that there will never be *another* chance provided for any who have enjoyed a *full* chance in the present life and have despised it. But we cannot agree that Mr. Talmage or any other man is competent to decide which of mankind have had, and which have not had, a *full* opportunity. Only the appointed Judge is either authorized or capable of deciding this question. – John 5:22.

However, we can say nothing further in harmony with the discourse: on the contrary, we must condemn all of its reasonings as sophistical and wholly unscriptural.

The only excuse that can be offered for the selection of so mis-fit a text for such a subject, by a man of Mr. Talmage's ability, is, that he felt that he must have some text, and this one came as near as any to be found in the Bible, which could be made in any degree to hint that the *only chance* for gaining everlasting life is the present life.

Those who will turn to the Scriptures and examine this text with its context will find nothing whatever to justify the interpretation given it by Mr. Talmage. Yet probably not one in a thousand of those who heard or read the discourse turned to and read the scripture cited as *authority* for all the weighty conclusions based on it. Alas! there is far too much confidence reposed in human teachers who frequently are far from faithful "oracles of God."

(1) The text has not the remotest reference to human probation. There is nothing to indicate that it refers to mankind at all. It merely

points out that we may know that inanimate things act under nature's laws – clouds full of water drop it upon the earth; a tree, whichever way it falls, is powerless to change or move its position. If any lesson or comparison to man were instituted it would be that so man falls helpless in death, and that "there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest" (Eccl. 9:10); but we see no comparison to man in the verse or its context.

The poor drunkard who finally becomes such a slave to his appetite that he loses all self-control, and battles in vain to regain his freedom, is used as a proof that experiences are *not* reformatory, whereas every person knows that some of the most valuable lessons we learn are lessons of experience, so that it has become a recognized proverb that "a burned child dreads the fire." The fact is that morphine, opium, nicotine and other drugs obtain such a mastery over their subjects that often the latter weep and strive for freedom in vain, and would welcome gladly any deliverance, – Keely Cures, or what not?

All that can be said against such slaves of appetite the Apostle Paul declares to be true in some measure of all sinners. He says (Rom. 7:14-25): "For I know that in me (that is, in my [fallen] flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to *will* is present with me, but how to perform I find not: but the evil which I would not, that I do....O wretched man that I am [as all by heredity are], who shall deliver me from this dead body [this body which my will cannot fully control, and with which there is a constant battle]?" Then comes the answer, that God has appointed Christ to be our deliverer – "I thank God [there is deliverance from this slavery] through Jesus Christ our Lord."

The fact then, attested by our experience and by God's Word, is that we all are slaves of Satan, sin and death, and all need a Savior. We who have already found Christ as our Savior may well rejoice; but by what authority can we declare that his power to save, to deliver from Satan, sin and death is limited to the "few there be that find" the narrow way in the present age? Quite to the contrary, the Scriptures, while

plainly declaring, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see," declare none the less explicitly that the time is coming when all the sin-blinded eyes shall be opened; and that Christ, the true light, shall yet lighten "*every man that cometh into the world.*" (John 1:9.) The eye of faith thus grasps firmly the promises of God's Word, – that the knowledge of the Lord shall yet fill the whole earth, that "all the families of the earth" shall ultimately be "blessed" with the knowledge of the "good tidings of great joy, which shall be unto **[R2049 : page 242] all people,**" "every creature," even "those that are in their graves," who shall come forth to hear it.

Moreover, the Scriptures explain how it comes that the majority of mankind are now blinded and deceived, saying, "The god of this world [Satan] hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." (2 Cor. 4:4.) And those whose eyes are not thus blinded by sin and superstition are alone the favored "drawn" by the Father to Christ. These, upon accepting Christ, are translated "out of darkness into his marvelous light." This **[R2049 : page 243]** the Apostle expresses when addressing those whose eyes of understanding have been *opened*, saying, "That ye...may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge [mere human understanding]." – Eph. 3:18,19.

This special class now called, chosen, and found faithful, are called "God's elect." God is choosing them for a purpose, – a good purpose, a grand purpose, a holy purpose. He is not choosing this "little flock" to sit in glory and (as described by Jonathan Edwards) to look over the battlements of heaven and see the great mass of humanity in eternal torment and to praise God for their own deliverance from such a fate; but he is electing them in order that through them, with Christ Jesus, as the elect and foreordained "Seed of Abraham," "all the families of the earth [shall] be blessed."

The Apostle points out the very slaves of sin, mentioned by Mr. Talmage, groaning under the weight of the yoke which the great task-master, Sin, has imposed upon them, but, so far from seeing no hope for such, he declares, "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now [not in despair and hopelessly, but] *waiting for* the manifestation of the sons of God [for their deliverance]." (Rom. 8:19,22.) The whole creation is not waiting intelligently, for "the god of this world has blinded their minds;" but they are ignorantly and blindly waiting, groaning and hoping for the "Golden age" and life elixirs of which the world's poets have long sung; all of which hopes are far inferior to the wonderful Millennial blessings which God has promised shall be ushered in, when the elect number of the "royal priesthood," the "sons of God," now making their calling and election sure by conformity to the predestinated conditions of joint-heirship, shall have been "changed" and manifested in glory. – Rom. 8:29,17,18.

The Apostle distinctly states this, saying, "The creature itself *shall be delivered* from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God." That he does not here refer to the Church, the saints, but to mankind in general, is evident from the context; for he turns then to believers and declares, "And not only *they* [the world] but ourselves also [the elect Church – the seed of Abraham, through whom "*they*" are to be delivered, after "we" have been "glorified" as the sons of God, we,] which have the firstfruits of the spirit, even *we* groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption [the full recognition of our sonship], to wit, the redemption [deliverance] of our body" – the body of Christ, the Church, in the first resurrection.

Ah, yes! We agree that pain and punishment cannot lift men out of sin and reconcile them to God. It is for this very reason that a Savior was sent. If a law and obedience to it and punishments could have reformed mankind, no doubt God would have chosen that way. (Gal. 3:21.) But what the law could not do, and what pain and sorrow could not do (Rom. 8:3), God proposes to do *through Christ*. (Rom. 7:24,25.) He proposes a glorious deliverance – the binding of Satan (Rev. 20:2),

the opening of the blind eyes (Isa. 29:18; 35:5) and the helping of all who will accept his grace back to all that was lost in Adam and redeemed by the Second Adam. (Luke 19:10.) It is for this purpose to give a universal blessed opportunity for life, that Christ died for all – redeemed all. It is for this purpose that the Kingdom of Heaven on earth has been promised, repeatedly, through the holy apostles and prophets – for which, as Christ's joint-heirs, the Church of "overcomers" is being selected. (Matt. 6:10.) Under that Millennial Kingdom (whose kings and priests will be invisible) the deliverance of the groaning creation will be effected and the incorrigible destroyed in the second death.

(2) Mr. Talmage's reasoning is strangely out of harmony with his Catechism, as well as his Bible, respecting the "innocency of infancy." He seems to forget that all of Adam's posterity are "born in sin and shapen in iniquity," and "prone to sin as the sparks to fly upward." He fails to take notice of prenatal influences upon character; and the Bible reference to it in the statement that by one man's disobedience sin and its results entered the world (Rom. 5:12), and its approval of the human proverb, "The fathers ate a sour grape [of sin] and the children's teeth are set on edge." But Mr. Talmage and all other sensible people know that either depravity or weakness of character are born in every child; and that many criminals were so low-born that it is almost impossible for them to pursue a righteous course under the present Satan-blinded and sin-abounding conditions.

No, although purity and goodness should be cultivated from infancy, the hope of the world does not lie in the purity of infancy and the avoidance of sin; for then none would be saved. – "There is none righteous, no, not one." The hope of humanity is in Christ – in what he did at Calvary in paying the *ransom-price* for the sins of the whole world; in what he is doing now in selecting the royal priesthood for the great future work of restitution, during the Millennium. – See Acts 3:19-21.

(3) Mr. Talmage argues truly that the Antediluvians were wicked, and that eight hundred years of experience did not make them clean from sin, but led to greater depravity. We agree that the course of sin has always been downward, and always will be. Noah's preaching was not expected to avert the flood any more than Moses' law was intended by God to deliver Israel [R2049 : page 244] from sin. As by the deeds of the law no flesh could be justified and saved, so by the preaching of Noah no flesh could be justified and saved. All the lessons of the past were intended to establish and enforce the fact that there is but *one remedy* for sin, the great sin-offering "finished" at Calvary. In the merit of that sacrifice Christ, the Redeemer, is fully authorized to begin the reign of Grace which shall not be powerless as was the reign of the Law; nor baneful as was the reign of sin and death, but mighty through God for the overthrow of the reign of Sin and Death, the deliverance of the groaning creation from their bondage, the blessing of "all the families of the earth" with the offer and opportunity of eternal life, and the final overthrow with "everlasting destruction" of all wilful sinners in the Second Death.

(4) Rejecting the Scriptural proposition, that the Church is being selected from the world for the purpose of blessing, instructing, ruling and judging the world during its Millennial "day of judgment," Mr. Talmage assumes without any Scriptural warrant that the judgment of the world will end with this age with the coming of the Judge to the throne, and that then earth's billions will be sentenced without having known that they were on trial or that there is hope for them (Eph. 2:12; 2 Cor. 4:4), and that then this great multitude will be given over to the instruction of Satan and his under demons. Not only is such a view unreasonable, but there is no Scripture to this effect, while there are many quite to the contrary, – showing that in the end of this age Satan shall be bound that "he may *deceive the nations no more*" for a thousand years; that then Christ and the glorified Church shall reign in righteousness, that "his reign shall be glorious" (Isa. 24:23) and shall witness the complete overthrow of sin and every enemy of righteousness; for Christ must "*reign*" until he shall have put all enemies

under his feet." (1 Cor. 15:25-28.) The same lesson is also clearly taught in our Lord's prayer: "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." Where, then, is the basis for Mr. Talmage's suggestion of a College Inferno of which Satan is the President and the under demons professors to have charge of the race? Truly, that would be a hopeless condition. But the Scriptures cited, and to be cited, prove that God's plan is the reverse of this, – to take the race completely out of the hands of "the Prince of *this* world" and to place it in "the world *to come*" absolutely under the control of the Prince of Light, "the Lord, the righteous Judge," who with his glorified Church will constitute a "Royal Priesthood," prepared by trials and temptations to sympathize with and assist the poor, degraded but blood-bought race: to bless them with an accurate knowledge of the truth and "times of *restitution* of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets." – Acts 3:19-21.

But who are "the righteous" of whom Mr. Talmage speaks so confidently, saying, – "Remember that the *righteous*, all their sins forgiven, pass right up into a beatific state?" Who are these? Are they few or many? How came they to have their sins forgiven? These important questions are all passed over in silence by Mr. T. Not a mention in the sermon of the fact that all were sinners, and that the penalty of all was paid by Christ Jesus, our Redeemer, and that the only ones whose sins are blotted out are those who by faith in the great sacrifice, and repentance from sins, and consecration to God have been adopted into God's family. [R2050 : page 244]

But those whom he describes are Scripturally termed the "elect" Church, the royal priesthood, the approved heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord and Redeemer who will prove faithful unto death. These are those of whom the Lord spoke, saying, – "Fear not, *little flock*, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom." They are not the great multitudes of inconsistent professors, but the few known unto the Lord and dear to him as the apple of his eye, "a peculiar people, zealous of good works," who lay down their lives in

his service. (See Psa. 50:5; Mal. 3:17.) And if this be true, and if, as Mr. T. declares, all others are to be given over hopelessly to the care of devils, it is an awful, a more horrible thought probably than Mr. T. meant to convey.

Yet where is the escape from his dilemma of his own and not of Scriptural construction? Can any claim that sinners are saints, that bad people are good, that the unrighteous are righteous, that unbelievers are justified? Not more than one in ten of professing Christians will *lay claim* to the foregoing Scriptural description of the "righteous," – those believing in Christ implicitly, fully consecrated to God's service, and seeking to "walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit." How then, we ask, could we expect that the "little flock" that will "pass right up into a beatific state" will be more than a mere handful of the 1,500,000,000 now living or of the more than 50,000,000,000 that have died?

DR. TALMAGE'S DIFFERENT VIEW.

But Mr. Talmage can reason very differently about *another chance* for some, when he so desires! About two years ago he preached a sermon, published broadcast, in which he took the other side of the subject, but got equally far away from the true plan of God, the true gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

He said in substance, –

I have no sympathy with the thought that a mere handful of humanity will be saved and that the vast host of our race will be lost. I have no share in the belief that our Lord Jesus Christ is going to suffer a [R2050 : page 245] crushing defeat, and that Satan is going to gain a victory by which he will carry off nearly all the spoils, and hell be peopled a thousand to one more than heaven. I believe that there will be a larger number saved than lost, and I will tell you how I reckon it. First, we have the fact that one half of our race dies in infancy. I hold that all of these will go to heaven because innocent of sin. Secondly, we know that a vast majority of the adult heathen have never seen "the true light,"

have died in ignorance, and therefore will not be punished as intelligent wilful sinners, but will be saved. Thirdly, we have a large class whose mental acumen is insufficient, who are *non compos mentis*, including the insane, idiotic and simple, who could not be sent to eternal torment because of their misfortunes, and hence must also be taken to heaven. Thus the larger proportion of our race will reach heaven, and the few, comparatively, suffer eternal torment.

We will state our objections to this unscriptural theory, then proceed to contrast it with Mr. T's latest deliverance, and finally show the Scriptural presentation in contrast with both; remarking by the way that Mr. Talmage, Presbyterian as he is, seems to have lost all of his Calvinistic theology, as he ignores entirely the distinction between elect and non-elect infants and heathen. We are glad to note this. But we object to

THIS GOSPEL OF SALVATION BY INNOCENCE.

(1) It is not true that infants, idiots, etc., are *innocent of sin*, so that they would be salvable on account of innocence; for, although they have committed no wilful, personal sins, they are nevertheless members of the race of Adam and sharers in the *condemnation* of original sin. As it is written, "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners." "By the offence of *one* judgment came upon *all* men to condemnation." "By one man's offense death reigned [over *all*]." "By one man [in whom *all* sinned] sin entered into the world and death by [as the result of] sin; and so death passed upon *all* men." – Rom. 5:12,17,18,19.

This proposition being true, that none are innocent, but all are under condemnation, it follows that Mr. Talmage's billions of infants, heathen, etc., can be no more justified by their ignorance than by their works. (Rom. 3:20.) There is only one way of escape from the "*condemnation*" that rests on the whole world; namely, by justification, through *faith in the Redeemer and his sin-offering of himself*. "There is no other name given under heaven or among men whereby we must be saved," and the salvation is through knowledge,

faith and obedience, and not through ignorance or incapacity or imperfect works. If Mr. T's theory be correct, it is a great mistake on God's part that all who are not idiots do not die in infancy; that thus all might get into heaven. According to this process of reasoning, the preaching of Christ, so far from being "good tidings," is bad tidings; because if all died in ignorance, in heathenism, all would then be saved.

SAVAGES AND MANIACS TAKEN TO HEAVEN.

(2) But we object to Mr. Talmage's gospel on another score. If heaven were made the receptacle of the heathen, savages, barbarians, the idiotic, simple, insane and infants, it would cease to be heaven to a considerable extent, and become a pandemonium. Mr. T. will no doubt admit that the billions of ignorant, imbecile and degraded, whom he describes as the vast majority of the heavenly throng, have never formed *characters*, and that they will need to do so before they would be fit companions for saints whose characters are formed after the divine pattern. And since each infant, as it develops, will become a free moral agent, what assurance have we in this theory that after all several billions of these infants, heathen, etc., would not choose disobedience, sin, rather than obedience, righteousness, and raise up an insurrection in heaven worse than has ever been known on earth? Verily, if the plan presented in the Scriptures were not much more reasonable than this theory, we would have serious grounds for questioning its being the divine plan, which must surely display divine wisdom.

Should Mr. Talmage attempt to make his theory more reasonable by claiming that the billions of heathen, idiots, infants, etc., would be *changed* instantly and miraculously and made perfect beings, fit for heaven, we would object that if such were the divine plan, and if development of character by contact with trial and temptation were unimportant, it would impeach the divine wisdom and love and justice for having permitted six thousand years of sin and death and the loss thereby of some; for according to the theory we are criticizing all this was unnecessary – worse than useless. If Mr. T. were not yet convinced

we would quote his text at the head of this article, "In the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be," and applying it Scripturally would urge that it teaches that *no change of character* takes place in the grave. It is in agreement with the Scripture which declares, "There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest." The earliest and only opportunity after death to gain knowledge and to form character will be when "All that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and come forth."

Here, then, we have the two extremes of Mr. T's view. (a) He assumes to decide that there can be only one chance of gaining everlasting life; – that all who do not enter the "strait gate" and walk the "narrow way" are *hopelessly lost*. (b) Yet remembering the Lord's words, "Few there be that find it [the strait gate]," he next determines (contrary alike to reason and Scripture) that the vast majority (who do not get [R2050 : page 246] a proper chance in this life) must go to heaven, and get their chance *there*. Indeed, Mr. Talmage seems ready to claim that the free agency of the "vast majority" will be abrogated, and that the savages, idiots and infants will be declared "predestinated" and "elect" beyond their own power to dissent from or alter their conditions. What a medley! What incongruity! What inconsistency! A logician, following Mr. T., would pretty surely be led either to "Universalism" or to ignore the "redemption which is in Christ Jesus" and trust solely to his own righteousness. But now contrast

THE SCRIPTURAL PRESENTATION OF THE DIVINE PLAN.

As we have already shown, the Scriptures clearly teach that all men are under divine condemnation, wholly irrespective of their own deeds: all were "born in sin," all inherited our father Adam's condemnation and share in the blight of sin and death which came upon him, and through him, by heredity, upon all men. "The fathers ate the sour grape [of sin], and the children's teeth are set on edge." (Rom. 5:12; Jer. 31:29; Ezek. 18:2,3.) None could get rid of this condemnation, – neither the Jew by his knowledge of the Law and possession of the oracles of God, nor the

Gentile in his ignorance. (Rom. 3:9,10,19,23.) All were unworthy of eternal life; and the race as a whole had been in this pitiable condition for four thousand years, when God in great mercy had compassion on *all* and sent "a Savior, and a great one," not of the Jew only, but also of the Gentile, who, until then, was left "without God, and having no hope." – Isa. 19:20; Eph. 2:12.

The salvation contemplated in God's plan was not merely a reform – a salvation from *some* of the evil consequences of the fall – but a salvation unto the uttermost, of all who come unto God by Christ. To make it comprehensive, available to all, Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for *every man*. He "gave [R2051 : page 246] himself a ransom [a corresponding price] *for all*, to be testified in due time. – Heb. 7:25; 2:9; 1 Tim. 2:5,6.

Thus the redemptive sacrifice is seen to have been for the benefit, not only of those living when it was made and their progeny since, but also for the billions who had previously died "without God and having no hope," – all of whom went down into "*sheol*," "*hades*;" the great prisonhouse of *death*; – everlasting death, everlasting destruction, and not everlasting torment,* being the wages of sin under the divine law. (Rom. 6:23; Gen. 2:17.) But it is one thing that the penalty for all mankind has been paid, life for life (Jesus' life for Adam's life – Rom. 5:12,17,18,19), and that Jehovah God has accepted that ransom price, and manifested his acceptance, both by the resurrection of our Lord Jesus from the dead and by the descent of the holy spirit at Pentecost (Rom. 1:4; Acts 2:33,34); quite another thing will be the salvation or deliverance from death of the redeemed ones, – the deliverance of the dead and dying creation from the bondage of corruption – the bondage of death as well as of sin.

*See [WHAT SAY THE SCRIPTURES ABOUT HELL? 80 pp. 10 cents.](#)

Hence the necessity for the second coming of our Savior. He came the first time as a sin-offering to pay our ransom price, and bought us with his own precious blood, – his life; but he comes a second time, not

as a sin-offering, but "*unto salvation*," – to save or deliver from sin and death all whom he redeemed at his first advent, or as many of them as shall wish for salvation upon his terms, when they shall be brought to "an accurate knowledge of the truth" "in due time."

This salvation reaches no one until the end of the Gospel age, except "believers" who (in a reckoned sense) grasp "the hope of salvation" and anticipate it by faith. The apostles declare that we are "heirs of salvation," and point us to the fact that it "shall be *brought unto*" us "at the revelation of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ," at his second advent; and tell us that "now is our salvation nearer than when we first believed," and that meantime we are "kept by the power of God through faith *unto salvation*, ready to be revealed in the last time." (See Rom. 13:11; 1 Thes. 5:8; Heb. 1:14; 1 Pet. 1:5,13; Heb. 9:28.) The completion of

SALVATION IS CALLED "RESURRECTION"

– and thus is divided into two parts: "the first resurrection," including our Lord Jesus and all the overcomers of this Gospel age, "members of his body," is the chief, the highest, the most desirable; and none except the overcomers who have walked with their Lord in the narrow way of self-denial and suffering for righteousness' sake can have part in it: it is a rising up to life upon the spirit plane, and can be attained only by those "made partakers of the divine nature." (Rev. 20:6; 2 Pet. 1:4; Phil. 3:10,11.) These only are being called, chosen and proved during this Gospel age. These victors, the faithful, the "overcomers," will constitute the Royal Priesthood after the order of Melchizedeck (of which the Lord Jesus is the Head or Chief Priest), which is to "reign on the earth" as God's Kingdom, to order the affairs of men and *bring to all* the great salvation purchased by our Lord when he gave himself "a ransom for all." – 1 Pet. 2:9,10.

The salvation to be offered to the world in general is termed a "resurrection by judgment" – a rising up to the perfection of life through a judgment or disciplinary process during the Millennium. It includes

mankind, – the so-called "living" (but really "dying," of whom God speaks as "dead," because the sentence of death stands against them until they accept Christ Jesus as their Savior) as well as "all that are in the [R2051 : page 247] graves" who "shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and come forth [– awaken from the sleep of Adamic death, which would have been an "eternal sleep" except for Christ's sacrifice]." These billions will be "judged," granted a trial, during the Millennium, and those found worthy of everlasting life will get it at the close of the Millennium, and all unworthy of it will be cut off from life in "the second death" – "everlasting destruction."

The *awakening* from Adamic death will not be resurrection in the full sense; but rather a preparation for resurrection (Greek *anastasis*) which applies to all the steps to be taken upward toward *perfection of life* – the high plane from which all fell in Adam. As the little flock of this Gospel age passes *reckonedly* "from death unto life" by the acceptance of Christ, so all the world during the Millennium will be brought to a knowledge of God and Christ, but only those who accept Christ as their Savior, and the New Covenant with God through him, are reckoned as having any life (John 3:36); and with these it is only a beginning of the resurrection, or raising up process, which will not be perfected until the thousand years are finished.

It is a resurrection of judgment (*i.e., by* judgments); because reward and discipline will be the process by which the lessons of righteousness will be enforced and *characters* developed. The good physician, who so loved the sinners as to lay down his life for them, will be the Chief of the kings and priests who will instruct, govern, "judge" the world in righteousness; and this guarantees that everything will be done that can be done to help out of sin into righteousness and eternal life all who choose to seek life upon God's terms.

But, although obedience to the laws of Christ's Kingdom will be enforced, no man's free moral agency will be interfered with: it will be true of those who then know of and fail to gain life, as it is true of some

now, "Ye **will not** come unto me, that ye might have life." (John 5:40.) Those who will refuse to make any progress, or even to start, are mentioned by the prophet Isaiah (65:17-20) who, describing the Millennial condition, says, "The sinner a hundred years old shall be accursed [cut off from life]," though dying at that age he would be but as an infant. By complying with the laws of that time he might live at least to the close of the Millennial age.

Under the rule of that age – the reward of progress and deliverance from weaknesses, mental, physical and moral, will be given to the **obedient**, and "stripes," reproofs, etc., will be inflicted for wrong doing and failure to progress. It is evident, therefore, that the close of the Millennium will not only find all men fully informed, and the knowledge of the Lord filling the whole earth and all outwardly obedient, but, as we might expect, it will find some who will have partially misused their opportunities, whose hearts, wills, will not be fully submitted to the Lord's will; and the separation and destruction of these as "goats" from the others, "sheep," is properly the last act of that Judgment age, as represented in Rev. 20:7-10.

"ALL THE WICKED WILL GOD DESTROY."

The whole population of the world will then be "as the sand of the sea," and **all** will be subjected to a final test of loyalty to God. For a thousand years they will have had experiences in every way favorable, and, Satan being bound, they will have had no special temptations to disloyalty to God; and it will be but proper that a test of loyalty should be made which will manifest to all, which are at heart loyal to the Lord, and which are still selfish, self-willed and disloyal. That test will be crucial: no excuse or allowance can be made for any there, because all will then have had all the experience, knowledge and help which infinite wisdom and love have seen proper to provide; – all that could be of service in forming character. The result of this final trial will be the destruction of Satan and all who have any sympathy with sin, in the Second death – "everlasting destruction," symbolically pictured as a

"lake of fire and brimstone," the antitype of the Valley of Hinnom (*Gehenna*) outside the walls of the typical Jerusalem; so also in Matt. 25:31-33,41,46. There "fire" is symbolic as well as the "sheep" and the "goats;" and as in Revelation signifies – "the lake of fire and brimstone, *which is* the Second death." The *punishment* for sin as declared by Scripture is not everlasting torment, but *everlasting* death. "The wages of sin is *death!*" "The soul that sinneth [wilfully], it shall die!" The wilful evil doers, after rejecting the opportunities of the New Covenant, shall be "*punished with everlasting destruction* from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power."

The proportionate numbers of those who shall pass this final trial successfully and enter into life everlasting, – beyond all sighing, crying and dying, – is not even hinted at; nor is the number or the proportion of any consequence when we are assured, (1) that the saved will include every member of Adam's race (condemned in Adam but redeemed by the great "ransom for all") who, upon *full* opportunity, chooses to "take of the water of life freely" in God's appointed way; and (2) that the lost are only such as infinite wisdom sees to be incorrigible, and who, thus "punished with everlasting destruction," shall be no more.

Now what have we seen? – a second chance? Nay verily; except it be argued that Adam's original trial was a first chance which brought the sentence of death – condemnation upon all the race; and that the ransom paid by Christ secures another (an individual) chance [R2051 : page 248] for each member of the race. We have seen in this great divine plan *one*, but only *one, individual chance*, or trial, for each member of the redeemed race. Those who have enjoyed a full chance in this Gospel age and have wilfully rejected Christ we cannot expect will get another chance to reject and crucify him (Heb. 6:4-8; 10:26-31); but all who have not yet had a *full* chance are guaranteed a full chance, a fair and favorable trial, "in due time," by virtue of the "ransom for all." [R2052 : page 248]

We conclude that God's plan is much more reasonable than Mr. Talmage's plan. It saves no one in ignorance and sin, it overrides no one's free agency; its provisions take hold of every creature of Adam's race, all are treated impartially, none are to be saved under it except those who become copies of God's dear Son, our Lord Jesus; none are to be lost for lack of full opportunity to attain that character. In God's plan every condition and arrangement is found that sanctified reason could desire; and the various parts fit together perfectly, attesting its divine authorship. But of the many false theories of salvation and their originators, God says, – "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,...For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! And his grace, who hath measured its fullness in Christ?
