DOES MAN LIVE FOR EVER,

OR

PERISH LIKE THE BEAST?

A Question for the Times.

BY

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I PROPOSE, as God enables me, to point out briefly what the Word of God teaches as to this foundation truth. Everything is in question at the present day—nothing ever so undoubted hitherto but is doubted now; and that by men who profess at least the greatest respect for Scripture. Hence the necessity for the appeal to its testimony upon the present most momentous subject. It is not enough to say that the doctrine of the soul, its nature and immortality, has never been doubted of. The reply is simply it is doubted now. Nor will it do to appeal even to the unenlightened heathen, as more fully enlightened upon this point than many so-called Christians; for then we shall be accused of ourselves adopting the vain speculations of pagan philosophy. A happy necessity sends us simply to the Word, that "we may be able to give an answer for the hope that is in us," in this matter. May this answer be required and given, dear reader, as the same Word teaches us, "with meekness and fear."

The opposers of the soul's immortality, however they may differ upon other points, agree pretty well upon these. They say that man is simply material, of the dust, and to return to the dust again. That he differs nothing from "the beasts that perish," except in possessing a higher organisation. That to this is due his intellect, his moral powers,—all in short that he is or has. That he lays all down at death and is reduced to nothing—whether saint or sinner;—but will be raised up again at the resurrection to receive his reward: the just to inherit incorruption in the "spiritual body," the unjust to be again reduced to non-existence, which, they say, is "the second death;" (the arguments will come up presently; I notice only the views themselves just now). Besides which they say that the soul is merely the life imparted to man; the spirit, either his "breath," or else a principle of life communicated indeed to man, but only lent him by his Maker, forming no part of his individual being, never identified with the man himself, and returning to God at death, unchanged, as it was given.

This is a simple and truthful statement, I believe, of views put forth confidently by many as almost self-evidently Scriptural, and attempted to be proved from Scripture, not seldom with a great parade of knowledge of original tongues, and unhappily less seldom still with many bitter charges of priestcraft and wilful perversion of the truth on the part of those who hold the commonly received doctrines. Happily they invite us to an appeal to an impartial witness,—"Search the Scriptures" is the motto on both sides. May the Spirit of truth guide and bless us while we attempt compliance. May He be with the Word of which He is Himself the author; and teach us the most absolute, implicit, reverential subjection to it in all things. "If they speak

not according to this rule, it is because there is no light in them."

I begin with remarking at the outset, that there are two words which are used in Scripture for man's immortal part, and that whether in Hebrew or Greek, and the distinction is sufficiently observed in our common translation. The words I refer to are "soul" and "spirit." They are often used indifferently, for what we also call indifferently, either man's soul or spirit. Nevertheless they are not in strictness precisely the same. They are distinguished for instance 1 Thess. v. 23, "That your whole *spirit and soul and* body may be preserved blameless;" and again in Heb. iv. 12, where the word is characterised as "piercing even to the dividing asunder of *soul and spirit.*" Here surely, what can be "divided asunder" must be distinct from each other. Just noticing this here, I confine myself for the present to the word "soul," because it meets us first in our enquiry, in fact at the very threshold of Scripture—"Man became a living soul."

Now, it is quite true that this expression itself decides nothing. Great exultation has been made over the fact that precisely the same term is made use of in relation to the beast and to the reptile, to go no lower; and, while the exultation might have been spared, the thing is true. In Gen. i. 30 (not to speak of many other passages), where man is carefully distinguished from the lower animals, these latter are spoken of in general under the term, "everything wherein there is a living soul" (marginal reading). And they say, "if you make man immortal because he was made a living soul, you make the beasts so too, because they are said equally both to have and to be '*living souls.*'" But the exultation might have been spared, as I have said; in fact, the real

argument from the use of this expression lies all the other way. We cannot prove immortality from it doubtless. No one in his senses would think of doing so. Nor can we even prove man's pre-eminence above the beasts that perish, from it; for the one term is applied to man and beast. But is it nothing that we have in this way something beyond mere matter referred to the beast? Look around you, dear friend, we say; look in how many varied forms the instinct (so called) of the beast displays itself. Look at the sagacity, the fidelity, the affection they manifest, often so conspicuously. Is it nothing for our argument that Scripture, instead of referring these qualities to mere "organisation," teaches that even the beast possesses a "living soul" to which we can refer them? I am thus so little afraid of any argument drawn from the beast's possession of a soul, that I say it greatly helps in testing the consistency of Scripture-teaching with our own. Of all the animal creation is the term used: "Everything wherein there is a living soul." And we are not afraid of this. It does not, whatever men may say still, level man with the beast. A "living" soul is not necessarily an immortal soul. Nor is the soul of the beast necessarily like the soul of a man, either in kind or derivation, or in end. What the Apostle says even of flesh comes in with singular force here. "All flesh is not the same flesh. There is one kind of flesh of man, another of beasts." If that be so, how truly we may say then also: "There is one kind of soul of man, and another of beasts." Different in their derivation we know they are. It is never said of beasts that "God breathed into their nostrils the breath of life." They sprang simply out of the ground at the word of the Lord, but there was no impartation of anything from the Lord. But, by THIS, man,—*formed out of the dust before,*—

became a living soul. And that which came from God, in that peculiar way, returns to God. "The spirit of man goeth upward," while "the spirit of the beast goeth downward to the earth." "The dust," indeed, "returns to the earth as it was," but "the spirit to God who gave it."

Mark, dear reader, these two returns; "dust to dust," "the spirit to God." Is the latter ever once said of beasts? Does not the whole sentence prove to demonstration that man has some better part, given of God, more immediately than the body, and which returns to God, while the spirit of the beast goes downward to the earth? In a word, that the soul of man is in every way abundantly distinct from the soul of the beast.

A writer of some notoriety among those we are speaking of, goes further still in his zeal against the doctrine of the soul's immortality.

He contends that a "living soul" is nothing else than a "natural body." He argues it from 1 Cor. xv., and, that I may do him justice, I quote his argument in full. "Writing about body, the Apostle says, 'There is a natural body and a spiritual body.' But he does not content himself with simply declaring this truth; he goes further, and proves it by quoting the words of Moses, saying, 'For so it is written, The first man Adam was made into a living soul,' and then adds, 'the last Adam into a spirit giving life.' . . . The proof of the Apostle's proposition, that there is a natural body as distinct from a spiritual body, lies in the testimony that Adam was made into a *living soul;* shewing that he considered a natural or animal body, and a living soul as one and the same thing. If he did not, then there was no proof in the quotation of what he had affirmed." (Elpis. Israel, p. 28.)

This is about the most extraordinary piece of argument, upon so serious a subject, with which I am acquainted. Especially, coupled as it is with a mis-quotation of Scripture in its support. The Apostle does not say, "*For* so it is written," but "and"; meaning not to prove his statement by the passage produced, but only to show its harmony with other parts of the Word. If a natural body *suited* one that was made a living soul, a spiritual body suited one who was made a quickening spirit. But all Scripture confutes the idea that a natural body and a living soul are one. Take only the verse before mentioned "Everything *wherein* there was a living soul." Could you say WHEREIN there was a natural body? It is simply an absurdity, and having mentioned it, we may leave it as such.

That the soul of man is distinct from the body, a multitude of passages plainly prove. So distinct are they, that to kill the one, leaves untouched the other, as a familiar passage shows: "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul." Plainly this is something that is not the body; and death is not the end of it—it lives beyond that.

I return to look at the distinction between "soul" and "spirit." We have seen that even a beast is stated to have a living soul. And, in man, it is throughout Scripture spoken of as that part of his inner being which is connected with his purely animal propensities. It is the seat of his passions, instincts, appetites. "As for me I humbled my *soul* with *fasting*." "Hungry and thirsty their soul fainted in them." "Their soul abhorreth all manner of meat." "If he steal to satisfy his soul when he is hungry." "All her people sigh, they seek bread, they have given their pleasant things for meat to *relieve the soul*." "I will say to my soul, Soul,

thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink and be merry." A concordance will show a number of other instances.

These things are never said of the spirit, which is the seat of the *mind;* the loftier part of man's immortal nature. So, too, there is an adjective derived (ψυχικος *psuchikos* from (ψυχη *psuchee gr.*) from this word soul, the use of which affords further proof of the distinction that I speak of. It is used six times in the New Testament. Twice, Jas. iii. 15; Jude 19, it is translated "sensual." Three times it is used in 1 Cor. xv., in the expression "a natural," or, if you please, animal "body,"—a body governed by the senses,—and once in 1 Cor. ii. 14, "the natural man"; in the same way, a man governed by his senses—temporal and sensible things—and rising no way higher. Alas, I know that even the spirit in man naturally is debased, and the mind, naturally, but a fleshy mind. The expressions plainly, however, give us the use of the term—shew us the soul of man as the seat of the senses, passions and appetites which relate to the body.

And surely this is another great argument against the views of annihilationists, that even such like of the lower instincts of man, many of which he really possesses only in common with the beasts, are never referred to in Scirpture to the body, never spoken of as the result of organization merely of the body, as these men say, but ARE uniformly referred to the soul. And that even the beasts that possess them have also within them a living—I do not say an *immortal,* but a *living,*—soul. While, with regard to man, this living soul *is* immortal, as we have already seen, for they who "kill the body," as our Lord says, "*cannot* kill the *soul.*"

Let us now look at the use of the word (πνευμα *pneuma*)

or spirit. As before said, it is often put indifferently with soul or (ψυχη *psuchee*,) for man's immortal part. When distinguished from it, however, it is uniformly characterised as the seat of the reason, or mind, and *not* (as in the last instance) the senses, or appetites. Such passages as these just cited, cannot be found in connection with it. Debased and earthly in fallen man indeed it is; yet it is that part in him, which, if any, retains for him some feeble degree of likeness to his Maker. It is that, too, which governs and inspires the rest of his being, as we say a man's spirit is so and so,—meaning his temper and deportment which are governed by his spirit.

Now, as I remarked before, there are two theories by which men try to set aside the Scripture with regard to this. The less subtle of the two makes of the spirit of man mere breath, deriving the argument (if it can be called such) from this being the acknowledged meaning of the original word in many passages in Scripture. The other speaks of it as a kind of all pervading principle or element, the instrument used of God for giving life to material bodies; thus belonging solely to God, and no part really of man, though for a time lent him; but which returns again to God unchanged, at death. The advocates of this theory, moreover, contend that man is never in Scripture identified with his spirit, but everywhere with the body; and they gravely tell us how Joseph was embalmed and put in a coffin in Egypt; how Moses died and the Lord buried him in a valley over against Bethpeor, and how Peter, standing up at Pentecost with the eleven, declared to all his hearers that David was not ascended into the heavens, but was dead and buried, and his sepulchre remaining unto that day.

A very brief examination will suffice to shew how thoroughly unreliable are all these statements.

In the first place, that the spirit of man is not a *mere* communication from God, given to inspire the lifeless clay, one passage of Scripture only will prove. "The burden of the word of the Lord for Israel, saith the Lord, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and *formeth the spirit of man within him*" (Zech. xii. 1). Is that a mere communication? Is it not a *creation?* and numbered with the other grand creations of God, as of equal, or more importance than "stretching forth the heavens, and laying the foundations of the earth." The spirit of man is therefore, we cannot be wrong in saying, something very specially belonging to him. As I have before said, it forms his whole character.

"Poor in spirit,"—"of a contrite spirit,"—"a meek and quiet spirit,"—"a perverse rebellious spirit," and such like expressions continually recurring, mark how perfectly the spirit gives its character to a man, and is that to which he owes everything of moral individuality, yet after all no part of him? A principle of life common to all *could* give no distinctiveness to any; and there could be no proof, I believe, stronger of the spirit being indeed the very essence of the man, than this distinctiveness it *does* give.

But we are warranted in going further still, "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?" All intelligence is thus referred to it. If this then be not something in the truest sense belonging to him, I know not what can belong. Formed within man by his Maker, giving him intelligence, characterising, individualizing him; and yet no part of him! But I go further: Man is identi-

fied with his spirit in the language of Scripture, not once or twice, but constantly. It is common phraseology; so far from man being everwhere identified with his body, wherever the inspired writers speak their own faith, and *to* faith, it is invariably the reverse. "Before I go hence." "I will endeavour that after my decease (ἐξοδον, *exodon* departure) ye may have these things in remembrance." "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my *departure* is at hand." "Having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better." Take a slightly different class of expressions. "We that are in this tabernacle do groan." "Not that we would be unclothed." "At home in the body." "Absent from the body." "Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle." "Whether in the body or out of the body I cannot tell."

Let me ask any one possessed only of common fairness, with which, body or spirit, is man identified in these expressions? Is it spirit or body that goes hence, departs, puts of this tabernacle? Is it the body or spirit which is spoken of as "in the body," "absent from the body," clothed or unclothed with it? Would a materialist, of any kind, be at a loss to know whether he were in the body or out of the body,—at least according to his own theory that the body is all? I shall leave my reader to settle these questions with himself, and also another question still, as to whether it be ignorance only, or dishonesty, which says that man is everwhere identified in Scripture with his body, never with his spirit. Meanwhile, without meaning to weary him, I must direct his attention to another proof; "Moses died and was buried by the Lord in a valley over against Bethpeor." None knew of his sepulchre, but we have the express statement of the word as to the fact: "Moses died and

was buried." How came he to the Mount of Transfiguration with one who had never seen death—not raised, mark, for Jesus Himself was the first to open the graves, the First-fruits and First-begotten from the dead, that in all things He might have the pre-eminence. How came Moses there, and how comes Scripture to speak of these two (in the eyes of some in the present day) strange associates, the dead man and the living one, in that simple way, "two *men*, which were *Moses* and Elias?" Blessed be God for this sight, for this association of the living and the dead; for this converse, this communion of the unseen world; we may not fear to call it now the world of *spirits;* which we have been made privy to. We know now what it is to depart and be with Christ, which is far better; that it is not annihilation, not unconsciousness; that it is such a state that in comparison of this we might desire, like Peter, to build tabernacles and stay there where we might be participators in its blessedness.

Man is then, in the Word, identified with his spirit. A disembodied spirit even is called a man, appears and holds converse with living men, and is seen "in glory."

It is objected, however, that this was a vision. And because the Lord said, "Tell the vision to no man," as the disciples came down with Him from the mount, they argue, we can make no use of it, to establish a point of this kind. But the word "vision" used there (ὅραμα, *horama*) is simply a "thing seen," no matter where or how. The Lord's words are, "Tell what you have seen to no man"—nothing more than this. And if you look into the narrative of the circumstances (Luke ix.), it will be seen that the transfiguration was no vision in the sense they use the word. The disciples did not see it when they were asleep, but when they were awake. And

more—the thing itself took place before they saw it at all, while they were asleep, and could not see it; and only "when they were awake they saw His glory." Lastly, supposing even (what is not the case) the whole were a mere dream or a vision, still the argument remains. For in it certainly the death of Jesus, which He should accomplish at Jerusalem, was contemplated as a future thing. And, therefore, the vision of Moses was either deceptive or it was that of a man "absent from the body"—*after* death, and *before* resurrection! Any way, we obtain what we want; but, in fact, the transfiguration was no visionary thing, as I have proved before; we cannot mistake that, if we have the least confidence in the language of the Word.

Man *is* then identified with his spirit. A spirit absent from the body is come to assure us of the fact, that they who kill the body are not able to kill the soul, that it survives the body, and (in the case of a believer) abides in happy consciousness and personal communion with the Lord.* But this leads us to a distinct part of our subject, and one which requires a fuller and more detailed examination.

* The Greek words (*pneuma* and *psuchee*) answering to πνευμα and ψυχη in Hebrew are respectively רוּחַ (*ruach*) and נֶפֶשׁ (*nephesh*). The first of these (*ruach*) רוּחַ or "spirit," is *never* applied to the beast *in that sense*—it has, of course, the sense of "wind" and "breath" beside—save in Eccles. iii. 18—22, where it is the musing of one brooding on the vanity of all things "under the sun." "*I said in mine heart* concerning the estate of the sons of men, that God might manifest them, and that they might see *that they themselves are beasts.* For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them; yea, they have all one breath (*ruach*, 'spirit') so that a man hath no pre-eminence over a beast, for all is vanity. All go into one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again. Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and *the spirit of the beast* that goeth downward to the earth? Wherefore I perceive that there is nothing better than that a man should rejoice in his own works;

Before we go on, however, to consider the Scriptures which speak of the soul in a state separate from the body, we must look briefly at some further objections which are here brought against such separate existence.

In the first place, there is the question as to the conditional character of immortality as found in the Word. Men say it is held out always as conditional, in the way of hope or reward; and they argue, justly enough were the premises ascertained, that if it be the reward of faith,

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for that is his portion: *for who shall bring him to see what shall be after him.*"

I quote the whole passage, to show that this is not the language of the Spirit of God, however much given (as it surely is) in the wisdom of the Spirit for our instruction. The last sentence is sufficient proof as to this. So the "preacher" says again (ch. iv. 3), after praising the estate of the dead more than that of the living, "yea, *better than both* is he which hath not been, who hath not seen the evil work that is done under the sun." Plainly there is no revelation, and no comfort there. The whole is the utterance of sorrowful and vain conjecture as to everything, the whole lesson "vanity," though with a certain sense of Divine Government. It is "I returned," "I saw," "I perceived," "I said," and as to what is beyond, "who knoweth?" only, until towards the end of the book, the moral lesson is *really* given, and *there*, instead "who knoweth the spirit of man," &c., the language becomes, "then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the *spirit shall return* unto God who gave it."

With this exception, the character of which I have thus briefly shewn, there is never in Scripture, ascription of "spirit" to a beast. I know people may quote against me Gen. vii. 22, where "the breath of the spirit (*ruach*) of life," (marg.) is attributed to all creatures under heaven, but there it should be "the breathing of the breath of life."

The same two words (*neshama* for breathing, and *ruach* for breath) are in the same juxtaposition, 2 Sam. xii. 16, and Ps. xviii. 15, where the expression added, "of thy nostrils," would make other rendering absurd, and where the English translation gives, "the blast of the breath of thy nostrils."

I repeat, then, my conviction, that (except as already stated,) there is no passage in which the word translated "spirit" in our version, can be shown *in that sense* to be applied to beasts. "Spirit" belongs, of all creation, to man alone.

"Nephesh," on the other hand, is the word used for "soul," in the Old Testament, and its force is to be found in the passages quoted above.

or conditional upon anything, it could not be that which every man possesses.

But Scripture never speaks of it as conditional. The passage brought forward sometimes to prove this is a mere blind; and men pretending to be versed in Greek should know it. Yet *we* do hear Rom. ii. 7 quoted as decisive: "To them that seek for glory and honour and *immortality*." This last word here is not a proper translation of the original word. It should be "incorruption" (αφθαρσια *aphtharsia*). Now this is only applied in the Word to God, or to the portion of the saints in resurrection, except when figuratively used, as we use it when we talk of "incorruptible" integrity, and so forth. It is used just fifteen times in the New Testament. Twice of God (Rom. i. 23); "The glory of the incorruptible God;" and (1 Tim. i. 17), "The King, eternal, immortal (or incorruptible), invisible." Once to our reward (1 Cor. ix. 25), "They do it for a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible." Five times of the resurrection-body to the believer (1 Cor. xv. 42, 50, 52, 54), "Sown in corruption, raised in incorruption," etc. Once to our inheritance (1 Peter i. 4) "An inheritance incorruptible, undefiled," etc. Once to the Word of God (1 Peter i. 23) "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God." Three times figuratively (Eph. vi. 24) "Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in *sincerity*." Titus ii. 7: "In doctrine showing uncorruptness." 1 Peter iii. 4: "The hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible." And lastly, the word occurs in 2 Tim. i. 10: "Who hath abolished death, and brought life and *immortality* (incorruptibility) to light by the Gospel."

Thus it never is applied to man, saint or sinner, as a *whole*, nor to his soul or spirit. The resurrection-state of

incorruption—(the wicked are raised, but raised not incorruptible) is, if you please, conditional. It belongs only to the child of God. Immortality of soul belongs to all men.

But it is still objected to this, that "God only hath immortality," as 1 Tim. vi. 16 says; and this surely excludes it emphatically from man. I answer, Yes; in the same sense in which it excludes it also from the angels of God. Are *they* immortal, then, or are they not? This is just the reason why I never speak of man,—I would not of angels—as *naturally* immortal. "God only hath" it, as what belongs to Himself. Men, and angels too, have it not in *themselves*. They are not independent of Him. They subsist surely eternally, but only by Him "who upholdeth all things by the word of His power." When we speak of man being immortal, we only speak of God's revealed purpose about him. The text says nothing about what man is in God's purpose, but about what is natural to him—and surely it is natural to a creature to be dependent; and that for all things—life and everything else. But this is as true of the angels as of man. If it implies necessarily that a single individual among men will ever as a fact cease to exist, it implies that all men and angels will.

Considering these objections as disposed of, we meet with others in the shape of a great array of texts taken out of the Old Testament, and mainly from three books of it, viz., Job, Psalms, and Ecclesiastes; these prove to us, they say, what death is. I quote, as the only fair way, the most forcible of them. Thus in Job iii. 13, 19, "For now should I have lain quiet, I should have slept; then had I been at rest . . . Or as an hidden untimely birth *I had not been*, as infants which never saw the light." Again, chap. x. 18, "O that I had given up the ghost,

and no eye had seen me ; *I should have been as though I had not been.*" Again, chap. xx. 6—8, of the wicked, "Though his excellency mount up to the heavens . . . *yet he shall perish for ever like his own dung ;* they that have seen him shall say, Where is he ?" etc. So in the Psalms, xxxix. 13 : "O spare me a little, that I may recover my strength before I go hence *and be no more.*" And so again, Ps. vi. 5, "In death there is no remembrance of Thee ; in the grave who shall give Thee thanks ?" And the answer to that, Isaiah xxxviii. 18 : "*For the dead cannot praise Thee,* death cannot celebrate Thee ; they that go down into the pit *cannot* hope for Thy truth. The living, the *living*, he shall praise Thee." And yet once more, Ps. cxv. 17, "The dead praise not the Lord ; neither any that go down into silence." Ps. cxlvi. 3, 4, "His breath goeth forth ; he returneth to his earth ; and in that very day *his thoughts perish.*" Ps. xlix. 19, 20, "They shall go to the generation of their fathers ; *they shall never see light;* man that is in honour, and understandeth not *is like the beasts that perish.*" Finally, I quote one passage from Ecclesiastes, chap. ix. 5, 6. "The living know that they shall die ; but *the dead know not anything;* neither have they any more a reward, for the memory of them is forgotten, and their love and their envy *are now perished.* Neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun."

These texts are confidently claimed as decisive of the matter. After quoting them, one writer says : "This host of Scripture testimony is conclusive. It decisively settles the point against all philosophical speculation. It shows that death is a total eclipse of being—a complete obliteration of our conscious selves from God's universe, and thus establishes the doctrine of the resurrection upon the firm foundation of *necessity*, for in this view a future

life is only attainable by resurrection." (Twelve Lectures, Lect. III., p. 43.)

I will place one fact before my reader, and then leave him again to judge as to the perfect honesty of such statements. The fact is, that passages lie intermingled with these quoted, which, taken absolutely (as this person takes these), would *do away* the resurrection.

Take some parts of the former passages :—Eccles. ; "Neither have they *any more* a reward" (*i.e.* the dead) ; "neither have they *any more* a portion *for ever* in anything that is done under the sun." Of all the dead this is spoken. Again, in Job vii. 9, "As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away, so he that goeth down to the grave shall *come up no more.*" So again, chap. x. 18—21, (I quote the first part for the sake of the connection), "Wherefore then hadst Thou brought me forth out of the womb? Oh that I had given up the ghost, and no eye had seen me! I should have been *as though I had not been :*" a part quoted with so much emphasis by these writers. Now read on—"I should have been carried from the womb to the grave. Are not my days few? Cease then, and let me alone, that I may take comfort a little *before I go* WHENCE I SHALL NOT RETURN, even to the land of darkness and the shadow of death ; a land of darkness as darkness itself; and of the shadow of death without any order, and where the light is as darkness." And so he says again, chap. xvi. 22, "When a few years are come, then I shall go the way *whence I shall not return.*"

Now what do such writers as the one above say to this? What do they say to the fact that side by side with passages which they quote as conclusive as to there being no consciousness or separate being for the soul of man at death we find passages which, taken *precisely in*

the same way, are just as conclusive against the truth of resurrection? The truth is, they say nothing, for they seem to be utterly unaware of them. Yet there they are, and how shall they be accounted for? Shall we say, and say it of the dead universally, with Ecclesiastes—"That there is no remembrance of the wise more than of the fool for ever"? "That the dead have any more a reward"? "No portion for ever in any thing done under the sun"? or with Job, that "he that goeth down to the grave comes up no more"? That there is no resurrection therefore, and no future reward? We might just as well say this, surely as that "the dead know not anything," etc., taking these as precise and absolute expressions.

But if you say that the doctrine of the resurrection is taught plainly in abundance of passages, I answer, so is the immortality of the human soul. Both these things are true. But where is the consisteney of retaining one, while we deny the other upon the warrant of expressions which, taken exactly in the same way, would equally deny either?

But still, what of these passages? They are popular expressions, similar to many in constant use among ourselves: true, if looked at from the stand point of him who utters them, but not meant to be carried farther. We say still as to other things, "the sun rises" and "the sun goes down," though astronomy has persuaded all of us that it is the earth revolves around the sun, not the sun around the earth. So we speak of all the souls on board a ship perishing, etc., though not believers in annihilation. So, too, the inspired writers can speak of Moses dying and being *buried*, and yet show us afterwards this same Moses, a disembodied spirit, having but put off his tabernacle, in converse with the Lord. So too of Enoch, it is

said in the same way, "He was not." Could anything be clearer, according to these men, as to his annihilation? but no, "He was not, for *God took him*," and "He was translated that he should not see death."

Thus the question is answered. If any one still has doubt, let him read carefully the passages with their contexts; let him mark how that context invariably speaks of the world, of worldly prosperity, or the loss of it; how they are never the *revelations of God*, but the language and experiences of men, even where inspired men, and I surely believe his doubts will vanish, if only he be subject to a guidance never denied to men seeking it; *but denied*—mark that—by most of those who hold the views I am speaking of, the guidance of the Spirit of God. And now there is one thing I would remind my reader of. If death be extinction, ceasing to exist, the wicked no more truly perish than the child of God himself; and this these people themselves say: all lay down their being at death, whether saints or sinners, and in the strictest sense, "are not" until the resurrection.

But what saith the Scripture? "Verily, verily, I say unto you"—mark, this *is* revelation, the absolute statement of One who had perfect knowledge, the Son of God Himself—"he that heareth my words, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath *everlasting life;* and shall not come into condemnation, but *is* passed from death unto life." These are important words.

It is singular enough that these very men contend zealously that "eternal life" means "eternal existence," and argue from this being the portion of the righteous, that others will not eternally exist. Now, according to their own showing, our Lord then here affirms of the believer that he *has* everlasting existence. And lest it should be said, as it has been said, this "*has*" means

"*will have*," He answers by saying that such a believer "IS passed from death unto life." Words could not more positively affirm that this is a present thing. So the apostle John writes of the opposite state: "No murderer hath eternal life *abiding in Him*." There is remarkable force in this expression. The believer *has* eternal life abiding in Him. And if the life he has be eternal, how can he pass ever out of being?

But "eternal life" is not simply eternal existence. It *implies* that, surely; but the wicked who never have eternal life will exist for ever. Eternal life is what a man receives in regeneration, and by virtue of which he becomes a "child of God." Faith in Christ is the evidence, on our Lord's own testimony, of having passed from death to life. He has been new born—received a life from God: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Physically, in the flesh, he was alive before; but without *this* life, therefore, dead, in that sense, while he lived. But this life received from God is in its own nature eternal. In this way we see that eternal life is not simply eternal existence. It is a thing given of God to men while here; so that if they have it not, they are said not to have life at all. Yet they exist. And as here, so in the judgment. The wicked have not eternal life, but exist, and exist for ever.

In fact, the whole idea of death held by materialists is completely contrary to Scripture. The Scriptural idea is separation, never extinction. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and *die*, it abideth alone; but if it *die*, it bringeth forth much fruit." "Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die." Here the change in the buried seed is called both by our Lord and the apostle, *death*. But is it extinction? Is the

grain of wheat *annihilated* in order to its bringing forth fruit? How foolish were such a question! Yet there is decay; there is corruption; and there is the separation of what decays, from the living germ which springs up and brings forth fruit. How like the separation of the decaying body from the spirit, which is the Scriptural definition, we may say, of the death of man. How like, too, to that spiritual death in which the soul, separate from Him in whose favour alone is life, corrupts morally in "trespasses and sins." The analogy is perfect. And this is the Scripture use of that great mystery, death. But the buried seed *exists*. The soul dead in sins *exists*. And man separated from the body *exists* likewise. In any use of the word in Scripture the idea of the cessation of existence never enters.

The way is now fully prepared for us to look at the passages which speak of the soul or spirit in its disembodied state. A brief glance at these will end this hasty sketch of an all-important doctrine. I have already spoken of the case of Moses on the Mount of transfiguration. I turn now to other, and if it were possible, clearer instances.

The belief of the Pharisees, however it had come about in the face of the (as is imagined) plain statements to the contrary—all found in the Old Testament—is acknowledged by our adversaries to have been on this point the same as our own. This is, indeed, beyond question; but it is exceedingly important, too, in connection with one text which we now come to examine. Paul in Acts xxiii. 6, standing up before the Jewish council, identified himself doctrinally with the Pharisees, "Men and brethren," he said, "*I* am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee, of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question."

That you may not imagine the resurrection was the only point of identity in the faith of the apostle and of the Pharisees, the inspired historian goes on to give some further points "For the Sadducees say there is no resurrection; *neither angel,* NOR SPIRIT; but the Pharisees confess both." These are two more points in which the Christian accorded with a large part of his adversaries. The Pharisees confessed—the very word implies it, for we do not speak of *confessing* what is false —the Pharisees confessed the truth as to these. In what way they held the doctrine of the spirit is clear from what follows: "If an angel or a spirit hath spoken to him," they said, referring to the voice of Jesus which Paul had heard on his Damascus journey where grace met him, "let us not fight against God." In fact, we know abundantly what was the doctrine of the Pharisees on this point, and with them Paul identifies himself.

Not only Paul; another did so, who is of much higher authority than even he. Our Lord's parable of the rich man and Lazarus is acknowledged to be based on Pharisaic sentiments. It is quite plain, too, that it speaks of conscious happiness or misery in the separate state. The rich man is in Hades (ᾅδῃ *hadee*), in torment, after death, with brothers yet alive on earth to be preached to, so that it is not resurrection, and the doctrine is that of a soul in conscious misery, apart from the body.* The only question is—and surely it cannot be a question for any one that knows and loves his Lord—whether He, the

* The objection from the expressions, "lifted up his eyes," "water to cool my tongue," &c., will be to a simple soul easily to be answered; for it is the way of parables (not to say, of nature) to speak of unseen things in figures taken from the seen. This is a very different thing from taking up what would be (if the materialistic theory were true) grave and widely spread error, and making it, without the least condemnation of or caution as to it, the vehicle of conveying truth.

living Truth Himself, here sanctioned truth or error. The only thing I say about this is, that those who can doubt about it may and must for me. I care not to say one word to them.

A second time our Lord sanctioned a similar belief with a precise statement, whether true or not men must again pass judgment if they choose. The passage is in Luke xxiv. 36—39; "And as they thus spake, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, 'Peace be unto you.' But they were terrified and affrighted, and *supposed that they had seen a spirit.* * And He said unto them, Why are ye troubled, and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is *I* myself; handle Me and see, * *for a spirit hath not flesh and bones,* as ye see Me have!"

Our Lord's words are here as distinct as possible. Reading their thoughts that what they saw was only the spirit of their deceased Master, He assures them He is no mere spirit, because a "spirit hath not flesh and bones." Was he speaking of another spirit from what they thought? or what else would the words be than deception if there were no such spirit?

Turning back again a little to the previous chapter, we find still another proof of our doctrine in the well known words of our Saviour to His dying companion, "To-day thou shalt be with me in Paradise." All kinds of attempts have been made to make these words speak a language consistent with annihilation doctrine. It has been said that the connection should be, "I say to thee to-day," instead of "to-day thou shalt be with me,"

* Spirit in both these places is the ordinary word, πνευμα. Men try to insert instead of it, on the authority of Griesbach, in the first instance, φαντασμα, which means a phantom or appearance. But both Griesbach and every other editor *reject* this reading. In the 39th verse no other reading was ever thought of.

though anyone must see that this is unmeaning absurdity. Others say that "to-day," (σημερον) means "in *that* day," *i.e.*, the day of Christ's coming in His kingdom, which is quite untrue, for σημερον simply means "to-day" and nothing else. But the grand argument used is derived from our Lord's words to Mary after His resurrection (John xx.), "Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended unto my My Father; but go and tell my brethren I ascend unto My Father, and unto your Father, and to My God and your God." Whence they argue that the spirit of Jesus could not have been in heaven with the thief before this. But evidently the words to Mary were spoken as the Risen One. He had not presented Himself before God with the spoils of death. It matters not where His Spirit had been, for that would have been more as conquered of death than conqueror. Now only in resurrection could He take His place there *for us*, "leading captivity captive, and giving gifts unto men." The Spirit of Jesus had been in Paradise because *He said so*. His words are incapable of another meaning, "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." And as to where that is, the Apostle, speaking of his being caught up to the third heaven, turns round to us immediately, and calls that Paradise: "I knew a man in Christ about fourteen years ago (whether in the body or out of the body I cannot tell, God knoweth), such a man caught up to the *third heaven;* and I knew such a man (whether in the body or out of the body I cannot tell, God knoweth), how that he was caught up into *Paradise*, and heard unspeakable things, which is not lawful for a man to utter."

Turn we now to still another proof. We have had the faith of Paul, the doctrine of the Lord, and now we come to the faith of the early Church: a threefold cord

which is not quickly broken. In Acts xii. we have the record of Herod's persecution. James having been slain, Peter is next taken and shut up in prison; but prayer having been made to God for him, an angel at midnight opens his prison doors. His reception at the house of Mary is thus related: "And when he considered the thing, he came to the house of Mary, the mother of John, whose surname was Mark, where many were gathered together praying. And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a damsel came to hearken, whose name was Rhoda. And when she knew Peter's voice, she opened not the gate for gladness, but ran in, and told how Peter stood before the gate. And they said unto her, 'Thou art mad;' but she constantly affirmed that it was even so. *Then said they, 'It is his angel.'*"

We could not have more clearly set before us the faith of the early Church. I shall not comment upon it, for comment is needless. This use of the word angel, however, for the human spirit, throws light upon another passage, sometimes considered an obscure one. It is found, Matt. xviii. 10; "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." That is to say, the little ones—the babes that these men despise—for whom they say there is (in common with idiots and some of the heathen) *no resurrection*—their spirits are, through the blood shed for them, even *before* resurrection, in converse with their God; and our Lord says of them expressly, "Take heed, despise them not."

I have done; it only remains to sum up briefly the doctrine of the Word.

We have seen that even the beast has a living soul, the Spirit of God thus teaching us to refer all the *self-*

government, as we might call it, even of a beast, *not* to organization, *not* to the body, but to the soul.

Man has not only a living but an *immortal* soul, for they who kill the body are not able to kill it.

To this soul, or the spirit, are referred all passions, instincts, appetites, disposition—all moral individuality.

Man is identified with this soul or spirit wherever faith is speaking or spoken to. The *man* goes hence. That is, the spirit departs to God.

Immortality is never in Scripture conditionally offered to man.

Eternal life is more than eternal existence. It is a thing abiding in the regenerate now. The unbeliever is even now in this sense dead; yet he exists.

Death is not, in Scripture, extinction; the seed dies and is not extinct; man dies, and his spirit goes to God.

Finally, we have looked at the state of the spirits departed. Twice the veil of the unseen world has been removed for our instruction. We have had the Lord's testimony, the Church's, Paul's, and all its perfect harmony with our view of Moses. "Absent from the body, present with the Lord."

May He give us true wisdom and subjection to His Word.

F. W. G.

I ADD for the help of any soul who may read this, now issued in a separate form, instead of that of a paper in a serial, in which it was first printed,—a few words on a point not taken up in it—the eternal punishment of the wicked.

Men have no difficulty in determining what I mean when I use those words, and yet they cannot understand the very same words when found in Scripture. In

Matt. xxv. 46, it is written, "These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal." Here the same word (ἀιωνιος) is used for punishment and for the life of the righteous, and it is the same word as is used in 2 Cor. iv. 18, to distinguish "things eternal," from "things temporal." In fact, there is no other language to use than the word has used already upon the subject, and if it does not express eternity of duration, it is nowhere expressed, no, not as to the life of the righteous, nor the being of God Himself.

Then, too, if we mark the epoch at which in some places the sentence is pronounced, the language used is abundantly confirmed. Take such a passage as Rev. xx. 10. Time is just at an end, eternity in the full meaning of it, just about to commence: it is the end of the thousand years of millennial blessedness, and the outbreak of evil is over, too. Satan, the leader of the revolt, is cast into the lake of fire, where already for a thousand years, yet unconsumed, the beast and the false prophet have preceded him. God's sentence stands recorded against them there: "they shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever." Nor only these. Into this abode of woe, as we see at the end of the chapter, "death and hell" (Hades), giving up the body and spirit they have separately held, pour out their myriads. "The second death," is, we are told, "the lake of fire."

All tells the same unmistakable tale. There is no cessation of existence anywhere. That the first death is not we have before seen. "The second death" is not, it is the lake of fire. And here we are in eternity. With those whom a thousand years of torment have not consumed, the thousands of lost beings get their "eternal judgment." It is no "for ever" of time, it is the "for ever" of eternity.

I know of course that people will object that the terms "burnt up," "consumed," "destroyed," "perished," "plucked up root and branch," &c., applied in Scripture to the punishment of the wicked, define its character as consisting in extinction of being. But a little consideration of the passages and their context will convince any honest mind that they do not so define it. In the first place, the context will shew that the passages in the Old Testament speak of judgment on the *earth*, just as they speak of blessing for the righteous on the *earth*. "Life and incorruptibility" are not brought to light then, and in the same way, the judgment "*after* death" (Heb. ix.). Take the 37th Psalm for an example, some verses of which are claimed as decisive on the side of our opponents. "The Lord knoweth the days of the upright, and their inheritance shall be for ever. They shall not be ashamed in the evil time, and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied. But the *wicked shall perish*, and the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs they shall *consume,—into smoke they shall consume away* . . . . For such as be blessed of Him shall inherit the earth, and they that be cursed of Him shall be cut off" (verses 18—20, 22). Plainly, this is destruction from the *earth*, and it is complete enough, but it leaves the question of judgment *after* death entirely untouched.

In the next place, the terms "destroy," "perish," &c., do not convey the idea of destruction of *being*. "The *lost* sheep" which the shepherd goes after and finds, is the "destroyed" sheep, the same word as in Matt. x. 28, is used of "*destroying* body and soul in hell."

Space will not allow me to follow this out further here. I would end only by beseeching my readers to be honest with themselves before God. If they would gladly be deceived, it is only too possible they may be. But it

would be terrible to have through eternity to learn the consequences of that self-deception. Ponder this, reader, and the Lord enlighten, convince, and save thee. There are now outstretched arms of mercy. There is now a day of salvation. *Now*, he that beliveth on Christ, hath everlasting life. Poor sinner, cavil not, but flee to Him who is able to save you from death,—as willing as He is able. Flee, oh, "flee from the wrath to come."

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