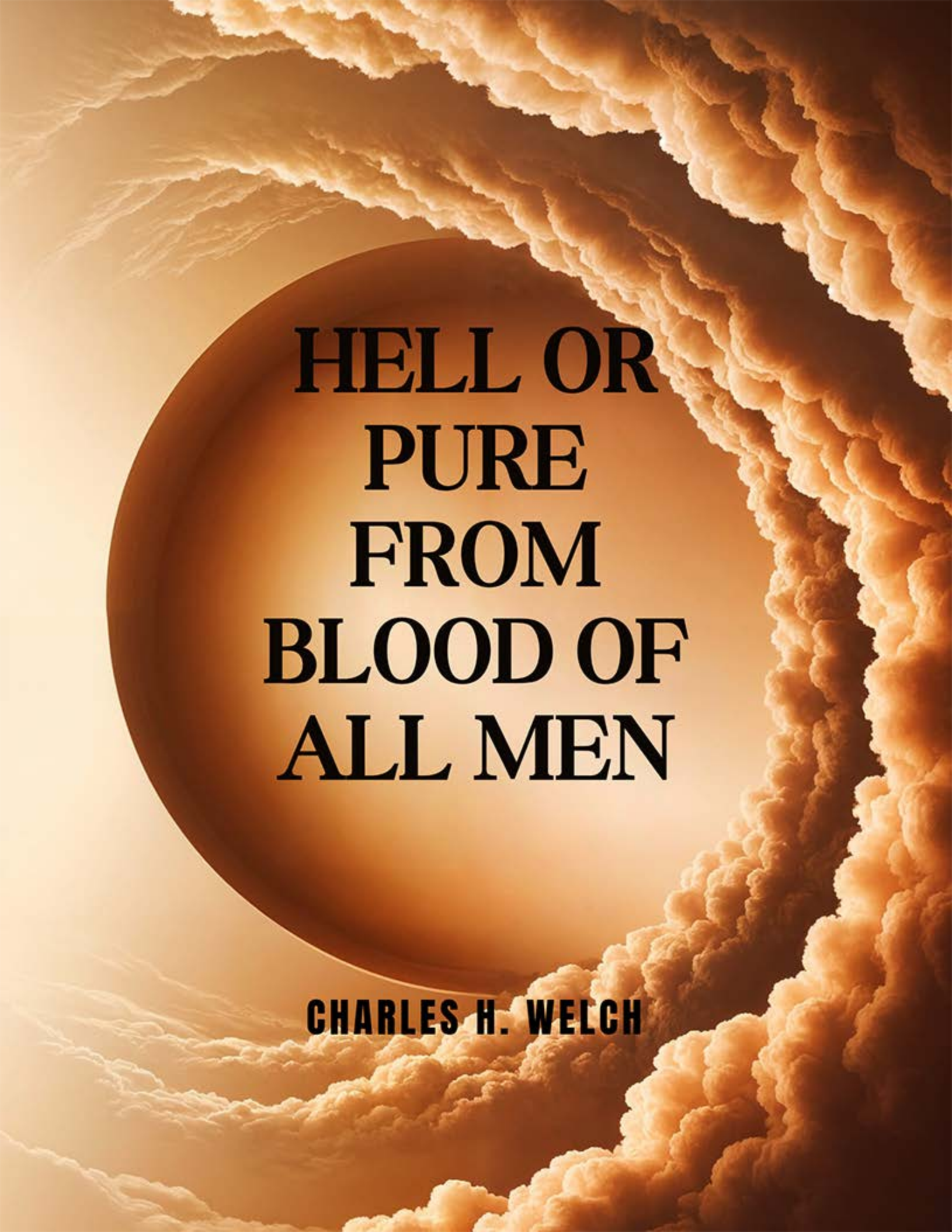

HELL OR PURE FROM BLOOD OF ALL MEN
CHARLES H. WELCH

HELL,

or

"Pure from the blood of all men"

Charles H. Welch

THE

BEREAN

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TRUST



Hell,

or

"Pure from the blood of all men"

by

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Author of

Dispensational Truth
The Apostle of the Reconciliation
United, yet Divided
Far above All
The Reconciliation of All Things
Sin, and its relation to God
The Deity of Christ
The Dispensational Place of the Lord's Supper

etc

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HELL,

or

"Pure from the blood of all men"

* * *

A word of explanation

This booklet has been written by special request, and we would explain that the beliefs herein criticized were once tenaciously held by the writer. A closer and more extended study of the Scriptures, however, proved the orthodox position on the subject to be untenable, not being supported by the general body of Scripture.

The object of our writing is that many a heart, desiring to be honest with and loyal to the Scriptures and the God of the Scriptures, should be delivered as we were from misrepresenting the character of God on this vital subject.

If any remarks appear severe, the reader should bear in mind that they are of quite an impersonal character.

The pattern of sound words

When the apostle Paul knew that his course was finished, and that Timothy, as his successor, must "do the work of an evangelist", he gave to him, and to all who would follow, two guiding principles in the ministry of the Word:

(1) "study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, *rightly dividing* the Word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15).

(2) "Hold fast *the form* of sound words, which thou hast heard of me" (2 Tim. 1:13).

It is not, therefore, possible to obey the command of 2 Timothy 4:2, which says "Preach the Word", if that Word is not divided aright, and it is evident that the "sound doctrine" of 4:3 will adhere closely to the "pattern (form) of sound words" of 1:13. Moreover, those who "turned away their ears from the truth" (4:4) were but following those who had previously "turned away from" the apostle Paul (1:15). True orthodoxy will teach all that the apostle was commissioned to teach, and will not use language entirely contrary to that used by him.

What constitutes sound doctrine?

Paul was given by the ascended Christ to be "a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles" (1 Tim. 2:7; 2 Tim. 1:11), and if we would express the truth as to: The inspiration of Scripture, we quote 2 Timothy 3:16; salvation by grace, we quote Ephesians 2:8,9; redemption by the blood of Christ, we quote Ephesians 1:7 or Romans 3:24; the deity of Christ, we quote 1 Timothy 3:16, and so through the whole range of doctrine and practice. The word "form" in 2 Timothy 1:13 means "a rough sketch before the finished design", and however much subsequent ministry may fill out the teaching of the apostle, it is not warranted to depart from the pattern, or to import into it teaching belonging to another dispensation.

It is clear that the question of the punishment of the wicked can be no exception to this rule, and *true* orthodoxy will not depart in the smallest degree from the form of sound words that are found on this subject in the recorded teaching of the apostle to the Gentiles.

Would Paul pass the orthodox test?

However faithfully one may adhere, both in letter and spirit, to the teaching of the apostle on these matters of the faith, the supreme test of orthodoxy lies outside of them all, and unless one can add the doctrine of *eternal conscious punishment* to his creed, and bring it to the fore in season and out of season, he must be content to be called "unsound", "dangerous", and other unpleasant titles. Such an one, however, is in good company, for Paul himself confessed that after the way his opponents called heresy, so he worshipped the God of his fathers, and the added fact that he believed all things which are written in the law and the prophets, did not in any sense mitigate their condemnation of his teaching. It is safe to say that Paul would not pass the orthodox test today. He would be branded "a soul-sleeper", "a non-eternity man", "an annihilationist", and classed as unsound. This assertion we hope to prove when we examine the apostle upon this question.

Pure from the blood of all men

It is not as though the testimony of the apostle is meagre, or that he has not actually dealt with the subject, for he has, giving us a complete statement concerning sin, its consequences, and its divine remedy, and has, moreover, added to this his own personal testimony that nothing had been omitted that was essential, and that his conscience was clear:

> "I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:26,27).

If we turn to Ezekiel 33 we shall see that whatever doctrine might be omitted by the apostle and still leave him pure from the blood of all men, it was incumbent upon him faithfully to warn his hearers of the judgment to come. Paul would not be pure from the blood of all men if the wages of sin were *eternal conscious punishment,* and he did not say so. It would not save his reputation that he went so far as to teach "everlasting destruction", or that "the wages of sin is death", or that "God is a consuming fire"; all this falls so far short of the traditional "hell" as to leave him convicted of trifling with the souls of men. He speaks of "wrath to come", of "tribulation and anguish", of "judgment to come", of "condemnation", of "death", of being "consumed", "destroyed", "punished", but none of these terms are terrible enough to satisfy orthodoxy, and those who have persisted in the use of these terms, without addition, have been hounded out of assemblies as dangerous and unsound. While one is speaking and adhering to the "form of sound words" left by the apostle for our guidance, one is often conscious that in the back of the mind of many hearers is one dominant question, *What does this man teach regarding* HELL? It is time therefore that this question was answered.

What did Paul teach about hell?

It will be understood from what has been said that this will resolve itself into the question: "What did Paul teach about hell?" If we hold and teach, without addition, subtraction, or alteration of any kind, exactly the same teaching on the subject as was taught by Paul, what can it matter what others may say of us? If to Paul "hell is a place of torment", then it will be so in our teaching. If to Paul it be "a place of disembodied spirits that can never die", it will be so in our teaching.

There are twelve different addresses given by Paul recorded in the Acts, and (including Hebrews) there are fourteen epistles from his pen covering the whole range of gospel, doctrine, and practice for the present time. If the subject of "hell" be but half as important as orthodoxy would have it to be, surely we shall expect to find at least fourteen references to it in his epistles, and at least twelve in his addresses, this being a very low estimate of what a genuine zeal would demand.

Paul uses the word but once

When we turn to the Scriptures, what do we find? that in the whole of Paul's recorded ministry the word "hell" occurs but *once*![*] What answer has orthodoxy to this? Was Paul slack? unfaithful? unsound? Such a question lays an axe to the root of our faith. It may be, however, that Paul has said enough in that one reference to "hell" fully to exonerate him from all such charges. We must therefore quote his statement in full and not omit a consideration of the context:

"O grave (margin *hell*) where is thy victory" (1 Cor. 15:55).

This is Paul's solitary reference to "hell". The context is entirely devoted to the glorious theme of resurrection. A study of Paul's one reference emphasizes three things:

(1) That *hades*, and its Hebrew equivalent *sheol*, mean the grave.
(2) That the context shows that it means the grave. (Hell, as a place of eternal punishment, tradition places after resurrection).
(3) That the traditional "hell" had no place in the apostle's creed.

The result of this enquiry suggests that it might be profitable to test the apostle's writings on the use of other terms that are used in the teaching of punishment. We accordingly draw attention to the following graphic presentation of our search, viz., a chart showing all the references in Paul's epistles to the terms of punishment used in Matthew:

Epistles	Gehenna (hell fire)	Fire	Torment	Hell (*hades*)	Ever-lasting punish-ment	Gnashing of teeth
Gal.	-	-	-	-	-	-
1 Thess.	-	-	-	-	-	-
2 Thess.	-	1:8	-	-	-	-
1 Cor.	-	-	-	15:55	-	-
2 Cor.	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rom.	-	-	-	-	-	-
Eph.	-	-	-	-	-	-
Phil.	-	-	-	-	-	-
Col.	-	-	-	-	-	-
1 Tim.	-	-	-	-	-	-
2 Tim.	-	-	-	-	-	-
Titus	-	-	-	-	-	-
Phile.	-	-	-	-	-	-
Heb.	-	10:27 12:29	-	-	-	-

Whatever be our deduction from this investigation, these blank columns demand something more than passing attention. They are a direct challenge to the orthodox position. Paul - pure from the blood of all men, whose words are left as an inspired model, whose preaching was such that even an angel from heaven altered it at the peril of *anathema* - Paul *never* needed to use once the word "hell-fire" (*gehenna*), *never* once to speak of "torment", *never* once to warn of "everlasting punishment", *never* once to describe the woe that causes "gnashing of teeth". Nor is orthodoxy better served by the evidence given in the two columns that do contain references. We have seen already that the one reference to "hell" is diametrically opposed to the whole teaching of tradition on the subject of "hell", while the references to "fire" in Hebrews tell us that it "consumes" and that it "devours", neither of which even remotely suggests eternal conscious suffering, but rather the reverse. The remaining passage (2 Thess. 1:7-9) we must quote in order to appreciate its bearing upon the subject:

"The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance ... who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power".

[*] 1 Corinthians 15:55 in Stephen's New Testament Greek Text and the Authorized Version read:
"O grave (*hades*), where is thy victory"
but the Nestle's Greek Text reads:
"O death (*thanate*), where is thy victory".

A specious argument exposed

It is said by the advocates of eternal conscious punishment that the true meaning of this passage is: "Who shall be *banished away from* the presence of the Lord". That is, the destruction does not refer to the sinner himself, but to his punishment, which is that he is "*destroyed away from* the presence of the Lord", and not, as one would have thought, that the destruction of the sinner takes place at the coming of the Lord, and is a direct result of His presence. This explanation can be tested. In Acts 3:19 we have exactly the same phrase:

> "When the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord".

It is neither Scriptural nor grammatical to teach that those parts of the earth that are farthest away from the Lord's presence when He comes will be the places where this blessed refreshing shall be enjoyed. Both the destruction and the refreshing alike flow from the presence of the Lord, just as the same sun shining at the same time will breed worms in carrion, open the rose-bud and give scent to the violet.

Orthodox teachers generally remind us that the two words "eternal" and "everlasting" in Matthew 25:46 are an important item in the interpretation of that passage. May we be permitted to repeat the same here? The words "From the presence of the Lord" in both passages are identical. Paul's three references to "fire" speak with one voice; "devouring", "consuming", "destroying". To some these words are an evident token of our apostasy, but to us they represent the mind of God on the subject of the wages of sin.

Matthew's terms examined

To those who have received the revelation of the mystery, and have seen its peculiar and separate character, no further argument will be necessary. What Paul taught is what they believe, and the doctrine of other dispensations can no more be intruded into the gospel of the mystery than circumcision could be allowed in Galatians, or the law of Moses in Ephesians 2. We write, however, for a wider circle, and desire to place before them the testimony of all Scripture on this subject, believing that he who has the truth need not fear the fullest light, but will know beforehand, that if what he holds is truth, the fuller the search the fuller will be the confirmation. Moreover, if his desire be honest, he will welcome the testimony of *all Scripture*, so that should any error have crept into his creed it may be exposed and put away. As, when examining Paul's testimony, we have already indicated the different terms used by Matthew, it will be as well to commence with them, and we therefore proceed to do so.

The following terms embrace Matthew's teaching on the subject: hell, hell-fire, fire, torment, gnashing of teeth, everlasting punishment.

Hell (*hades*)

This word will be given a more thorough examination when we deal with the Hebrew equivalent, *sheol*. The two occurrences are Matthew 11:23 and 16:18. One passage speaks of the city of Capernaum being brought down to "hell", and a glance at the verse will show that "hell" here is in contrast with "heaven". If "hell" be literal, then "heaven" must be literal, but who is there so foolish as to maintain that Capernaum had once been actually exalted unto heaven? Matthew 16:18 uses an expression ("The gates of hell") that every reader of the Old Testament in the Lord's day recognized as a quotation from Isaiah 38:10. Hezekiah had been told by the prophet to set his house in order, for he was to die and not live. Hezekiah in his sickness said:

> "In the cutting off of my days, I shall go to the gates of *sheol*: I am deprived of the residue of my years".
>
> When the message of deliverance came to him, Hezekiah said:

> "Thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption …for the grave cannot praise Thee, death can not celebrate Thee" (Isa. 38:17,18).

No words of ours are needful to make this passage clear. Those who accept the Scriptures as the last word on any subject will know the meaning of "the gates of hell" in Matthew 16:18, and those who wish to retain their own traditions, in spite of the testimony of Moses and the prophets, would not be persuaded though one rose from the dead. In Revelation 20:14 we read that "death and hell (*hades*) were cast into the lake of fire". If *hades* be rightly translated "hell", then we have *hell cast into hell*, which is neither sense, good doctrine, nor of any help to those who say that hell goes on for ever. *Hades* is, as we have said, the equivalent of *sheol*, and as we propose a fairly comprehensive study of that word later, we can pass on here to the other words used by Matthew.

Gehenna, or hell-fire

Gehenna is translated "hell" and "hell-fire" in Matthew (A.V.) as follows:

> "shall be in danger of hell fire" (Matt. 5:22)
> "Thy whole body should be cast into hell" (Matt. 5:29,30).
> "Able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matt. 10:28).
> "Having two eyes to be cast into hell fire" (Matt. 18:9).
> "Twofold more the child of hell than yourselves" (Matt. 23:15).
> "How can ye escape the damnation of hell?"(Matt. 23:33).

It is evident that *gehenna* is not an English word, and before we can rightly understand any of these references to it we must have some knowledge of the place intended. *Gehenna* is the name of the "valley of the son of Hinnom" that lay W. and S.W. of Jerusalem. We learn from 2 Kings 23:10 that Josiah:

> "defiled Topheth, which is in the valley of the children of Hinnom, that no man might make his son or his daughter to pass through the fire to Molech".
>
> Speaking of this awful practice the Lord said:
>
> "And they have built the high places of Tophet, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire; which I commanded them not, neither came it into My heart" (Jer. 7:31).

In passing, we might note the strong figure used by the Lord, "neither came it into My heart", and also realize that the teaching concerning the *eternal conscious suffering* of human beings necessarily places in the heart of God something infinitely more terrible. Tophet, however, means destruction, as a reference to Isaiah 30:33 will show, and the statement that "the breath of the LORD, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it", links it with 2 Thessalonians 1:8,9, which results in "everlasting *destruction*" and not "everlasting *torment*".

In order to stop the abominable rites of Molech, Josiah "defiled Tophet" by "filling it with the bones of men" (2 Kings 23:14). From that time forward it became the common cesspool and rubbish heap of the city. Into this valley were cast the carcases of animals, and of criminals who had been denied burial. Fires were kept burning to prevent pestilence from spreading, and what escaped the destruction of fire and brimstone was eaten of worms. To this the prophet Isaiah refers in 66:24 :

> "And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed against Me: for *their* worm shall not die, neither shall *their* fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh".

It is common knowledge that the advocates of "everlasting conscious punishment" do not fail to emphasize the words *their* worm, and *their* fire, and draw from these words arguments to prove that they who are thus described must be *conscious*. The presence of the word "carcases" in Isaiah 66 is a complete

refutation of this interpretation. That the word here rendered "carcases" means a lifeless corpse, the following quotations from the same prophecy will prove:

"Thou art cast out of thy grave (*keber*) ... as a carcase trodden under feet" (Isa. 14:19).

"Behold, they were all dead corpses" (Isa. 37:36).

We submit that any interpretation of Mark 9:44 should not contradict the passage in Isaiah that gives it its true setting.

Gehenna in Matthew

Let us now turn to the references to *gehenna* in Matthew. The first passage is found in the Sermon on the Mount. This portion of Matthew is the Lord's instruction *to His own people*. To the self-same hearers who heard the beatitudes of Matthew 5:3-12, to the self-same hearers who were told to be perfect as their Father in heaven is perfect, is given the warning about "hell-fire". This is disconcerting if the Lord intended *gehenna* to refer to the orthodox hell. Matthew 5:21-48 constitutes one undivided portion of truth, addressed to one and the same people, and to whom all that is said is within the realm of possibility. It will help us to see the passage as a whole:

Matthew 5:21-48

A **a**$_1$ 5:21. Ye have heard of old time.
b$_1$ 5:22. But I say unto you.
c$_1$ 5:22-26. Heart murder.
a$_2$ 5:27. Ye have heard of old time.
b$_2$ 5:28. But I say unto you.
c$_2$ 5:28-30. Heart adultery.

B **d** 5:31. It hath been said.
e 5:32. But I say unto you.
f 5:32. Avoidance of marriage covenant.
d 5:33. Ye have heard of old time.
e 5:34. But I say unto you.
f 5:34-37. Avoidance of oaths.

A ***a***$_2$ 5:38. Ye have heard.
b$_2$ 5:39. But I say unto you.
c$_2$ 5:39-42. Non-resistance to evil.
a$_1$ 5:43. Ye have heard.
b$_1$ 5:44. But I say unto you.
c$_1$ 5:44-48. Love to enemies.

All these precepts are given with the object that those addressed "may be the children of their Father", and they are differentiated from the publicans, the climax being reached in verse 48, where we read: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect".

It is impossible to pick out some of these precepts and omit others. We have to admit that if *gehenna* in verses 22 and 30 means eternal torment, then those who are the children of God and can rightly be expected to love their enemies and pray for their persecutors, who are told to turn the cheek to the smiter, and to manifest a very high standard of heart purity and obedience - that such, if they fail of this high and spiritual law, will not suffer loss or be saved, yet so as by fire, but that, with the unsaved who have never known God as Father, they must be tormented day and night everlastingly. That such is not the teaching of any sane believer will but show that *gehenna* here means something different from the traditional hell.

Gehenna and its contexts

Let us turn to the passage under consideration and examine it afresh, not so much to uphold pre-conceived ideas, as to see its teaching anew.

Matthew 5:22-26.

A **a** The Judgment.
b The Council.
c Gehenna.

B Be reconciled with thy brother. Agree with thine adversary.

A ***a*** The Judge.
b The Officer.
c Prison.

B Thou shalt not come out till uttermost farthing paid.

Here it will be seen that *Gehenna* responds to *Prison* in the structure, and there is mention of not coming out again until the uttermost farthing is paid. That this is totally foreign to the conception of everlasting punishment needs no argument. That such language as this can be used of a saved person is evident when we turn to Matthew 18. The servant who had been forgiven his great debt, but who failed to forgive his fellow-servant, is delivered to the tormentors till he should pay all that was due, and lest we should imagine that such language cannot be used of any child of God we quote the Lord's own application:

> "so likewise shall My heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses" (Matt. 18:35).

Gehenna and its dispensational setting

This reference shows us that we are still dealing with the same system of truth as is taught in the Sermon on the Mount, for there, following the great kingdom prayer, we have the words:

> "If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (Matt. 6:15).

This is sound doctrine if kept within its Scriptural limits, and not brought over into the dispensation of the grace of God. This is also true of the teaching concerning *gehenna*. It belongs to the message of the kingdom, it applies to the subjects of the kingdom, and must be interpreted in the light of that kingdom. The Lord contrasts the law of Moses with His own deeper and spiritual law. Moses dealt with the external act, Christ deals with the intent of the heart:

> "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: but I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire" (Matt. 5:21,22).

The Lord here makes reference to the different courts of justice in Israel that had the power of life and death.

(1) THE JUDGMENT - An inferior court consisting of seven presidents. This court could condemn to death by the sword.
(2) THE COUNCIL - This was known as the Sanhedrin. This Council had the additional power of condemning to death by stoning, which was a great ignominy.
(3) GEHENNA - The Sanhedrin, moreover, could also condemn a man to be denied burial, and to be cast after death into the valley of Hinnom, there to be "an abhorring to all flesh".

Translating these degrees of judgment into modern terms we should say:

"Anger" is likely to bring you before the Magistrate.

"Raca" will lead you to the Assizes.

"Fool" will put you in the dock at the Old Bailey.

Here the progression is regular, but if we were to say that while anger placed one in danger of being tried before a magistrate, and saying "Raca" betrayed a spirit that might lead to the Assizes, to say "Thou fool" would be punished by *never-ending torment*, it would be so patently wrong that its statement would be its own refutation. It is because tradition has twisted *gehenna* to mean "hell" that the perversion has obtained a hearing.

When we pursue the subject in the same chapter we find another context that must not be ignored:

"If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell" (Matt. 5:29).

If "hell" here is literal, then the command to pluck out the eye must be literal, but if the plucking out of the eye is to be taken in any spiritual or figurative sense, then the reference to *gehenna* must be taken figuratively also. We must not omit to draw attention to the fact that the Lord speaks of the "perishing" of one member, in contrast to the whole body being cast into hell. If He knew that the body that was cast into hell would *never perish*, how can we explain this apparently misleading word? Then again, those who teach eternal torment stress that hell is the place to which the never-dying *souls* of men go, whereas the Lord unhesitatingly speaks of the *body*. Nor is this all; the next reference reveals the utterly wrong conception that is held by orthodoxy, for in Matthew 10:28 we read:

> "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him which is able to *destroy both soul and body in hell*".

For believing and for teaching this as truth, men of God have been branded as heretics of the deepest die. Here it is taught that the soul as well as the body can be destroyed in *gehenna*, *and if that truth were held by the church of God this booklet would be unnecessary*.

Matthew 10:28 does not teach that the soul is immortal, but affirms, with the rest of Scripture, that "the *soul* that sinneth *it* shall die". It teaches that *destruction* and not torment is the punishment of hell, and its presence in the Scriptures is a standing witness against those who virtually make void the Word of God that they may keep their traditions, however honestly those traditions may be held.

Everlasting punishment

It may be objected that until we have included the teaching of Matthew 25, we, too, are exposed to the charge of bias. Now it cannot be that one can hold Matthew 10:28 and deny Matthew 25, any more than one can hold Matthew 25 to the exclusion of Matthew 10:28. Both passages must be held as truth, and held together, destruction of soul and body not being understood in such a way that "everlasting punishment" be denied, and everlasting punishment must not be so understood that it makes one single word of Matthew 10 untrue, unnecessary, or even undesirable.

We found that ignorance of and the ignoring of the context was responsible for a good deal of untenable teaching being fathered upon Matthew 5, and we shall surely find that a survey of the whole passage that contains the one and only reference to everlasting punishment in the Scriptures will illuminate the passage with true and certain light. Matthew 24 and 25 form one section, and must be read together. Three questions were asked, and three answers were given.

THE QUESTIONS - "When shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the age?" (Matt. 24:3).

THE ANSWERS - "The *end*" (Matt. 24:4-24. *See* verses 6,8,13,14).

"The *sign*" (Matt. 24:25-35. *See* verses 27,30, 33).

"*When* shall these things be?" (Matt. 24:36-41. *See* verses 36,39).

Following these answers is a series of lessons that deal with the question of readiness, and of entry into or exclusion from, the kingdom:

"The TEN VIRGINS" Matt. 25:1-13).
Key thought - "Watch therefore".

The THREE SERVANTS and the TALENTS" (Matt. 25:14-30).

Key thought - "Enter", "Cast out".

"The NATIONS" (Matt. 25:31-46).
Key thought - "Come", "Depart".

These three sections of Matthew 25 are connected with the Second Coming of the Lord. The first has reference to entry into the marriage supper; the second, to reward or forfeiture in connection with service; the third to the entry into, or exclusion from, the kingdom, of living nations who are on the earth at the time when the Lord comes and sits upon the throne of His glory. Let us, however, see it from the Scriptures themselves:

> "When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory: and before Him shall be gathered all nations: and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats" (Matt. 25:31,32).

This gathering of the nations is spoken of in Joel 3. It takes place at the commencement of the Millennium, and must not be confused with the judgment of the great white throne that is set up when the thousand years are finished, and which is a judgment of the dead. The issues of this judgment are expressed in Matthew 25:46, "These shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal".

Terms of eternal life in Matthew 25

Let us now see how these attained unto righteousness. If they come under the stewardship of the apostle Paul we know full well that neither "by works of righteousness that they have done", nor "by the deeds of the law" can they be made righteous, but only through faith "in His (Christ's) blood". When we examine the grounds of judgment in Matthew 25 there is not a single word about faith. Indeed these righteous nations confess that they had not consciously done anything as unto the Lord (*cf*. "When saw we Thee a stranger?"). They enter the kingdom on the ground of works, such as visiting prisoners, or clothing the naked. That it was done to the Lord's *brethren* was noted in their favour, but they themselves did not connect that fact with the Lord. It is clear that "eternal life" is granted here in a way totally foreign to the dispensation under which we live.

Now we are continually reminded by the upholders of the traditional *hell* that "eternal" life and "everlasting" punishment are of equal duration. This we readily accept, and press it upon those who fly to Matthew 25 for their great key text. It will be granted that eternal life is here given upon terms very different from those of the gospel of grace. Now what we ask is this: Would our orthodox friends consider that they had preached the *gospel* to sinners, acceptably, if they adhered closely to the terms of Matthew 25? Would they preach something like this?:

> The glad tidings that we bring unto sinners is that they exercise themselves in deeds of charity, being careful to include the Jew, and they shall receive eternal life (apparently without faith in the Lord Jesus, or any knowledge either of His death or resurrection).

We rejoice to know that such a travesty of the gospel would be repudiated. What, then, is the warrant for rejecting the conditions for eternal life here, and for taking out of its context and applying to a different people its alternative punishment?

The reason for punishment connected with our preaching is rejection of the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ, not for the omission of deeds of charity. Even supposing we allowed the expression "everlasting punishment" the full force demanded by orthodox teaching, even then we should be without the slightest warrant for taking the punishment attached to one set of conditions, and applying it to sinners of all times and dispensations. The eagerness with which this passage is quoted, but all its terms brushed aside, is itself evidence of the poverty of the position that can fall into such methods, crying aloud at one minute against a false gospel of works, and the next forgetting its protest so that the wages of sin shall be, not as Paul was inspired to declare, "death", but eternal conscious torment.

The question of the meaning of the words rendered "eternal" and "everlasting" comes up again in these pages under the headings of *olam* and *aion*.

Try the things that differ

Orthodoxy mutilates both Romans 6 and Matthew 25**.** It takes eternal life as being the gift of God, and rejects the wages of sin as being death. It takes the wages of sin from Matthew 25 as being everlasting punishment, and rejects the grant of eternal life and righteousness as a result of good works. Surely it will be manifest to the most zealous advocate of eternal torment,

> that to overleap all dispensational boundaries,
> make a mixture of law and grace, faith and works,
> violate all demands of context, and
> ignore all limits of time, place and circumstance,

is to show oneself disapproved before God, and, so far as interpretation and service arising out of this doctrine is concerned, to prepare one for shame in His presence through failure to divide aright His Word of truth.

Dr. Young in his Concordance defines the word punishment by "restraint", and the literal meaning is "cutting off" as of "pruning", which explanation contains a truth that would yield far more profit by an hour's meditation than all the indiscriminate repetition of Matthew 25:46 can ever produce.

The fire into which these rejected nations go is said to be the one "prepared for the devil and his angels". This is evidently the same as that of Revelation 19:20 and 20:10, which, when it is associated with men, is defined not as a place of never-ending torment, but as "the second death" (Rev. 20:14,15). Matthew 25 is parallel with Psalm 37:22:

> "Come, ye BLESSED of My Father, INHERIT the kingdom .... Depart from Me, ye CURSED ... into everlasting PUNISHMENT" (Matt. 25:34-46).
>
> "such as be BLESSED of Him shall INHERIT the earth; and they that be CURSED of Him shall be CUT OFF" (Psa. 37:22).

Of those who have seen the necessity for rightly dividing the Word, but who have, till now, hesitated about the application of Matthew 25, we ask whether the following is a fair statement of truth? The gospel of the kingdom ends at Acts 28; evidential miracles end at Acts 28; the hope of Israel ends at Acts 28; *but eternal punishment is the one exception that must not be given up*.

Two other expressions must be considered briefly before we pass from Matthew to a wider survey, viz., "torment" and "gnashing of teeth".

(1) Torment

> "And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him" (Matt. 18:34).

This is part of a parable. Its application is given by the Lord Himself, and makes further comment unnecessary.

> "so likewise shall My heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses" (Matt. 18:35).

(2)Gnashing of teeth.
This expression occurs in Matthew 8:12; 13:42,50; 22:13; 24:51; and 25:30. While these passages indicate pain consciously endured, they make no contribution to the question of duration. It *is* important that we observe who it is that gnash their teeth - "the children of the kingdom", "the children of the wicked one", "the man without the wedding garment", the evil servant who said "My lord delayeth his coming", and "the unprofitable servant who hid his talent in the earth". We do not know of any one who teaches that eternal torment awaits the servant of God who has not used his talents aright, and so these words make no contribution to our main enquiry.

words that the holy ghost teacheth

An examination of the meaning and usage of the words sheol and hades, olam and aion, immortality, the soul, and the parable of the rich man and Lazarus.

The Hebrew word *sheol*

We will now turn our attention to a wider range of study, and seek, from the usage of several key words, light upon this great question. The first word we propose for study is the Hebrew word *sheol*.

This word occurs 65 times in the Old Testament and is translated in the A.V. by the word "hell" 31 times, "grave" 31 times, and "pit" 3 times. Moses uses the word seven times, and the A.V. renders it "grave" four times, "pit" twice, and "hell" once. The R.V. omits the word "hell" and substitutes "pit". The following are the four references in Genesis:

> "I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning" (37:35).
> "Then shall ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave" (42:38).
> "My gray hairs with sorrow to the grave" (44:29).
> "The gray hairs of thy servant our father with sorrow to the grave" (44:31).

Did Moses, Jacob or Judah dream that there would ever be any necessity to explain these most obvious passages? Are they not the heart's language of all men? That system of doctrine which would put into the mouth of this sorrowful old man words that arise out of deep theology, rather than out of deep feeling, is evidently hard pressed for support.

Jacob did not necessarily contemplate any one particular grave when he spoke, for he believed that Joseph was unburied, having been eaten by a wild beast. Of Simeon and Joseph he said: "Joseph is not, and Simeon is not", so that we could easily argue that, so far as Jacob was concerned, *sheol* was not the abode of conscious spirits. *Sheol* does not refer to *a* grave but to *the* grave. Each individual may have his own private place of burial (*keber* or *bor*), but it would still be true that "all go to one place" (*sheol*), which has been expressed by the term "gravedom".

Hell in old English

If the English language had remained unchanged, and if theological meanings did not attach themselves to words, then either of the words "grave" or "hell" would be a good translation. In old English literature we read of *helling* a house, that is to say "thatching". A tailor had his *hell*, a dark corner into which he threw all his cuttings. Lads used to lead lasses to a *hell* as part of a game where a kiss was the forfeit. East Suffolk spoke of a *hale* of potatoes, whereas Lincolnshire called the same a *grave*. Sussex would speak of *heleing* a man up in bed. When the Sussex farmer descended the stairs from tucking up his children in

bed for the night, and stayed to read the Scriptures, he would have needed no interpreter should his portion for that night have included the words, "Though I make my bed in *hell*", for it would have been but speaking in his own tongue. *Hell*, however, is not a proper translation of either *sheol* or *hades* now, for it is too deeply tinged with the modern conception of the word to be anything but misleading.

Perhaps the reader would appreciate some modern authority on the subject, and we accordingly refer to the *Etymological Dictionary of the English Language* by Walter W. Skeat, Lit.D., LL.D., D.C.L., Ph.D., F.B.A., whose letters ought at least to place him on a level with any reader of this little work so far as the meaning of English is concerned.

> "Hell. (E.) M.E. *helle.* A.S. *hel.*, orig. "that which hides", allied to cell, conceal".

Sheol as used in The Old Testament

So much for the English word. We are more concerned, however, about the words that God has used, and accordingly turn to the Scriptures to seek the truth. Job cried:

> "O that Thou wouldest hide me in the grave (*sheol*)" (Job 14:13).
>
> The context supplies a valuable commentary:
>
> "But man dieth, and *wasteth* away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and *where is he*? So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, they shall *not awake*, nor be raised out of their sleep" (Job 14:10,12).

We are in the happy position of being able to believe all that is here written without the slightest mental reservation, without needing to add, "of course that was Job's idea" or "Job did not know what *we know* about the intermediate state", etc. Some orthodox writers get angry when we quote Job; will the Psalms have more weight?

> "For in death there is no remembrance of Thee: in the grave (*sheol*) who shall give Thee thanks?" (Psa. 6:5).

The only answer to the Psalmist's question given by Scripture is that "The dead know not any thing", and that "there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave" (Eccles. 9:5,10). But modern orthodoxy knows better than Solomon or David. Other Psalms say:

> "Man being in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish ... like sheep they are laid in the grave" (*sheol*) (Psa. 49:12-14).
>
> "The dead praise not the LORD, neither any that go down into silence" (Psa. 115:17).
>
> "O LORD, Thou hast brought up my soul from the grave (*sheol*): Thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit" (Psa. 30:3).

But we must come back to Job again, for he has said more on this subject:

> "If I wait, the grave (*sheol*) is mine house: I have made my bed in the darkness. I have said to corruption, Thou art my father: to the worm, Thou art my mother, and my sister. And where is now my hope? as for my hope, who shall see it? They shall go down to the bars of the pit (*sheol*), when our rest together is in the dust" (Job 17:13-16).

What have *darkness*, *corruption*, the *worm*, and the *dust* to do with the spirit of Job? It is most patent that he believed *sheol* was the grave, and connected with the body, certainly not a place for disembodied souls or spirits.

An orthodox witness - A.J. Pollock

In a pamphlet entitled *Hades and Eternal Punishment* the author, A.J. Pollock, says:

> "If any reader can, after verifying this evidence, still state that *sheol* and *hades* mean the grave, then I charge him with deliberate deception".

After reading the evidence, the writer of these pages does most emphatically state that *sheol* and *hades* mean the grave, and so stands charged by Mr. Pollock as a deceiver. This is serious because the truth is at stake, and it therefore behoves us to sift the evidence on which the charge is based. Does Mr. Pollock quote the testimony of Ecclesiastes? Oh no, he says of Ecclesiastes 9:10 :

> "This is NOT (the author's own emphasis) *revelation*, but the *inspired record* of what Solomon summed up as to *his* knowledge of things "*under the sun*"".

We cannot, however, let this pass without demanding a more explicit statement from Mr. Pollock. Does he believe Ecclesiastes 9:10 to be a true revelation? No, he does not, but considers it to be false. He does quote Ecclesiastes with approval once, however:

> "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God Who gave it" (12:7).
>
> On this passage he says:
>
> "That Solomon himself contradicts such an interpretation of Ecclesiastes 9:5 as that of soul-sleep is evident".

But how does Mr. Pollock know that Ecclesiastes 12 is not as much the mere personal opinion of erring Solomon as all the rest of the book? And is Mr. Pollock qualified to criticise when he uses a passage that speaks of the *spirit* to refute a doctrine that speaks of the *soul*?

Perhaps we have been a little unfortunate in commencing with Solomon. Maybe Mr. Pollock, in what he refers to as "this evidence", has given a fair hearing to Job. But no, he has no more room for Job's testimony on *sheol*, than the Modernist has for Job's testimony concerning his Redeemer!

His quotations from the Psalms are 116:3 (which is only half quoted), 16:10, and 86:13, where he assumes what Scripture does not teach, namely, the separate entity of the soul. *Sheol* is, to use his own words, "disembodied soul condition". The more we search into Mr. Pollock's evidence, upon which he charges us with deception, the more it becomes apparent that he appeals to those who do not bother to test his evidence. According to this writer *sheol is never used of the body, but only of the soul*. For evidence he refers to two or three passages, puts a prejudice in the mind against Job and Ecclesiastes, and then, with this carefully selected evidence (that would be condemned in a court of justice) he has the audacity to say that "after verifying this evidence" all are deceivers who still state that *sheol* and *hades* mean the grave!

Possibly Solomon should be allowed to speak for himself, at least Gamaliel would have given him the opportunity. The former says:

> "The preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and THAT WHICH WAS WRITTEN WAS UPRIGHT, EVEN WORDS OF TRUTH ... given from one shepherd" (Eccles. 12:10,11).

Does not the charge of "deliberate deception" come back on Mr. Pollock? We are not so much concerned about Mr. Pollock and his charges, as we are about this tinkering up evidence so calculated to mislead those who have not the "Berean" spirit to search and see. For the truth's sake we must sift this charge against certain Old Testament teaching a little more.

Ecclesiastes compared with the Psalms

Here is the teaching of Ecclesiastes written by the Psalmist:

> "LORD, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail (short-lived) I am. Behold, Thou hast made my days as an handbreadth; and mine age is as nothing before Thee: verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity. Selah. Surely every man walketh in a vain shew: surely they are disquieted in vain: he heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them" (Psa. 39:4-6).

Shall we say of this as Mr. Pollock does of Ecclesiastes 1:2:

> "We repeat, it is not divine *revelation*, but the *divinely* INSPIRED record of human doubt and disappointment".

"The marvellously clever wail of a disappointed man"?

Take another quotation from the Psalms:

> "For in death there is *no remembrance* of Thee: in the grave who shall give Thee thanks?" (Psa. 6:5).

This same truth, when expressed by Ecclesiastes, is but the "clever wail of a disappointed man".

> "For he seeth that wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others ... man being in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish ... Like sheep they are laid in the grave (*sheol*); death shall feed on them" (Psa. 49:10-14).

Ecclesiastes has said the same, but of course Ecclesiastes is but the wail, even though a clever one, of a disappointed man! It would never do to admit this evidence, for the whole orthodox position would collapse. Mr. Pollock, who dares to talk about deliberate deceit, has said that *sheol* is never connected with the body, and if his readers will only confine their search to "this evidence" that he has so carefully selected, they will be convinced that it is so. But how, in spite of the Psalm saying, "*Like sheep* they are laid in the grave, death shall feed on them", Mr. Pollock can assert such a thing we know not.

David said:

> "Our bones are scattered at the grave's mouth, AS WHEN ONE CUTTETH AND CLEAVETH WOOD UPON THE EARTH" (Psa. 141:7),

so that "disembodied souls" have bones that can be likened to chopped wood. Either David is totally astray, or Mr. Pollock is wrong. We have no hesitation in deciding that Mr. Pollock is grievously at fault, that his evidence is most partial; that while he affirms on one page his belief in the inspiration of Scripture, he denies its value and authority on another, and we submit that he is the last to bring charges of deception against those who want *every* reference that is found in *all* Scripture as the sole basis of their belief.

We ask the reader to use the concordance given at the end of this booklet, and to frame his theology in such a way that he will be under no necessity to repudiate any teaching God has given. We are not concerned with Mr. Pollock personally, but we have cited his so-called "evidence" as typical of the nature of the foundation upon which the doctrine of the traditional hell has been erected.

For ever, everlasting, and eternal

In the majority of cases the Hebrew word *olam* and the Greek word *aion* are translated in the A.V. in terms of eternity. What we said earlier regarding the old English word "hell" is in measure true of the original meaning of the word "eternal". The word is from the Latin *-turnus*, "lasting for an age", from *-num*, "an age", which in its turn is derived from the Greek word *aion*. Strictly speaking, therefore, we have been travelling in a circle, *eternal* and *aion* being identical, and still awaiting an English equivalent.

"Eternal" has, however, taken a definite meaning that departs from its original sense, and therefore may be misleading as a translation of a word that means strictly "an age". This, however must not rest on bare assertion; it is capable of proof by adducing all the Scriptures bearing on the point, and not merely a few edited passages.

F.W. Grant on *aion*

Advocates of eternal conscious punishment find in F.W. Grant a champion for their views, and we are sure of a hearing from such if we give a quotation from his orthodox pen. Speaking of the words *olam* and *aion* in *Leaves from the Book*, he says: "The Scripture is full of the doctrine of the ages". This doctrine he says is "hidden under the stereotyped form "for ever" and "for ever and ever". This last is always in the New Testament, if literally rendered, "for the ages of the ages"". Speaking on Romans 16:25, 2 Timothy 1:9 and Titus 1:2 he says: "It is hard to realize what *eternal times* can be. The true force is *in or before the age times*".

Now what would be the action of a normal and unbiased mind, after making these statements? Surely "stereotyped forms" would be set aside, and the "literal rendering" adopted. But no, the writer of these true comments then turns round and labours with all his ability to substantiate the traditional meaning as over against the literal, to enforce the stereotyped forms for living truth, and to accept what he had admitted to be unintelligible. Such can be but blind guides, and to follow them is but to end in the ditch. Rather let us put up the prayer: "Lead me in Thy truth, and teach me".

The root meaning of *olam*

The underlying idea of *olam* is something secret or hidden, as in Psalm 90:8, "secret sins". Used of time it indicates a period the end of which is undefined or hidden from man, but this does not warrant any man saying; "Because *I* cannot see the end, *there is none*", neither does it warrant our translating an age, the end of which is hidden from us, by the words "for ever". To do so is but an assumption.

Before we go further we would state, once and for all, the reason why we do not lead our readers into the mazes of classical Greek for the meaning of these and other words. Greek thought, like English or Hindu, is coloured by national and religious ideas. The Greek idea enshrined in the words "holy" and "love" is utterly subversive of the truth. What pagan Greeks thought about "the immortality of the soul" is nothing to us who have the Word of God. What pagan Greeks speculated about *hades* is not a part of our faith. God has used the Greek of the common people as a vehicle for His truth, but He has provided a means of testing every word of doctrinal importance in the New Testament. That provision is the Septuagint Version, a translation by Jews of the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek, long before Christ, and in common use in the synagogues during the life of Christ and the apostles, who all quote it freely. The Greek word *aion* is to us the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew *olam*, and means exactly the same, viz., "an age of unknown duration".

We will now draw attention to the way in which the translators have rendered the word *olam* in the A.V.

Used of God	**Used of man**
"Ever of old" (Psa. 25:6).	"Of old" (Gen. 6:4; 1 Sam. 27:8).
"From everlasting" (Psa. 41:13; 90:2; 93:2; 103:17; Isa. 63:16).	"In old time" (Josh. 24:2).
	"Long time" (Isa. 42:14).
	"since the beginning of the world" (Isa. 64:4).

If Psalm 25:6 is rightly translated, why do we not teach that the giants of Genesis 6 are "from everlasting"? How do we know that Joshua did not affirm that Israel's "fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood *from eternity*" (Josh. 24:2)?" If it is God's truth to say that the ungodly shall be punished *for ever*, why do we not read in Psalm 73:12, "These are the ungodly that prosper *for ever* (*olam*)"? If the one rendering is impossible, who is there, with divine warrant, to assure us that the other is true? There is but one sure means of arriving at the meaning of any word, either in Scripture or in secular literature, and that is by its usage.

The usage of *olam* in the Old Testament

"If the servant shall say ... I will not go out free ... he shall serve him *for ever* (*olam*)" (Exod. 21:5,6). Yet of the same class of servant Leviticus 25:40 says: "He shall serve him unto the year of jubile".

Hannah, speaking of the infant Samuel, said: "I will bring him, that he may appear before the LORD, and there abide *for ever* (*olam*)" (1 Sam. 1:22), yet in verse 11 she said: "I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life".

Revelation 21:22 tells us that a time is coming when there shall be no more temple, yet Ezekiel 37:26; Exodus 40:15 and Numbers 18:8 tell us that temple, priesthood, and sacrifice were to be *for ever*.

The phrase "for ever and ever" in the A.V. is, in many instances, the translation of the words *le olam va ed*, which the Greek version renders: "unto the age and *yet*", and "unto the age and *beyond*". These translators showed a truly humble spirit. They did not say that because *they* could not see the end of the age they were dealing with, therefore there was no end, and so translate these words in terms of eternity. They have given us the true and the literal meaning and thereby opened our eyes to a wonderful fact.

The Old Testament prophets did not see much beyond the Millennium, but they knew that there was much "beyond". This is enlightening and helpful, but "for ever and ever" can only be dealt with casually; it defies exegesis. If *ever* means never-ending eternity, what sense is there in "for *ever* and *ever*"? If *olam* means eternity, what did God intend when He followed it by the words "and yet further"? If *olam* means eternity, what are *olams*? And what are "eternities of eternities"? If we will but keep to the one word "age", we shall find a true and proper translation for every expression. We shall find some things are "for, or unto, the age"; others are "for, or unto, the ages". We shall learn that there are not only "ages", but "ages of ages", and not one expression will be redundant or unwanted.

Psalm 145:13 is translated in the A.V.:

"Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and Thy dominion endureth throughout all generations".

All generations, be they never so long, are a drop in the ocean of eternity, and the balance is not true. The margin tells us that the Hebrew reads, "a kingdom of all ages", and that is what we should have read, not man's fancied version.

"Thy kingdom is a kingdom of all ages, and Thy dominion in every generation and generation".

Here we see the character of Hebrew poetry, where thought rhymes with thought rather than sound with sound, and this feature is most helpful in the true understanding of the poetic sections, such as the Psalms and Proverbs. However, all this is sacrificed by tradition in order to retain the doctrine of eternal conscious punishment. It may be as well to say here why we persist in saying "eternal *conscious* punishment". The reason is that "everlasting punishment" is a Biblical term, and, rightly understood, is part of our own creed. What tradition intends by the expression is everlasting punish*ing* of the immortal and conscious souls of men. This we repudiate, and so indicate where we differ in this way. Do these

same teachers understand other passages to mean "eternal sav*ing*" instead of eternal salvation and the like?

The fitness of the word "age"

The word "age" has the sanction of both the A.V. and the R.V., as well as of such versions as Rotherham, J.N. Darby, Robert Young, Spurrell, and others. It transgresses no canon of translation, either in grammar, usage, context, or good sense. It is the only word that allows every variety of number and case in the original to be faithfully expressed, without human addition, suppression, or substitution. Yet, in spite of all this, orthodoxy has the temerity to raise a hue and cry after those who dare to abide by the teaching of the Word, and who will not subscribe to their pretentious shibboleth. With the key thus provided, the revealed purpose of the ages is open before us. We may learn, for example, that:

The ages had a *beginning* (1 Cor. 2:7).
The age has an *end* (Matt. 24:3).
Some ages are *past* (Eph. 3:9).
Some ages are *to come* (Eph. 2:7).
The present age is *evil* (Gal. 1:4).
There is a *purpose* of the ages (Eph. 3:11).

"This age" and "that age" are contrasted in Luke 20:34,35, and Ephesians 1:21. This age has its wisdom, its walk, and its god, 1 Corinthians 2:6; Ephesians 2:2 and 2 Corinthians 4:4. Then we have three different expressions, each having its own line of teaching:

"The age of the age" (Heb. 1:8).
"The age of the ages" (Eph. 3:21).
"The ages of the ages" (2 Tim. 4:18).

We can understand the Modernist setting all these distinctions aside as beneath his notice, and obliterating them all in one poetic translation, but we cannot understand any one who professes to believe that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God treating the sacred words of truth as they do.

Just as one truth leads to another, so one error leads to another, and never-ending torment necessitates never-dying souls. Gladstone, in his *Studies in Butler*, and *History of Opinion* says that the doctrine of the natural immortality of the soul was "wholly unknown to the holy Scriptures", and that it had "crept into the church by the back door". This may be set aside as the mere opinion of a man, but it surely suggests a study of the Word since the doctrine has been challenged. But though Gladstone is not reckoned among theologians, there are few Protestants who would lightly set aside the pronounced belief of Martin Luther who said:

> "I permit the Pope to make articles of faith for himself and his faithful, such as ... that the SOUL IS IMMORTAL, with all those monstrous opinions to be found in the Roman dunghill of decretals" (Luther's 27th proposition).

The doctrine of the soul

The word that the A.V. renders "soul" is the Hebrew *nephesh* and the Greek *psuche*: *nephesh* occurs 754 times in the Old Testament, so that it is quite beyond the limits of a booklet like this to deal with a tithe of its occurrences. The word "soul" is the translation of 472 occurrences of this Hebrew word, while the remaining 282 occurrences are translated by no less than 44 different words and phrases. If we note the two exceptions, Job 30:15 and Isaiah 57:16, then we shall know that every other mention of "soul" in the A.V. stands for the Hebrew word *nephesh*.

Turning to the New Testament we find that *psuche* is translated "soul" 58 times, "life" 40 times, "mind" 3 times, and "heart" and "heartily" once. There are no exceptions in this case, no other word being translated "soul" in the A.V.

These facts clear the ground for definite study, and an examination of these 857 occurrences will provide a full, perfect and authoritative statement by the Creator and Redeemer of man as to its nature. One thing we would state at once: in all the varied teaching of these 857 references there is *not one* that speaks of an *immortal* or *never-dying* soul. While we may not be able to deal with this vast amount of material, we can make a commencement with the book of Genesis.

Nephesh in the book of Genesis

> "The moving creature that hath life (margin *soul*)" (Gen. 1:20).
> "Every living creature that moveth (margin *living soul*)" (Gen. 1:21).
> "Let the earth bring forth the living creature" (Gen. 1:24).
> "Every thing ... wherein there is life (margin *living soul*)" (Gen. 1:30).

Here are the four passages in which *nephesh* occurs in Genesis 1. Creeping things, therefore, are *souls*; great whales, called elsewhere "serpents" and "dragons", are *souls*, also cattle and beasts of the earth and

> "Every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is *soul-life* (margin *a living soul*)" (Gen. 1:30).

This will be news to many readers, and they may wonder why it is that their teachers have not made this plain, or maybe they will come to the conclusion that their teachers are not prepared to take their stand with an unpopular truth, and in this particular are not unlike the Romish priest who withholds the Word of God from the people.

> "Man became a *living soul*" (Gen. 2:7).
> "Adam called every *living creature*" (Gen. 2:19).

Has the reader never heard it stressed that in the account of creation man alone is called "a living soul", and that because "God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life"? He now knows that such teaching is false and, even if unconsciously to the interpreter, in the interest of the devil's lie who said to our first parents, "Ye shall not surely die".

Article VI of the "Thirty-nine Articles of Religion"

A favourite argument of these teachers is that the Scriptures have no need to teach the immortality of the soul, *because it is universally believed*! Apart from the saving grace of God, the whole world is under the dominion of a lie, and that which is accepted among
men is an abomination before God. The Greeks held the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, yet what does 1 Corinthians 1 say about the wisdom of the Greeks? Salvation by human merit is universal, but that does not make it true. It is a poor shift to avoid the condemning fact that not one of 857 references contains the idea. If man somehow and somewhere must live on for ever, how is it that we read the following in Genesis 3:22,23?

> "Lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and LIVE FOR EVER: therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken".

If we approached this verse without bias, would we not receive from it the following facts:

> Adam had not up till then eaten of the tree of life.
> If he had he would have lived for ever in his sin.
> The expulsion was to prevent that catastrophe.
> Being expelled he did not live for ever.

God has no intention of allowing an immortal *sinner*.
The way of the tree of life being guarded by the cherubim teaches that immortality is to be found alone in Christ.

Compare the words of Genesis 3:22, "lest he *eat* and live *for ever*" with John 6:51,53 :

> "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man EAT of this bread, he shall LIVE FOR EVER ... Except ye EAT ... ye have NO LIFE in you".

Nothing but the necessity to defend the traditional view could extract from either Genesis 3 or John 6 man's natural immortality; true exegesis forbids it.

We read in Scripture of a living soul, of a dead soul: the soul is said to be cut off, slain, or killed. *Nephesh* is actually used of the dead in thirteen passages, being translated in the A.V. "the dead", "dead body", and "body", and in spite of all that may be said to the contrary, the soul not only goes to *sheol*, but to *shachath*, a pit for taking wild beasts, or, as the Greek version renders it, by the derived sense of corruption or destruction, all of which are directly opposed to the notion that the soul is immortal (Lev. 19:28; Num. 6:6; 9:6; Psa. 35:7; and Job 33:22).

The doctrine of the immortality of the soul is absent from Scripture, so that, although it is a principle of the Protestant faith that nothing shall be received as an article of belief that cannot be proved from Scripture, and although Paul was inspired to warn against the "vain deceitful philosophy" of men, and declared that in Christ was to be found all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, orthodoxy must add to the 857 references to the soul the philosophy of poor, darkened Greeks who were stumbling along the best they could, and who put up the cry, "Oh for a word of God!"

Immortality of the soul a doctrine of demons

The devil's first recorded lie uttered in the garden of Eden was, "Ye shall not surely die". Paul tells us that,

> "in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of demons" (1 Tim. 4:1).

The following quotations are taken from *The Bible Echo*, and report messages and resolutions made at spiritist seances:

> "If a man would become satisfied of modern spiritism, he must first be satisfied that he is an IMMORTAL BEING".

> "The first, the greatest and the grandest truth coming through modern spiritism is the IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL".

All our orthodox friends then have the first essential for the last great deception, and by their propaganda are unwittingly helping forward the dreadful cause.

> "RESOLVED - That spiritism, according to the modern acceptation of the term, EMBRACES ALL THOSE WHO BELIEVE IN IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL ... Beyond this common faith, there is no doctrine or creed necessarily incident to modern spiritism".

Is this the "common faith" of Titus 1:4 for which Paul lived and died? Is this embraced in the unity of the Spirit that we are enjoined to keep? May the Lord open eyes to see, and send His children back to the Word of truth.

Immortality in Scripture

There are but three passages in Scripture that speak of immortality, 1 Corinthians 15:53,54 and 1 Timothy 6:16. These are the only occurrences of the Greek word *athanasia*. Where we read "immortality" in Romans 2:7 and 2 Timothy 1:10 it is *aphtharsia*, "incorruption", and in 1 Timothy 1:17 it is *aphthartos*, "incorruptible".

The context of 1 Corinthians 15 is resurrection and the resurrection body. It has nothing to do with the soul, indeed the "soulish" body is contrasted with the "spiritual" body, so that immortality is predicated in some instances of those who are beyond the soul stage altogether:

> "The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening (life-giving) spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural (soulish); and afterward that which is spiritual" (1 Cor. 15:45,46).

Our theme is not the resurrection body, however, and we must return from these digressions. All that we desire at the moment is to show that immortality here is spoken of the resurrection body, and not of the soul at all.

> Immortality and resurrection are brought together in Luke 20:35,36 :
>
> "They which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that age, and the resurrection from the dead ... NEITHER CAN THEY DIE ANY MORE" (Author's translation).

Orthodoxy, however, says that whether a man obtains that age or not, whether he be raised from the dead or not, the question as to whether he will die any more does not arise, because man is already an immortal being.

> The third reference to immortality is found in 1 Timothy 6:14-16 :
>
> " ... the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ; which in His own seasons will show that blessed and only Potentate, King of kings and Lord of lords, the only One having immortality, dwelling in inaccessible light, which no one of men has seen, nor is able to see, to Whom be honour and might age abiding" (literal translation).

"Endless Being" quoted

> We quote in explanation of this passage J.L. Barlow in *Endless Being*:
>
> "Attention has here been called to the negative form of this word, not only because it is a fact, but to suggest, with some diffidence, that this fact has a bearing on what the writer believes to be an erroneous, though popular, idea. i.e., that where Paul says: "Who only hath immortality", he means God the Father ... It is, at least, supposed to be true that God, as Father, was never subject to death, and never will be. *He* was never *mortal*. God the Son became mortal - took on mortality - became subject to death, and rose again triumphant from the grave ... Now, as immortality comes to the righteous, and to them alone, at the resurrection, what more natural than to infer, and to expect Scripture to teach, that He Who is the firstfruit of the resurrection, and Who did put on this immortality - this undyingness - then and there should be alluded to, just as He is in 1 Timothy 6:16. as the only One Who now has immortality? And then again, Who but He is "King of kings and Lord of lords"? It is objected that the latter part of the verse cannot apply to Christ, "dwelling in light which no man can approach unto, Whom no man hath seen, nor can see". It is urged that Christ has been seen by man, and man yet expects to see Him. Granted; and yet the above language may, and it is believed does, apply to Christ in His present kingly glory. The word "dwelling" is a present participle expressing that which *is*. Has any man approached as yet Christ's present kingly glory, or can he do it, as he is in the present condition of things?".

Whether we agree with this interpretation, or whether we believe that the verse records that immortality belongs inherently to God alone, makes no difference to our main contention, viz., that apart from this reference immortality is only spoken of the resurrection, and never of unregenerate man, or of the soul. "Orthodoxy" departs from the teaching of Scripture, while so-called "heresy" is in accord with it!

The use of torment in the Scriptures

We have already seen that torment is used in a parable that refers to a saved person (Matt. 18:34). Its usage elsewhere is as follows:

Five months" torment of a special class (Rev. 9:5).

The two witnesses torment those that dwell on the earth (Rev. 11:10).

Worshippers of the beast tormented, the smoke of this torment ascends up "for ever", while those tormented have no rest day nor night (Rev. 14:9-11).

Babylon is tormented (Rev. 18:7,10,15), and the same chapter concludes the description of this judgment by saying: "Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and *shall be found no more at all*". Which comment is not conspicuous in the pages of traditionalists.

The devil, the beast and the false prophet are tormented (Rev. 20:10).

This book of the Revelation contains more references to torment than any other, but, unfortunately for the orthodox view, all who are spoken of there as being tormented are very special classes. Except in a few instances, there is no agreement among orthodox teachers as to who are intended by these classes. Some reckon the beast to be the Pope, some believe Babylon to be the literal city, and in any case a creed that is obliged to find its warrant in a book so confessedly allegorical and figurative is scarcely for those who believe all Scripture.

Traditionalism is as badly off when it turns to other references. "*Just* Lot" tormenting his "*righteous* soul" (2 Pet. 2:8) is rather an awkward reference, so is Mark 6:48, where we read that the disciples were *tormented* in rowing on the lake. Matthew 8:29 tells us that *demons* feared torment, but we look in vain for a clear statement that teaches either temporary or eternal torment of ordinary sinners of the sons of men.

There is but one reference more, the passage in Luke 16 which speaks of the rich man and Lazarus. This is the last ditch of traditionalism, and we shall devote special attention to its interpretation.

The rich man and Lazarus

Unanimity of opinion is not to be found, even among those who otherwise hold identical views, as to whether this portion of Luke 16 is to be taken as a parable, actual history, or partly history and partly allegory. Some endeavour to interpret every detail literally, while others spiritualize the whole, or a part.

It is a canon which will receive the assent of every reasonable mind, that doctrine, while it may be *illustrated* by figurative passages when once it has been demonstrated as Scriptural, can never be *proved* from such passages. Another equally important rule is that no figurative passage may be interpreted in such a way that the plain statements of the rest of Scripture are reversed or denied. Luke 16:19-31 is in very strong contrast with the teaching of the Old Testament on the subject of *sheol* or *hades*, yet by the closing words of the passage it is very evident that the Lord held to all that the Law and the Prophets taught on the subject. The true interpretation of the parable is therefore one of great importance, touching as it does so many vital issues.

Luke records several "contrast" parables

No part of Scripture is isolated, every part being related to its context, and no interpretation can be thoroughly reliable which avoids the illumination that comes from observing the setting, atmosphere, and relation of any one part with other parts of the same book.

In Luke 16 occur two related sayings, both introduced by the words, "There was a certain rich man". Now some have regarded these words in "The rich man and Lazarus" as proving that the Lord was not speaking in a parable, but actually recording a literal fact. This, however, would be equally true in the case of the parable of the Unjust Steward, and is quite unnecessary. In fact this argument applies to the parable of the Good Samaritan, for that opens with the words, "A certain man", just as the two in Luke 16 just referred to. Or again, Peter's question in Luke 12:41, 'speakest Thou this parable unto us, or even to all?" shows that the words of verse 39, which commence with "And this know, that if the good man of the house had known", etc., is a parable, even as the Lord's words about the faithful and wise steward that immediately follow (verses 42-48). We shall therefore speak of the parable of the rich man and Lazarus without further explanation, and hold that the language of all parables, being figurative, must always give place to those passages that teach plain doctrine.

Luke has several parables where the truth is found by realizing that the Lord is instituting a *contrast*. Take for example, the parable of the Unjust Steward. His prudence is commended by the lord referred to in the parable, but does that justify anyone following the example of this unjust steward? All will agree that no one would be justified in copying the example of this man, even though commended by the lord of the parable. One may ask, Are we then left without guidance from the Lord Jesus as to what His intentions are in this parable? and our answer is most emphatically, We are not, for the Lord has most definitely repudiated the whole attitude of the unjust steward. Thanks to the translators and their traditional interpreters, the truth lies buried and Christians have been given the awful instruction to "Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness" in spite of 2 Corinthians 6:14 "What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness?" or Peter's repudiation, "Thy money perish with thee" (Acts 8:20).

Statement or Question?

Some things which stand as positive statements in the A.V. are better rendered as questions, e.g., the marginal reading of the R.V. of Romans 8:33,34. A consultation of the great commentaries will reveal that honest and godly men have felt the difficulty of taking the despicable action of this steward as in any sense an example, or as justifying the use of anything so unrighteous as mammon in the service of the Lord, particularly when it is remembered that at the end of the parable the Lord most definitely says, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Luke 16:13). The trouble is all man-made. If we but take the Lord's words in Luke 16:9 to be a question demanding a negative answer, we shall see that He utterly repudiates the attitude of mind manifested by the unjust steward, and follows with what He *does* enjoin upon His followers, *in contrast*:

> "And *do I say unto you*, Make unto yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations?".

The answer demanded is, *No, I teach no such thing*; this is what I teach you, in contrast:

> "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?".

A similar misconception arising out of the same fault is found in Matthew 23:1-4, where it reads:

> "The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses" seat: all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not".

If we read the passage, as follows, we get a clearer conception of the Lord's meaning:

> "The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses" seat: all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, YE OBSERVE AND DO. But do not ye after their works; for they say, and do not",

and are spared the overwhelming difficulty presented by a passage indicating that the Lord actually instructed men to "observe and do" the bidding of those whom He was to denounce immediately as "hypocrites, fools, and blind guides". All that Matthew 23 says is that the people, overawed by the authority assumed by the Scribes and Pharisees, did their bidding, whereas the Lord pronounced woe upon these self-same, self-placed authorities whose works belied their pretended authority, and whose traditions were so completely repudiated by Him.

Returning to Luke's Gospel we find in 18:1-8 another instance of contrast in the parable of the Widow and the Unjust Judge. In Luke 19:12-27 we have an example of the Lord's method of taking something that was believed by a man, though wrong, and showing that his actions were not consistent with his beliefs, even though those beliefs were in themselves wrong. The servant admitted that his conception of the lord was that he was *an austere man*, etc. Is there anyone with any knowledge of the Lord who would say this was true simply because it is found in one of the Lord's own parables? If anyone did he would find reproof awaiting in the verse that follows: "Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant".

In Luke 16 the Pharisees realized that it was they who were referred to by the Lord as the unjust steward, "and they derided Him". He then judged them out of their own mouths, for their traditional views concerning *hades*, though contrary to the teaching of the Law and the Prophets, should have held them back from the course of life they pursued.

Is Luke 16:19-30 Pharisaic tradition?

This is the crux of the whole matter, and demands immediate and complete explanation. In the providence of God we have preserved the writings of an orthodox Jew (Josephus), who lived from A.D. 37 to about the year A.D. 100. He tells us that he was a Pharisee, and that from the age of 19 he sought to conduct himself according to their rules. Among his writings is part of a discourse to the Greeks concerning *hades*, and if we find that practically all the imagery of the parable we are dealing with is given by Josephus, we shall be compelled to face the fact, and must honestly accept the consequences.

Luke 16:19-30	**Josephus on hades**
"It came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom".	"There is one descent into this region, at whose gate we believe there stands an archangel with an host: which gate when those pass through that are conducted down by the angels appointed over souls ... are guided to the right hand ... while they wait for that rest and eternal new life in heaven, which is to succeed this region. This place we call *The Bosom of Abraham*".

Here are two items exactly parallel: (1) the ministry of angels to the dead, and (2) the name of this portion of *hades* - The Bosom of Abraham.

"The rich man also died, and was buried; and in *hades* he lift up his eyes ... Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented".	"Now, as to *hades*, wherein the souls of the righteous and unrighteous are detained, it is necessary to speak of it". "This region is allowed as a place of custody for souls, in which angels are appointed as guardians to them, who distribute to them temporary punishments, agreeable to every one's behaviour and manners".

Here we have still further parallels: in both, *hades* is a place where punishments are meted out *before the day of judgment*, agreeable to the life lived on earth.

"And seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom".	"They are struck with a fearful expectation of a future judgment, and in effect punished thereby: and not only so, but where they see the place of the fathers and of the just, even hereby are they punished".
"Father Abraham, have mercy on me ... I am tormented in this flame".	"Now those angels that are set over these souls, drag them into the neighbourhood of hell itself, who, when they are hard by it, continually hear the noise of it, and do not stand clear of the hot vapour itself".
"send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue ... between us and you is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence".	"A chaos deep and large is fixed between them: insomuch that a just man, that hath compassion on them, cannot be admitted, nor can one that is unjust, if he were bold enough to attempt it, pass over it".

No words of ours are wanted to make it abundantly clear that the whole imagery of this parable is unalloyed Pharisaic doctrine. As to *sheol*, the parable differs from the teaching of the Old Testament, for no plain statement is to be found there that teaches either consciousness or punishment before the day of judgment. Throughout the New Testament judgment is never said to be meted out in *hades*, but at the day of judgment, when men shall be raised from the dead. The Lord most definitely endorses the teaching of the Old Testament on this subject, saying at the end of the parable:

> "If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead".

The whole of Luke 16 is one, and the parts of the two parables are related the one to the other. This may be seen if set out in outline, which we trust will be tested by all readers before they accept it as true.

LUKE 16 AS A WHOLE

Two parables exposing the Pharisees in their doctrine and practice

A 16:1. A certain rich man had a steward who wasted his goods.
B 16:2-7. The steward's actions in view of the future.
C 16:8-13. The Lord's teaching in contrast.
D 16:14-18. The Pharisees deride Him, and are exposed.
A 16:19-21. A certain rich man failed in his stewardship to Lazarus.
B 16:22-30. The rich man's doctrine of the future.
C 16:31 to 17:2. The Lord's appeal to Old Testament in contrast, and His own statement concerning judgment.

As touching the resurrection

Matthew 22:31,32 is often taken to prove that the Lord taught that the dead patriarchs were really living in *hades*, so far as their souls are concerned, but we have only to read and believe the Lord's own explanatory introduction - "as touching the *resurrection* of the dead" - to see that it does not. If God be the God of resurrection, then all "live unto Him" even though they have fallen asleep in death.

This calls for another word. The Bibles of the traditionalist contain all the references to the sleep of death that our own does, yet, when we implicitly believe these statements and the related truth that resurrection is an awakening out of sleep, such senseless names as "soul-sleepers" are given us. Such a term is not accurate: we do not believe that the soul sleeps, but that the *body* returns to the dust as it was, and that the *spirit* returns to God Who gave it. The name "living soul" is given to that body animated by the spirit, and it is not considered as a separate entity. However, we will give the statements of the Word itself, and leave them with the conscience of our readers.

The Old Testament a faithful witness

Even though our orthodox friends very much object to the Old Testament witness on these things, we follow the example of their Lord and ours. Having said this we ought perhaps to give their own objection in their own words:

> "The reader may be warned to treat with grave suspicion writers who, whilst presenting a grand array of texts from the Old Testament, principally drawn from Job and Ecclesiastes, fail to give adequate testimony from the New".

We shall have to risk the grave suspicion of our readers, for we shall certainly give three quotations from Job, yet out of 44 verses from the Old Testament which teach that death and sleep are synonymous terms, we shall quote only six, giving seven references to the self-same truth from the New Testament. If in so doing it is shown that Christ and Paul say the same as Job, another awkward gap in the orthodox armour will be exposed.

Death as sleep. The testimony of Old and New Testaments

> "Why died I not from the womb? ... I should have slept: then had I been at rest" (Job 3:11-13).
>
> "Now shall I sleep in the dust; and Thou shalt seek me in the morning, but I shall not be" (Job 7:21).
>
> "Man dieth, and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he? ... man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep ... Thou shalt call, and I will answer Thee" (Job 14:10-15).
>
> "Lighten mine eyes, lest l sleep the sleep of death" (Psa. 13:3).

"so David slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David" (1 Kings 2:10).
"And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake" (Dan. 12:2).

This is the testimony of the Old Testament. Both Job and Daniel are specially picked out by God as men of exemplary righteousness. Speaking of the use of the Old Testament witness on the subject of life, death, and the soul, etc., F.W. Grant says:

> "These writers are groping for light amid the shadows of a dispensation where was yet upon this subject comparative darkness. They look at death as it existed before Christ had for the believer abolished it".

Do Paul, Job and Daniel agree?

This being the case, and F.W. Grant is an authority on the subject, we ought to be struck by the difference when we read the language of the apostle Paul who states that Christ has abolished death:

> "For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep" (1 Cor. 11:30).
>
> "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept" (1 Cor. 15:20).
>
> "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed" (1 Cor. 15:51).
>
> "After that, He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep" (1 Cor. 15:6).
>
> "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain ... Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished" (1 Cor. 15:17,18).
>
> "I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep ... the dead in Christ shall rise first" (1 Thess. 4:13-16).
>
> "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit ... And when he had said this, he fell asleep" (Acts 7:59,60).

Each of the above quotations is taken from post-resurrection Scriptures, which should, according to F.W. Grant and his school, illuminate the comparative darkness of the earlier statements. What, however, do we find? The language of the illuminated Paul on the point is the same as that used by darkened Job and groping Daniel. The dead believer in Christ now sleeps, just the same as David, or Job.

Paul, however, goes further than Old Testament witnesses, for feeling the resurrection to be so vital, he dares to say that dead believers *are perished* if there be no resurrection! Whereas orthodox teachers are equally certain that dead believers are alive in *hades*, consciously waiting for resurrection, as Josephus believed before them. Paul the Pharisee once believed the same thing, but it is evident that the "light on life and immortality" that he had received had badly shaken his traditional views. Stephen, who saw the Lord standing at the right hand of God, commended his spirit to the Lord, and then fell asleep, which is not one iota different from the testimony of rejected Ecclesiastes, Job and Daniel.

In 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 Paul does not set out to teach doctrine, but to administer "comfort" (1 Thess. 4:18). Here, then, is his opportunity. He will assure these sorrowing saints that since they believe that Jesus died and rose again, light has been shed on the state of the dead and the meaning of *hades*, and he can now assure them, by the Word of the Lord, that at that very moment their loved ones were in Paradise, consciously enjoying the presence of the Lord, their bodies only having died, they themselves being alive in a disembodied condition. Was this his word of comfort? The reader will know that this is quite contrary to the message of comfort that the apostle had to give. He knew nothing of life in *hades*, he knew nothing of souls being now in conscious bliss. This had once constituted a part of his creed, but he

now counted it as dung for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, and resolutely refused to go back to the bondage of tradition from which he had been set free.

With unbroken testimony the Scriptures from first to last declare that death is sleep, and those of us who would speak the truth will say the same. We could add the testimony of the Gospels and of Peter, but what has been quoted will suffice. If the reader is still unconvinced we can but leave him with the Scriptures, and pray that the Lord may enlighten him.

conclusion and concordance

We must now draw to a conclusion, not that we have dealt with every feature of this subject: such a comprehensive treatment does not lie within the scope of a booklet. What we have done is to set before the reader the claims of the apostle Paul upon the Gentile believer, and that doctrine must be modelled on the line of his teaching. Every item in this subject should be noted. May we earnestly ask every reader to search the writings of the apostle Paul, and not to rest satisfied until everything that he has written on the subject of "death", "soul", "spirit", "*hades*", "immortality", "resurrection" "sleep", and kindred themes, have been carefully pondered? And may we ask that the truth be taken at first-hand and not second-hand? Do not be content to accept as Paul's inspired words, "Absent from the body *is to be* present with the Lord", but see what he did say and what he actually meant.

We have freely quoted the Scriptures to show the basis of our faith, but the number of references alone that are found in Old and New Testaments forbid a fuller quotation. We are anxious, however, that the reader shall not rest with what we have brought forward, but desire that the searchlight of the Word in all its brightness shall be turned upon the subject. We will therefore endeavour to assist the reader in his investigation, by giving the following concordance key which may help the beginner in the use of such an aid as *Young's Analytical Concordance.*

A concordance key.

SOUL	Hebrew -	*nephesh*, Gk. - *psuche*, translated "soul", "life", and 44 other ways.
AGE	Hebrew -	*olam*, Gk. - *aion*, translated "for ever", "everlasting", "age", "world", etc.
		Aionios the adjective follows the noun, and means "age-long".
GRAVE	Hebrew -	*sheol*, Gk. - *hades*, translated "hell" "pit", and "grave".
HELL-FIRE	Greek -	*Gehenna*, translated "hell" and "hell-fire".

After these words have been studied in all their varied usages and contexts, further details can be added by examining the usage of the following:

PERISH	(Heb. *abad*).	DESTROY	(Heb. *shamad*).
CUT OFF	(Heb. *tsamath*).	CONSUME	(Heb. *halah*).
DESTROY	(Gk. *apollumi*).	DESTRUCTION	(Gk. *apoleia*).
DESTRUCTION	(Gk. *olethros*).	PUNISHMENT	(Gk. *kolasis*).
TORMENT	(Gk. *basanos*, *basanizo*).		

As promised in these pages, we give the complete list of references to *sheol* and *hades*, the study of which words is that which most immediately concerns us. We do not ask the reader to pick and choose his references, but rather to seek from them all their testimony, whether found in the Old Testament or the New, and to receive as a result a conception that shall not be at variance with any statement of truth, but which shall be in harmony with all that is written.

When we therefore appeal to "this evidence" we are not making an appeal to prejudice, referring to three or four carefully selected passages; and, moreover, although we refer you, dear reader, to 76 references instead of three, we refrain from saying that you will be a deliberate deceiver if you do not endorse what we have put forward. We desire for ourselves as for you, the truth, and that is found alone in the Word of God. Again we would ask the reader to notice our bias! We have given 65 references in the Old Testament and only 11 in the New. Does this prove that we are to be regarded with suspicion? At any rate when we make our appeal to "this evidence", none can call our motives in question.

In each reference the English word used to translate the Hebrew *sheol* or the Greek *hades* is underlined.

A concordance to the word *sheol*.

Gen. 37:35	Psa. 16:10	Prov. 23:14
Gen. 42:38	Psa. 18:5	Prov. 27:20
Gen. 44:29,31	Psa. 30:3	Prov. 30:16
Num. 16:30,33	Psa. 31:17	Eccles. 9:10
Deut. 32:22	Psa. 49:14,14,15	Song. 8:6
1 Sam. 2:6	Psa. 55:15	Isa. 5:14
2 Sam. 22:6	Psa. 86:13	Isa. 14:9,11,15
1 Kings 2:6,9	Psa. 88:3	Isa. 28:15,18
Job 7: 9	Psa. 89:48	Isa. 38:10,18
Job 11:8	Psa. 116:3	Isa. 57:9
Job 14:13	Psa. 139:8	Ezek. 31:15,16,17
Job 17:13,16	Psa. 141:7	Ezek. 32:21,27
Job 21:13	Prov. 1:12	Hos. 13:14,14
Job 24:19	Prov. 5:5	Amos 9:2
Job 26: 6	Prov. 7: 27	Jonah 2:2
Psa. 6: 5	Prov. 9: 18	Hab. 2:5
Psa. 9:17	Prov. 15:11,24	

"And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted; and he said, For I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning. Thus his father wept for him" (Gen. 37:35).

"And he said, My son shall not go down with you; for his brother is dead, and he is left alone: if mischief befall him by the way in the which ye go, then shall ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave" (Gen. 42:38).

"And if ye take this also from me, and mischief befall him, ye shall bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave" (Gen. 44:29).

"It shall come to pass, when he seeth that the lad is not with us, that he will die: and thy servants shall bring down the gray hairs of thy servant our father with sorrow to the grave" (Gen. 44:31).

"But if the LORD make a new thing, and the earth open her mouth, and swallow them up, with all that appertain unto them, and they go down quick into the pit; then ye shall understand that these men have provoked the LORD" (Num. 16:30).

"They, and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them: and they perished from among the congregation" (Num. 16:33).

"For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains" (Deut. 32:22).

"The LORD killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up" (1 Sam. 2:6).

"The sorrows of hell compassed me about; the snares of death prevented me" (2 Sam. 22:6).

"Do therefore according to thy wisdom, and let not his hoar head go down to the grave in peace" (1 Kings 2:6).

"Now therefore hold him not guiltless: for thou art a wise man, and knowest what thou oughtest to do unto him; but his hoar head bring thou down to the grave with blood" (1 Kings 2:9).

"As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away: so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more" (Job 7:9).

"It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know?" (Job 11:8).

"O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave, that thou wouldest keep me secret, until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me!" (Job 14:13).

"If I wait, the grave is mine house: I have made my bed in the darkness" (Job 17:13).

"They shall go down to the bars of the pit, when our rest together is in the dust" (Job 17:16).

"They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave" (Job 21:13).

"Drought and heat consume the snow waters: so doth the grave those which have sinned" (Job 24:19).

"Hell is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering" (Job 26:6).

"For in death there is no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks?" (Psa. 6:5).

"The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God" (Psa. 9:17).

"For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption" (Psa. 16:10).

"The sorrows of hell compassed me about: the snares of death prevented me" (Psa. 18:5).

"O LORD, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave: thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit" (Psa. 30:3).

"Let me not be ashamed, O LORD; for I have called upon thee: let the wicked be ashamed, and let them be silent in the grave" (Psa. 31:17).

"Like sheep they are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them; and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning; and their beauty shall consume in the grave from their dwelling" (Psa. 49:14).

"But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me" Selah. (Psa. 49:15).

"Let death seize upon them, and let them go down quick into hell: for wickedness is in their dwellings, and among them" (Psa. 55:15).

"For great is thy mercy toward me: and thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell" (Psa. 86:13).

"For my soul is full of troubles: and my life draweth nigh unto the grave" (Psa. 88:3).

"What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave? Selah" (Psa. 89:48).

"The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow" (Psa. 116:3).

"If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there" (Psa. 139:8).

"Our bones are scattered at the grave's mouth, as when one cutteth and cleaveth wood upon the earth" (Psa. 141:7).

"Let us swallow them up alive as the grave; and whole, as those that go down into the pit" (Prov. 1:12).

"Her feet go down to death; her steps take hold on hell" (Prov. 5:5).

“Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death” (Prov. 7:27).

“But he knoweth not that the dead are there; and that her guests are in the depths of hell” (Prov. 9:18).

“Hell and destruction are before the LORD: how much more then the hearts of the children of men?” (Prov. 15:11).

“The way of life is above to the wise, that he may depart from hell beneath” (Prov. 15:24).

“Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell” (Prov. 23:14).

“Hell and destruction are never full; so the eyes of man are never satisfied” (Prov. 27:20).

“The grave; and the barren womb; the earth that is not filled with water; and the fire that saith not, It is enough” (Prov. 30:16).

“Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest” (Eccl. 9:10).

“set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love is strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave: the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame” (Song 8:6).

“Therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure: and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it” (Isa. 5:14).

“Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming: it stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth; it hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations” (Isa. 14:9).

“Thy pomp is brought down to the grave, and the noise of thy viols: the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee” (Isa. 14:11).

“Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit” (Isa. 14:15).

“Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves” (Isa. 28:15).

“And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it” (Isa. 28:18).

“I said in the cutting off of my days, I shall go to the gates of the grave: I am deprived of the residue of my years” (Isa. 38:10).

“For the grave cannot praise thee, death can not celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth” (Isa. 38:18).

“And thou wentest to the king with ointment, and didst increase thy perfumes, and didst send thy messengers far off, and didst debase thyself even unto hell” (Isa. 57:9).

“Thus saith the Lord GOD; In the day when he went down to the grave I caused a mourning: I covered the deep for him, and I restrained the floods thereof, and the great waters were stayed: and I caused Lebanon to mourn for him, and all the trees of the field fainted for him” (Ezek. 31:15).

“I made the nations to shake at the sound of his fall, when I cast him down to hell with them that descend into the pit: and all the trees of Eden, the choice and best of Lebanon, all that drink water, shall be comforted in the nether parts of the earth” (Ezek. 31:16).

“They also went down into hell with him unto them that be slain with the sword; and they that were his arm, that dwelt under his shadow in the midst of the heathen” (Ezek. 31:17).

“The strong among the mighty shall speak to him out of the midst of hell with them that help him: they are gone down, they lie uncircumcised, slain by the sword” (Ezek. 32:21).

"And they shall not lie with the mighty that are fallen of the uncircumcised, which are gone down to hell with their weapons of war: and they have laid their swords under their heads, but their iniquities shall be upon their bones, though they were the terror of the mighty in the land of the living" (Ezek. 32:27).

"I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes" (Hosea 13:14).

"Though they dig into hell, thence shall mine hand take them; though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down" (Amos 9:2).

"And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the LORD, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice" (Jonah 2:2).

"Yea also, because he transgresseth by wine, he is a proud man, neither keepeth at home, who enlargeth his desire as hell, and is as death, and cannot be satisfied, but gathereth unto him all nations, and heapeth unto him all people" (Hab. 2:5).

A concordance to the word *hades.*

Matt. 11:23	Luke 16:23	Rev. 1:18
Matt. 16:18	Acts 2:27,31	Rev. 6:8
Luke 10:15	1 Cor. 15:55	Rev. 20:13,14

"And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day" (Matt. 11:23).

"And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18).

"And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven, shalt be thrust down to hell" (Luke 10:15).

"And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom" (Luke 16:23).

"Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption" (Acts 2:27).

"He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that His soul was not left in hell, neither His flesh did see corruption" (Acts 2:31).

"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" (1 Cor. 15:55).

"I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death" (Rev. 1:18).

"And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth" (Rev. 6:8).

"And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works" (Rev. 20:13).

"And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death" (Rev. 20:14).

Whatever we do, let us seek deliverance from the fear of man that bringeth a snare, from the doctrines and traditions of men that lead to bondage, from that vain deceitful philosophy which is not after Christ, and from that lie of the devil who introduced sin and death into the world.

“Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, Who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel: whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles. For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know Whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him (has been entrusted), against that day” (2 Tim. 1:8-12).

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