



“ALAS!”



GOSPEL BOOK DEPOT,

20, PATERNOSTER SQUARE, LONDON,

Price 4d. per doz., 2s. per 100, by post 2s. 3d.

MADE AND PRINTED

IN ENGLAND.



“ALAS!”

SUCH is the brief, but thought-stirring and saddening epitaph engraved on a moss-covered tombstone in an old churchyard.

What did it mean? Was it the climax of a life-tragedy? Was it the index of a desolate soul left behind to weep? Was it the groan of a despairing sinner going into a hopeless eternity?

We cannot even guess—we need not. What concerns us is not the dead past, but the living

present, the endless future. Will any who read these lines pass beyond the bounds of time gasping this word of pathos and despair, and find it written right across the whole stretch of their eternal destiny? I pray God that they may not.

“Alas !” cried the dark and evil *Balaam*, who loved the wages of unrighteousness. (Num. xxiv. 23.) “Alas !” we echo for all who, like him, fight against God, and trifle with light and knowledge.

“Alas, my daughter !” wailed the reckless *Jephtha*, as with rent garments and startled eyes

he realised the awful sequel of his rash vow. (Judges xi. 35.) Alas, indeed, for those who speak rashly to God or man.

"Alas, my brother!" lamented *the old prophet* as he mourned over the dead body of the man whose testimony he had ruined by a pretended revelation. (1 Kings xiii. 30.) "Alas!" we repeat, for religious deceivers—ministers of Satan, "transformed as the ministers of righteousness." (2 Cor. xi. 13-15.)

"Alas, master! for it was borrowed," cried *the careless workman* when the mystic axe head fell into deep water. (2 Kings

vi. 5.) "Alas!" we say, for all who let slip God-lent time, money, talents, opportunities and truth.

"Alas!" thunders the God of judgment concerning *apostate Judaism*. Repeat it, "Smite with thine hand, and stamp with thy foot . . . Alas!" (Ezek. vi. 11.) Alas! we add, for apostate Christendom. "Come out of her . . . Alas, alas that great city Babylon! . . . for in one hour is thy judgment come." (Rev. xviii.)

Judgment is ripening! "Alas for the day! for the day of the Lord is at hand, and as a destruc-

tion from the Almighty shall it come.” (Joel i. 15.) “Wailing shall be in all streets; and they shall say in all the highways, Alas! alas!” (Amos v. 16.)

“To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart.”

We have heard of a rich man dying, whose heart, once soft, had become so hard that he cried out, “I would give my fortune to be able to shed a tear over my sins. But alas! I cannot.” When the fortune was left and the man was gone, the tear was shed, alas! What alas in time can compare with the alas uttered too late,

when the deep judgment knell
sounds its ceaseless doom over
the lost soul?

Friend, flee from the coming
wrath! Flee for refuge to the
hope set before you in the gospel!
Flee to the waiting, willing arms
of a Saviour-God, and find every
alas changed into song, and joy,
and triumph, and blessing.

S. J. B. C.



