10.

NO ANNIHILATION;

OR,

THE LAKE OF FIRE AN ETERNAL ABODE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

A CESSATION OF CONSCIOUSNESS, OR OF EXISTENCE.

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THREE-PENCE.

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OR,

THE LAKE OF FIRE

AN ETERNAL ABODE.

SEQUEL TO

"DEATH NOT A CESSATION OF CONSCIOUSNESS, OR OF EXISTENCE."

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NO ANNIHILATION;

OR,

THE LAKE OF FIRE AN ETERNAL ABODE.

ANNIHILATION, as applied to God's creature, man, whence comes the thought? From the revelation of God in the Scriptures? If so, how is it that the word cannot be found therein from Genesis to Revelations? Is it the result of an instinctive desire planted in the heart of man by the Creator? If so, how is it that the instinct is not sought to be followed out, and why does man love and cleave to life and existence even in the midst of suffering and woe? Is his love of life one of the *fruits* of his fall, and is it one of the evidences of his having got away from Him who breathed into his nostrils the *breath of life*, and who blessed him, saying, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth," &c.? (Gen. i. 28.) What person acquainted with Scripture would venture to answer in the affirmative? If, then, neither the word nor thought as applied to man can be found in Scripture, nor any such desire be found implanted by nature in his heart, whence comes the notion, and what leads some so-called teachers of religion to advance such as a doctrine, and by the most palpable wrestings of the Scriptures seek to substantiate the same? Is it that the *wish* is father to the thought, and hence every effort to persuade that the *wish* is a realizable one, or rather is one day to be *a fact*, for *annihilation* can hardly be said to be *realizable?* If so, whence comes the wish? What is its source? Why is it present, since nature, even fallen, does not find it to be part of herself, and revelation from God does not even hint at such a thing, let infidelity boast as it may? Before proceeding to examine this doctrine in the light of Scripture, in order to its exposure and refutation, we have somewhat to say in reference to that which precedes.

That the wish of finding such a doctrine as that of annihilation in the Scriptures, and the purpose of endeavouring to establish the same as a part of a creed by any and every means, exist, is too palpable to be ignored. The existence of such desire being manifest, the question at once arises as to whence the same has its source. Man's history, in the past and present, as also the individual experience of every one of us, prove indisputably the same not to be an instinct common to our nature. We all *naturally* wish for life and existence, not death nor annihilation; suffering, misery, and woe, the result of a man's finding himself in a condition and circumstances which produce the same, being destitute of the knowledge of the grace and love of Him, the light of whose countenance turns all into blessing, and gives peace in the midst thereof, *may* lead a man in a moment of despair to desire to become extinct, that he may cease to suffer and be wretched and miserable. But change the circumstances, let him be in the full vigour of manhood, without an ache or a pain, prosperity tracking his every footstep, and care, anxiety, and suffering perfect strangers, and his conscience undisturbed by fears of death, judgment, &c., and what man *thus situated*, even though fallen, could be found desiring extinction of being? How much less so when intercourse with God formed his chief blessing. The desire in the one case is the product of a cause, not the result of an instinct common to his being. The absence of that desire, where the cause is not, and the presence of the very opposite, viz., love of life and existence, prove the latter and not the former to be common to his being. At his creation everything calculated to make life enjoyable surrounded him, and blessing, not sorrow, was his portion, hence any such thought as that of future annihilation could only have been fraught with misery, had it been present. But even in poverty and wretchedness man clings to life, the case of suffering leading to the desire of *extinction* being entirely exceptional.

As to Scripture, as I have previously said, and as I shall also shew, neither the word nor the thought as applied to man can be found therein. Whence, then, is its origin? What cause is productive of such a result? Is it the knowledge of God as a God who has been revealed *as love* in Christ, through whose death

the believer has been "reconciled to God" (Rom. v. 10), that originates the desire of extinction; or is it the absence of this knowledge and reconciliation, and an inward consciousness of being away and at a distance from Him, with the conviction that such a condition *must* end in eternal misery, too terrible to contemplate, unless annihilation came in to stay the same? Is it the result of bowing to Scripture testimony as to the true character of sin, and that which *alone* could put it away, even the shedding of blood (Heb. ix. 22), and that of God's own Son; or is it linked with the rejection of Scripture testimony thereon, even a practical denial of *the necessity* of atonement by the blood of Christ, and denial of man's responsibility, so seeking to fasten upon God the authorship of sin? That the thought of annihilation as to man has an origin, although that origin *be not revelation* or natural instinct, is clear enough. From whence then does it originate? We believe anyhow as to those who accept such as to be *their own* portion, if any such can really be found, simply from the *wish*, that wish having an existence solely as the result of a conscious estrangement from God, and unwillingness to have to do with Him, although now fully revealed in Christ, the One full of grace and truth, as love, the same being accompanied with a conviction that judgment must follow such a condition, but the same judgment being extinction of being sooner or later, a loose rein can be given with impunity in this world, to the desires and passions of the heart; and this is but little affected by any admission that there may be a certain *duration* of punishment, since the terrible thought of *eternity* being got rid of, and an end to suffering being sure, the *present* free gratification of the heart's desires more than counterbalances any prospect of *mere temporary* future misery. Besides, God is merciful, and perhaps after all things won't turn out so bad as is supposed. Thus is it, I believe, with those who profess to accept extinction as to be *their own* portion. Doubtless any possessed of average intelligence amongst *such* would question even the probability of the period of their extinction being deferred beyond the hour of death itself, since no possible gain could accrue either to God or themselves in mere suffering for a period, to be terminated in extinction, and since the same

involves the revolting thought of *gratuitous* suffering inflicted of God without aim or object. We believe that it may also be said of those who profess to have life in Christ and salvation through His blood, and who hold and teach the annihilation of the lost, that the *wish* is mainly father to the thought, since, in order to making any show at all of a Scriptural foundation for the dogma, it becomes necessary to handle Scripture after a fashion closely akin to wresting. The wish in their case, we believe, to be the result of want of apprehension as to what the true character of sin really is, as revealed in Scripture, to utter confusion of thought, as to what the Scriptures really do teach, as to *who* are to be the eternal denizens of that place Scripture calls the "lake of fire," as also the ground whereon they are condemned thereto, and also to false conceptions as to what is consistent with the revelation of God as love. These matters will have to be entered into in our consideration of the subject in hand.

It is useless discussing questions connected with the *unseen* world, apart from a thorough subjection to revelation, since all our mere notions and ideas thereon may only prove to be empty speculations, one person's being as good as another's, *and all false alike.* If this be true, as to subjects concerning which some faint inkling may be obtained from analogy and illustrations in this world, as from instincts common to us all, even in our ruin, how much more is it so as to the character and purposes of God, in order to any acquaintance wherewith we are necessarily as *creatures* wholly dependent on *revelation*, this is even so as to the whole intelligent universe, even where *unfallen.* How much more so therefore in reference to man. In dealing with the subject of our tract, we have but *one* question to solve, and that, What saith the Lord? that is revelation. If we have no revelation, as before said, any discussion of such subjects is useless, and mere waste of time. We must wait till we *have got* revelation thereon, and be content to remain in ignorance. It is not our object in writing this paper to enter into discussion with infidels as to the authority and trustworthiness of that book which all Christians accept as revelation, and as being the Word of God. Our object is to prove indisputably that no such

doctrine as that of annihilation can be found revealed therein, but that that of eternal misery and ruin is indelibly written on its pages. Infidels may scoff at and deny that God has revealed anything of the sort, but they do so at their peril. Their blind and wilful (in many cases) ignorance should not turn a single honest Christian aside from accepting and bowing to God's plain record. Some, too, whom we would fain believe to be true Christians, but who for a SEASON HAVING FALLEN INTO THE ENEMY'S snare, are alike found in concert with infidelity, opposing the plain teaching of Scripture, and even seeking, at the risk of laying themselves open to charges of dishonest and ignorant handlings thereof, to prove that the same does not teach eternity of misery for the lost, but universalism or annihilation, but their fall (for it is a fall, and a sad one, to be found linked with open and blasphemous infidelity in opposing any revelation of God) should but be a warning to us to avoid the trap that has been but too successfully laid for *their* ensnarement, and should in no way shake our purpose of holding fast *by all and everything* that God has revealed. Our appeal shall be to the law and the testimony, and by the unerring light thereof we trust to be able in some cases, at least, to dispel the temporary darkness that has overshadowed *them*, and to expose the emptiness of the loud boastings of infidelity. The course we purpose following is—1st, To examine all that annihilationists have advanced *worthy of notice* (for some have advanced notions and ideas, and quotations from Scriptures, in support of their dogma, as would shame any averagely-instructed charity school-boy), as for example, such quotations as the following:—Eccles. iii. 19, 20; ix. 5, 6, 10; Ps. vi. 5; xxxix. 12, 13; cxlvi. 4; Mal. iii. 1, 2; &c.; most of which will be found examined, and the absurdity of the interpretation sought to be put thereon exposed in another paper lately published, entitled "Death not a cessation of consciousness or of existence," to support their teachings, and testing their quotations from, and interpretations of, Scripture, at the same time seeking to prove that their doctrine is contrary to what is revealed. 2nd, To establish the very reverse of their doctrine, proving from Scripture that eternity in misery is the inevitable fate of the lost, the doom being "the lake of fire" for ever.

The dogma of universalism it is not our purpose to discuss in this paper, and beyond the few following remarks thereon we shall not further notice the same. If we establish from Scripture "the lake of fire" to be the eternal abode of the lost, the dogma of universalism is at once disposed of. The rejecter of the doctrine of eternal punishment is compelled to accept either that of annihilation or universalism, but in accepting *either*, he necessarily depreciates, and, in fact, subverts the atonement. The reception of the doctrine of universalism of necessity involves also the reception of that of purgatory, since it is impossible to deny that the Scriptures teach a future punishment of some sort, but then at once the doctrine of the atonement is subverted, since purgatorial suffering accomplishes that which Scripture asserts to be possible only through the blood, the atonement *for, and cleanser from* sin (Heb. ix.; 1 John i).

Some of the grounds upon which annihilationists base their rejection of "eternal punishment," apart from any positive texts of Scripture, are the supposed inconsistency of any such doctrine with the revelation of God as love. The injustice of inflicting eternal punishment for sin committed in time by finite creatures, the same creatures having been born with sinful natures, and for which they cannot be held to be responsible. The unrighteousness of punishing all the wicked eternally, since some must have deserved longer punishment than others. It is also asserted that man not having been created immortal, that is, possessed of an endless existence, eternity of suffering is an impossibility. The latter assertion we shall not stop to dispute here; it will be found practically met in the other paper referred to previously. Let us now investigate the soundness of these objections on the part of our opponents. It is said that the revelation of God as love forbids the thought of His punishing any of His creatures with eternal misery, especially such misery as that depicted by an eternal consignment to the lake of fire, let the lake of fire mean what it may. But is such the case? In the first place we ask, How does any man *know* that God is *love?* Has he arrived at such a knowledge by any perceptive power of his own? If so, *at what period of his history?* Let our opponents state, *if they can.* The *fact is*, that no such thought

has ever been grasped by the mightiest philosophers of this world, apart from revelation. Man left alone, *cannot get beyond* himself, and being a fallen creature to boot, no such conception was, or is, possible on his part, unaided by revelation. This is a fact which is indisputable. Annihilationists themselves, who ground their rejection of the doctrine of eternal punishment on the fact of God being love, have nought but His revelation as the base of so blessed a truth. Of course, when a thing *is revealed* and faith is in exercise as *to the same revelation*, all is plain and simple enough—the thing then is *known*, but never before. Man therefore being wholly dependent on God for the revelation and knowledge of this truth, it follows necessarily that He is as dependent upon the same source for any true knowledge as to that which is consistent in God's sight, with His own revealed nature as love. Man may reason as he pleases; he can *settle* nothing. God alone must communicate, and *he* must bow, or find himself in antagonism with the very One whom he professes to know as love. The doctrine of eternal punishment is therefore entirely a question of revelation. The question is, Has the same God who has in Christ revealed Himself as love, along with the same revelation, declared it to be His purpose to consign to the lake of fire for eternity any portion of His creatures? If He has, the best and wisest thing for His creatures to do is to take warning, and not set themselves up to question and dispute with Him as to its consistency with His nature. To do so is the rankest presumption and folly. That we need the clearest possible evidence of such a fact being revealed, we do not deny; but then the same may be said of every asserted revelation. We purpose, by God's help, establishing from Scripture, before we close this paper, the fact of such a doctrine as eternal punishment being a revelation, but do not touch thereon now. The question can only be settled by Scripture. We return to our question, Is such the case? Even its appearing to be so *to us*, would not make it so. As we have shewn, *it is a question of revelation;* but we maintain that even to ourselves it does not appear to be necessarily so. What are our notions as to the requirements of a nature that can declare itself to be love. That is the point, and it is here that we shall find ourselves in direct antagonism

with our opponents. *They say* that One who is love cannot allow His creatures to suffer throughout eternity; in fact, they say such a thought is monstrous. *We say* that He both *can* and *will*, and yet remain that which He is, viz., LOVE. We *know* that He will, because *He has said so;* and through bowing to His revelation, and not setting ourselves in antagonism thereto, we have learnt to know that He *can*, and that, too, without any inconsistency necessarily with His nature. The monstrosity appears to us to lie in the assertion of such a dogma as that of annihilation, which can be found *nowhere* in Scripture. *God is love*, blessed truth indeed. Does the presence of love forbid the infliction of punishment? Does it not, on the contrary, oftentimes *necessitate the same*, sometimes for the well-being of the one to be punished, sometimes for the well-being of others who will be necessarily injured if the offender remains unpunished? Is there any need for us to stop to illustrate this from the case of a father and his children? Has not many a father been obliged even to banish from his house for ever a persistent rebellious son, even cutting the same off from all participation in his property, and this not as an act of vengeance, nor merely as a punishment of the offender, but for the preservation of, and example to the other members of the family? Can it be said that such a course on the part of a father is necessarily inconsistent with his love? If the son repent at any time during his lifetime and confess his sin, the father can receive him back, but apart therefrom he cannot possibly do so without risking the loss of his parental authority over the rest. In the case of the sinner that dies *a rejecter of God*, his day of grace has passed, and since the blood *which could alone meet* his need has been despised, and the opportunity of being born again passed, there is no possibility of his restoration. There remaining no more sacrifice for sins, his fate is sealed, and that for ever. The opportunity for repentance and confession of sin has been allowed to slip by and cannot be redeemed in his case. It is no proof whatever that God is not love, that it should be so. God is not only the creator of man, but the ruler of the universe, and it is not possible for Him to pass by sin and let it go unpunished because He is love. The fact of His being love will

not render Him a bad governor, unwise, weak, and foolish, and which would necessarily be the case if lawlessness and evil were allowed to go unpunished. The fact of the punishment being eternal, does not necessarily affect this, *provided the subject of the punishment remain ever the same and worthy of it.* What warrant from Scripture exists for any such absurd idea as that the agonies of the lake of fire will ever effect a change in the moral and spiritual being of those consigned thereto; the very reverse, in fact, will be the case. They will remain rebels and enemies to eternity, in all probability their suffering only increasing the intensity of their enmity. One thing is clear, viz., that if the love of God, now displayed in Jesus, will not *win*, the agonies of the pit *never will.* In the terrible judgment depicted in the revelation as falling on the nations in the last days, we do not find that they, apart from grace, for grace will not be absent even then, induce to repentance, but the contrary, even to men *blaspheming God* because of the plagues (Rev. xvi. 21, &c). If the punishment of the lake of fire *be just* at the commencement, it will remain so to eternity, *the condition of its denizens not only remaining the same, and as guilty as when first consigned thereto,* but that condition becoming more and more corrupt, and their guilt ever on the increase. If it were consistent with the nature of God AT ALL, its being eternal will not make it the less so. Because God loves His creatures, He must punish the rebellious, and that as long *as they remain so,* that is to say, when once grace has expended itself in vain, and *judgment has become a necessity,* the eternal existence of man will render this inevitable, hence the efforts made by annihilationists and others to get rid of the same, but without success. See paper on "Death, &c."

The next ground taken is that of its being unjust to inflict eternal punishment for sin committed in time by finite creatures, the same creatures having been born with sinful natures, and for which birth they cannot be said to be responsible. But this will not hold water for a moment, simply because, in the first place, Scripture nowhere says that the lake of fire is *an inevitable inheritance,* incident to being connected by birth with the first Adam that fell, neither does it say that sin or sins *necessarily*

land the one who has committed them in that terrible abode. The lake of fire was not *the inevitable consequence* to our first parents of their act of disobedience, as to the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil; at least, it is nowhere revealed so. *Death* was the penalty declared. From the New Testament we know that "after death comes the judgment" (Heb. ix.), but then judgment for what—judgment resulting in the lake of fire for having been born a sinner? We trow not; nevertheless sin in itself merits God's wrath, as witness the terrible cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in Rev. xxi. we see that such as remain *to the end* fearful, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, whoremongers, &c., have their part therein, but their remaining such is the result of their own act in wilfully *doing evil* (Rom. ii. 9), despising grace, defying law, and resisting conscience, in fact *rejecting God in every way*, let Him manifest Himself as He will. The work of Christ on the cross, determined of God even before man fell, has brought about the possibility of SCARLET sins being made as *white as snow*, and CRIMSON sins *as wool*, yea, all manner of sin, except blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, being forgiven; and this is true as regards the whole of Adam's descendants, let the age of their existence have been when it may, and God, the blessed God, the judge of all the earth, who *will do right*, knows how to bring all this to bear on men in all ages, if we do not. As to ourselves, we are connected with a dispensation that has its own distinctive privileges and responsibilities. Let us see that *we* endeavour to walk according thereto, and have confidence in God as to all else. The *final rejecter* of God in all ages, *judged such of God Himself*, will find himself eternally lost; of that we may be sure. Scripture leaves no room for doubt, and terrible will be the doom, *even the lake of fire for ever*, and which is not annihilation or anything like it, but that which it is, viz., the lake of fire, and which will be found a very different thing by any who get there through their own wilful sin. Eternal punishment for sin committed in time is hardly the way of putting it; it is rather eternal punishment, *the consequence of a condition arrived at through impenitent rebellion and rejection of God.* But for a moment let us look at it in the way in which it is put. Sin and its punishment cannot

be measured by the time merely that it takes to commit; for instance, a man commits a theft or a forgery in a few minutes of time, for which perhaps he gets twelve months and twelve years' imprisonment respectively, and that at the hands of the best human governments, then acts deserving of punishment have different moral aspects, and punishment is awarded accordingly, for instance, a youth commits an offence and gets six months' imprisonment, it being his first offence, whereas a confirmed offender would get a much severer punishment for precisely a similar act. Again, one young man assaults his father or mother, another young man assaults a stranger, both are assaults, but the moral aspect thereof are very different, and the punishment awarded would differ likewise. If, therefore, such distinction are found connected with human government, and RIGHTLY so, why not with God? The amount of time occupied is not the point at all, *but the character of the act committed*, and God alone is the only true judge of that, as also of its due award. The next and last ground we have to investigate is that based on the supposition that it is unrighteous to punish all eternally, since some must have deserved longer punishment than others. Well, one thing is clear at starting, viz., that man himself does not consider it unjust to act on any such principle; for instance, three men are committed for various offences, the *duration* of their punishment is fixed by the judge in each case at twelve months, only the first is only deprived of his liberty, the second has in addition to work at the treadmill, and the third, in addition to losing his liberty and working at the treadmill, is fed only on bread and water. Now it is quite clear that if God is so pleased He can act on a similar principle. The term of the punishment being eternal, cannot constitute the same an injustice, provided *that the punishment itself be strictly in accordance with the merits of the case.* The distinctive merits of each case may be set forth by the degrees of punishment inflicted, not merely by its duration. Anyhow, *annihilation at the end of a given period is out of the question*, since, if the sin for which a person is consigned to the lake of fire has met its deserts by a temporary endurance of the same, it would be an act of the grossest injustice to tack on at the end thereof annihilation, that

is to say, supposing annihilation be regarded as *a punishment*, but which under such circumstances it certainly would not be, but the very reverse, viz., the most *merciful* act that God could possibly do, viz., put out of misery those in suffering rather than let them continue therein. The duration of the punishment may be the inevitable consequence of the existence of the subject punished being eternal, having, through forfeit of privileges and neglect of opportunities of escape, merited banishment from God's presence. The same banishment becomes eternal consequent upon the existence of the banished, the time for repentance, reconciliation, &c., having for ever passed, the one offended against no longer purposing to exercise grace, but judgment in its place. Let us illustrate this. Six men have brought themselves through continuous crimes under the sentence of penal servitude for life; in *their* case the period of their existence in this life will differ, one may die soon after the sentence is passed, another within a few years, another after twenty years of servitude, and the rest not till fifty have been spent therein. The law, however, is as fully satisfied in the case of the man who dies just after sentence has been passed, as in the case of those who live out the full space of human existence. The sentence was that of *penal servitude for life*, that is, the term of existence of each. Their crimes had merited their banishment from society. Had one lived 1000 years, another only one day after sentence had been passed, the justice of the sentence itself would in no way be affected thereby. In the case of the lost sinner, the term of his existence determines the duration of his punishment, the same being eternal, his punishment is so likewise. Men may deny this, but their denial is no disproof, and before any intelligent Christian *subject to Scripture* can be induced to admit their claims to attention, their use thereof must be more intelligent and honest than anything we have yet seen. We do not deny that difficulties may present themselves even to honest minds desiring to be subject to Scripture, when attempting to reach beyond simple revelation, though never having really bowed thereto because IT IS SUCH, and that especially when such monstrous perversities, as, for instance, the damnation of all unbaptized infants, the universal damnation of all the heathen

men, women, and children, are sought to be forced upon them as dogmas to be accredited, whilst being in truth the most Satanic of all lies and delusions. No wonder that men get puzzled and distressed and fly to annihilationism or anything else to avoid such hideous monstrosities. But let every honest soul keep his eye fixed on Calvary and that blood shed of God (although men were the instruments) *there*, even *the blood of His own* (Acts xx. 28). Let them seek to grasp the fact that God, whilst *there* displaying the solemn truth that nought but that *blood* could put away sin, and consequently the terrible nature of sin itself, made known that He was *love* in not sparing His own Son (Rom. viii. 32), but so loving the world as to give His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him might not perish, but have everlasting life (John iii. 16); *and that such is the value of that blood in His sight*, that He can forgive all manner of sin, excepting that of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, and that in perfect consistency with His own attributes, but which sin is unpardonable, involving as it does the trampling under foot of the Son of God. Let them bow to the plain declarations of Scripture, in the full assurance that *such a God* cannot possibly do aught that is inconsistent with His nature as revealed, viz., love, or with His own glory, and most certainly could not allow anything to proceed from Himself calculated *in any way to deceive or mislead* those to whom He has deigned to make communications; let them bow to what is revealed *because it is revealed*, and wait upon God to remove difficulties as He may see fit and good. Above all, let them remember that the blessed Son of God Himself, the one who could declare concerning Himself that He was the TRUTH, bore the plainest testimony possible to the fact of eternal punishment, and yet no man ever spoke such gracious words as *He*. Let them act thus and they need not fear ever getting launched into such absurdities and unscriptural fallacies as those of annihilationism or universalism. As to those who have never received the testimony of the Holy Ghost to the work of Christ on the Cross, and to His present position as risen and glorified, &c., let them remember that *God is love* towards *them*, as well as towards *us*, yea, towards the WHOLE RACE, commencing with Adam and Eve in the garden, as seen by His course towards

them after their fall, and that though in consequence of our spiritual dulness there are many things beyond our comprehension, and that we cannot bear now, *that God is love* has been proved, and that consequently in all His dealing with them, whether those living before the flood, after the flood, and since Christ's death and resurrection, He will ever act in perfect consistency with Himself, and that none amongst them will be eternally lost and find their portion in the lake of fire, *but such as God Himself deems it necessary to put there.* Let us have confidence in God and accept His revelation as to eternal punishment as we do that of His being love. That there will be eternal denizens of the lake of fire is clear enough, the testimony of the Son of God as to the consequence of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost settling that point *definitely*, and hence sweeping the annihilation and universal salvation dogmas out of the way at a stroke. His testimony, as recorded in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, is as follows: Matthew xii. 32, "Whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost *it shall not be forgiven him*, neither in this world (or age), neither in the world to come;" Mark iii. 29, "But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost *hath never forgiveness* (or to eternity—*eis ton aiona*—has no forgiveness) but is in danger of eternal damnation;" Luke xii. 10, "But unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven." Were there no other passages in Scripture asserting eternal punishment than these, they would amply suffice. In fact, one can hardly conceive any honest man failing to stand aghast at any attempt to establish such a dogma as that of universalism, in the teeth of such a declaration as this, for it can only be done by giving the direct lie to the Son of God Himself, since, if *universalism* be *true*, forgiveness for *such there must be*, and the Son of God has lied. We do not envy the person who can let his resistance to the truth lead him thus far. But the same may be said as to annihilation, for eternal judgment in other portions of Scripture is shewn to be the lake of fire for ever, in addition to the fact asserted that there is *never forgiveness.* Now, if the dogma of annihilation be true, the Son of God has still spoken falsely, and the testimony of the Holy Ghost is false too, for if the penalty be the lake of *fire for ever*, annihilation would make the same an impossibility, since it would

involve the lake of fire for a season and annihilation at the end, which would be quite a different thing, for the penalty being the lake of fire for ever, it is clear as noonday that the one consigned there for ever must remain there for ever, *or the penalty is not enforced.* Immediately that annihilation takes place the character of the punishment is changed, and it ceases to be that which was originally decreed. And, then, if there be annihilation there is forgiveness, since no greater act of mercy, under the circumstances of restoration being impossible, could possibly be done on God's part, thus at once at a stroke delivering out of the misery of the lake, and cancelling entirely the punishment itself, as it originally stood. The absurdities that men are forced into in order to try and establish their dogmas are almost incredible; for instance, in six lectures published in Birmingham to prove annihilationism, the author actually advances the following theory:—Page 6, Lecture I. After disclaiming any fellowship with certain doctrines taught by the followers of a Dr. Thomas, the writer states, page 5, "But these are my solemn convictions;" then follows a statement thereof concluding in page 6, thus, "And he the wicked mortal perishes, becomes extinguished and blotted out of God's universe. Men call it annihilation, God calls it 'everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power,' and Christ speaks of it as the destruction of body and soul in hell. Thus, although his suffering will not be everlasting, his punishment will be, because irrevocable, because irreversible, because irreparable, because unalterable and unchangeable, and of eternal duration." Now it is to this last declaration we would draw attention, as illustrative of the shallowness of the reasoning of these men. At a glance the theory explodes, since the *suffering* is that which constitutes the *punishment*, not being annihilated and put out of suffering for ever. If punishment is to be of eternal duration, suffering connected with the sentence passed, whatever that may have been, must be eternal also. Annihilation puts an end to the punishment, alters its character altogether, and deprives it of all possibility of being of eternal duration. Supposing it were possible for a criminal to be condemned to *everlasting hanging*, instead of as is, of course, the case under the present

condition of physical existence, merely to be hung till life is extinct, such a punishment would necessitate the continuous suffering of the agonies of the death throttle, and to be carried out it must be everlasting. To put an end to the suffering altogether, and then turn round and say that the punishment is eternal, because the man has ceased to be, and to suffer, in fact, passed out of existence, would be one of the most absurd utterances possible. It is so in this case; we do not know that we have ever read a more foolish assertion, in fact the six lectures themselves are illogical, contradictory, and, in their main subject, unscriptural, from beginning to end. We purpose investigating and reviewing the whole in another paper, and exposing their unscriptural fallacies. But it is time that we proceeded to investigate some of the Scriptures relied on as establishing this dogma of annihilation. We have perhaps already encroached upon the last proposed purpose of establishing from Scripture the opposite thereof, but this our readers will kindly bear with. The passages we purpose examining will be of a different class to those we have referred to as having been investigated in the paper entitled "Death not a cessation of consciousness or of existence." It would be weary work going over such ground again, it being astonishing that any such passages should be quoted at all. They are all from the Old Testament, and have no reference whatever to the subject for which they are quoted. It is only possible in this paper to examine a certain number of passages upon which it is relied to establish annihilationism. In selecting the strongest that can be adduced, and exposing the fallacy of *their* use for such a purpose, we shall secure the dismissal of the rest. We shall select for examination the six following passages, and upon which some found the idea of the annihilation of Satan and his angels as well as the finally unrepentant from among men:—

1 John iii. 8: "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil."

Heb. ii. 14: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part in the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."

1 Cor. xv. 26: "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."

Col. i. 20: "And, having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself; by Him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven."

Rev. xxi. 4: "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away."

1 Cor. xv. 28: "That God may be all in all."

It is asserted that the three first passages teach the extinction of evil, and consequent annihilation of all subject to its influence and the centres of its outgoings; and that the three last teach the presence of good in such a way as to necessitate the blotting out of creation any locality or creatures tainted with evil of any sort. Let us see by what sort of arguments this is sought to be established. From the passage in 1 John iii. 8, it is argued "that since the works of the devil are sin, suffering, and death, and Christ came for the very purpose of destroying his works (the word used for destroy here is *luô*, a totally different word to that translated destroy in many other passages, and is admitted to mean destroy in the sense of dissolve, break up, demolish, &c.), it is evident they cannot be permitted to last for ever, otherwise Christ came for their conservation and preservation, and not for their extinguishment and nullification. That the passage teaches that all evil men and all evil things will be destroyed, being 'the works of the devil,' of course it is meant in the sense of annihilation." Now it is clear that the whole teaching of this passage as to the character of the work accomplished by the Son of God, depends upon the force of the word translated *destroy*, and if it can be shewn that the word itself has no such signification as that of annihilation, the whole fabric sought to be established therein at once falls to the ground. And this is easily done, besides we do not at all accept the reasoning, nor the habit of wresting a passage for a purpose from its context. The word *luô* used here, and translated destroy, is used in various passages and in slightly different senses, thus, in Mark i. 7, it is used for *unloose*, where John the Baptist is referring to his unworthiness even to *unloose* the latchet of Christ's shoes; in Matthew xxi. 2, it is used where the Lord Jesus tells His disciples about *unloosing* the ass and colt; in Acts xiii. 43, it is used when speaking of the

breaking up of a congregation; in John x. 35, in the passage "the Scripture cannot be *broken*;" in Eph. ii. 14, in the passage "and hath *broken down* the middle wall of partition between us;" and in John ii. 19, in the passage "*Destroy* this temple," speaking of His body. Even an annihilationist would hardly venture to assert that in either of these passages the thought of annihilation is to be found; it is strange, to say the least, that any should venture to assert that the word has that sense in the passage we are considering. The fact is, that the word has no such sense whatever, neither is it necessary that it should have, seeing that the requirement of the fact asserted in no way demands the same. The "breaking up," "setting at nought," "nullifying" the *works* of an enemy, does not imply the thought of *annihilation* at all, either as regards the works broken up or the individual from whence they may have proceeded; in fact, we fail to discern how the thought of *annihilation* can be made applicable to a *work* of any sort. A work once done remains an accomplished fact, so far as it goes, *for ever*, that is in itself, and cannot possibly be annihilated. The very thought appears to us to be an absurdity. It *may be* entirely nullified, broken up, and set at nought, and put aside, and its good or evil effects diverted and counteracted, and the one from whom the work proceeded be deprived of all power of repeating the same, and this is, in fact, all that the passage implies. The Son of God was manifested for this purpose, and He has accomplished the same in bruising the serpent's head, although all is not yet fully and visibly displayed. To say that Satan and his angels and all the wicked must be annihilated, since otherwise sin, suffering, and death, cannot be broken up or destroyed if an eternal existence in the lake of fire be their portion, appears to us to be a statement remarkable only in the extent of its folly. Supposing, for instance, it to be possible for Satan, his angels, and all the wicked to be annihilated, but, in order to which, it must first be shewn that the very essence of their being is not that of an eternal existence, how would this meet the case? *The fact* would still remain to all eternity that the works of Satan had been productive of *results impossible of extinguishment*, in the fact of his having brought about the annihilation of some of

God's creatures, their suffering for a time in the lake of fire, as also their suffering in this life through sin and death. How would it be possible for their annihilation in any way to set aside this accomplished fact? It would remain to eternity, and could not be got rid of in this way. The truth is that the thought of annihilation in no way meets any difficulties. Honest ones there may be which present themselves to some minds as to the possibility of eternal suffering being consistent with God's revealed nature as love. It leaves us still face to face with the FACT that sin HAS *come into God's universe*, HAS brought in havoc and ruin, and HAS necessitated a terrible judgment, the witness of which would remain to eternity in the very annihilation of Satan and the wicked. There is nought but *faith* and *confidence* in God Himself, the blessed God revealed to us in Christ as love, and humble subjection to His revelation, in the assurance that HE cannot act inconsistently with Himself, that will help us in these matters, and give peace and rest of mind thereon. As to the interpretation sought to be forced on the passage we are considering, it will not hold water for a moment. If *annihilation* be the way of destroying the "works of the devil," what need could exist for the Son of God to be manifested in order *thereto*? An exercise of the will of God putting all out of existence would have been all required. The passage with its context has no application whatever to the character of God's future judgment on Satan and the wicked; it simply sets forth the fact that any one *living in sin* remains morally linked with him who is the *author of it from the beginning*, in fact shares his character, and cannot, therefore, be with Christ, seeing that Christ was manifested to destroy (that is, break up, unloose from, nullify) the "works of the devil" (Heb. ii. 14)—is as far from teaching anything as to the future punishment, either of Satan or the wicked, as the preceding passage. The writer to whom we have previously referred in seeking to prove the dogma of the annihilation of Satan, as well as of the wicked, says, on this passage, "We see, therefore, how totally at variance with the idea of Satan's eternal suffering is the Scriptural idea of his destruction. We see Christ comes down from heaven and becomes man for the very purpose that Satan

might be destroyed." When men are forced to resort to such interpretations and reasoning as this, their case must, indeed, be a weak one, and which in this case it assuredly is. We would warn our readers from putting any trust in such interpreters of Scripture as these. In the first place, the word rendered here "destroy," although a totally different word to that used in 1 John iii. 8, and which, being different, would alone shew that *both passages* cannot teach annihilation, has no such signification as that of annihilation any more than the word used in 1 John; and, in the next place, a child would, we think, see at a glance that the passage simply teaches that Christ partook of flesh and blood in order to the deliverance of those spoken of as "the children," from him under whose power they lay, and that this deliverance would in no way involve the annihilation of the one in power over them, but simply the breaking up of that power itself, and the depriving him of any longer using the same against them. What need, we ask, for Christ to come down from heaven and become man, and pass through death, in order to Satan's annihilation? Who, in speaking of the destruction of an earthly power, and the person or body of persons in whom that power may be centred, ever means necessarily even the death of that person or persons, much less their annihilation? Their power can be broken up and destroyed apart from either. Take the case of Napoleon I. whilst confined at St. Helena, what had become of his power then? and what has become of it now? He certainly was not annihilated at the time of its destruction, and consequently the same was not a necessity thereto. Supposing that the various powers which formed a coalition against Napoleon had issued a manifesto, stating that the object of their coalescing was for the purpose of *destroying* Napoleon, who wielded such a terrible power in Europe, and delivering those who were suffering therefrom. Would such a manifesto necessarily involve his death, that is, extinction as far as this world is concerned? Certainly not. The breaking up of his power through his dethronement and the depriving him through confinement or otherwise of ever again regaining the same, would fully meet the case. And so here. The passage refers in no way to Satan's future punishment. And then as to the word rendered destroy,

viz., katargeô, it is used in various passages and in somewhat different senses, but nowhere in that of annihilation. Its meaning is, *to render useless, render powerless, abrogate, bring to an end, destroy, free from,* and is so used in the following passages, and where any such thought as that of annihilation would be senseless:—In Luke xiii. 7, it is used in reference to the unfruitful fig tree cumbering the ground, "why *cumbereth* it the ground?" in the sense of rendering the ground useless. In Rom. vi. 6, "that the body of sin might be *destroyed*," that is, rendered powerless. In Rom. iii. 3, "shall their unbelief *make* the faith of God *without effect*," that is, render null, abrogate. In 1 Cor. ii. 6, "yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that *come to nought*." In 2 Thess. ii. 8, "whom the Lord shall *destroy* with the brightness of His coming." This destruction referred to will embrace that of both the beast and the false prophet spoken of in Rev. xix. 20, and which consists of being cast into the lake of fire, and where *they are still found* 1000 *years afterwards* (Rev. xx. 10), hence clearly shewing that the word is not used in the sense of annihilation. The destruction *occurs at His coming*, and yet 1000 years after the object or objects of the vengeance are found still in their punishment. If it meant "whom the Lord shall *annihilate* with the brightness of His coming," it is quite clear 1000 years after they would not be found in existence. The interpretations of these men are puerile in the extreme. In Gal. v. 4, "Christ is *become of no effect* unto you," we have the word again. How senseless any such thought as annihilation as being the meaning of the word, is thus shewn to be. It is just as much so in Heb. ii. 14, the passage we have had in hand. The third Scripture we have to consider is that from 1 Cor. xv. 26, "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." The arguments sought to be founded on this passage are subversive even of what annihilationists do hold, viz., that a measure of punishment in hell does await both the wicked and Satan. It is said that since death is said to be the LAST ENEMY, *and is to be destroyed*, no enemies can exist after the same has been accomplished, and that, unless destroyed means annihilation, enemies would still be in existence, and the passage would be

untrue. For a moment let us accept their notions as to the "last enemy" and the force of the word destroyed, and see where they will land us. The judgment upon this "last enemy" is spoken of as taking place at "the end, when He, that is Christ, shall have delivered up *the kingdom* to God, even the Father" (v. 24), that is at the close of the millennial age and at the setting up of the great white throne, as seen in Rev. xx. But, then, it is at this very time that the *wicked dead* are raised and come into judgment, and have their portion allotted to them in the lake of fire, Satan also receiving his portion therein too. Now, if the annihilationists' idea of the meaning of the "last enemy" and force of the word destroyed be correct, how comes it that at *this very identical time*, when death is being destroyed, we have the wicked and Satan in existence, and about to be cast into the lake of fire, even according to the annihilationists' creed, anyhow for a certain period, and that *after* the destruction of the "*last enemy*." Has, therefore, the casting of Satan and the wicked into the lake of fire caused them to *cease to be enemies?* and how has the destruction of this "last enemy" proved the annihilation of the wicked and Satan? The fact is, the *very contrary is the case*, for it is the destruction of *death* that *has caused the coming forth from their graves* of all not raised before then, and death and *hades* (mark, *death* and *hades* are spoken of as two distinct powers, *both* of *which* are cast into the lake of fire, Rev. xx. 14) having lost all power over them, are spoken of as being cast into the lake of fire, in which now the raised dead, all whose names are not found in the book of life, and Satan find also their punishment, and enemies are found in existence after the destruction of the "last enemy." It is clear then that such interpretations are absolutely foolish, and overthrow the very thing annihilationists are so anxious to prove, in fact like all the interpretations of these men on this subject, they prove to be mere air bubbles, which only require to be touched in order to their dissolution. But we will now look at this passage and endeavour to ascertain what its true teaching really is. In the first place, the word rendered destroyed is precisely the same as that in Heb. ii. 14, and which we have previously had under consideration, and it is also used in verse 24, in the passage "when

he shall *have put down* all rule and all authority and power," and has no such signification as that of annihilation. In the next place, death, which is here spoken of as the "last enemy," can hardly be said to be GOD'S enemy; it is a power *under* which *men* lie, as the executor of *God's judgment* upon sin, the wages of sin being death, according to Rom. vi. Satan being the agent would not affect this, as he can only wield the power in subjection to God's will. It is an enemy to man, and to Him in whose hand the sceptre is found during the millennial age, inasmuch as long as it has power it is an hindrance to the full display of His victory over Satan, who, in Heb. ii. 14, is said to have the power thereof. In its manifestations as regards the body, it is only connected *with the present scene*. It has its future along with hades, to which it introduces in the lake of fire. What death and hades are in themselves we are doubtless but little acquainted with, their both being spoken of as being *cast into the lake of fire* should not escape our notice. It is then as the last adversary to the display of the complete victory of Christ over Satan, that it is spoken of as the "last enemy," and since *all rule* and *all authority* and power have to be put down by Him, this power comes in at the end of *His millennial reign*, to be dealt with by Him prior to the delivering up of the kingdom to God, and the general judgment of Satan and the "rest of the dead" (Rev. xx. 5); and it is *the pulling down of this power* that brings on to the scene the rest of the dead, wherever their previous place may have been, *and that for final judgment as men no longer capable of dying*, death, as we have *in this scene* witnessed it, being *for ever destroyed* by the power of Christ. Instead, therefore, of the passage teaching anything as to the destruction of the wicked, it teaches *the very reverse*, viz., that they are *thereby again brought into visible existence* to receive their final doom, as we see in Rev., in the lake of fire—the second death, and which *second death* IS *the lake of fire itself*, and not extinction or annihilation at all. This is very solemn and terrible, and men do well to weigh the consequences of impenitent, unrepentant, rebellion against and rejection of God. Surely He will not be trifled with, neither can He lie. That it is by the power of Christ the rest of the dead come forth, is shewn in

verse 22, where it states "for as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive." We are not ignorant of the general interpretations put on this passage, and as long as the same be not overstrained we do not object thereto, but the subject that the apostle is discussing is clearly that of actual death, as we speak and think of death, and actual resurrection, as we speak and think of the same, that is as both have to do with the body, and we cannot but think that its primary application has reference to the universal death of the human race through the fall of Adam, and the universal resurrection thereof by the power of Christ. The question is, having been raised by the power of Christ, through the destruction of death, what becomes of the lost? We must plainly affirm that Scripture teaches neither that they will be saved nor annihilated, but have their portion for ever in the lake of fire, and which is a *totally* different thing. Eternal denizens of that place there will assuredly be besides Satan and his angels; *who* they will be from amongst men, we are not now considering. Were it not so, the Scriptures would be proved to be the most false and deceptive of all writings, for it is as plainly affirmed, as we shall see shortly, as that God is love. We have seen then that death having been destroyed or put down, its victims are necessarily released from its power, and instead of being annihilated thereby regain *their visible existence* in their raised bodies, and that in order to their appearance before *the terrible great white throne.* How different all this is to what such interpreters as we are dealing with would have us to receive. The three next passages we must consider very briefly; they are all as utterly misapplied and falsely interpreted as those we have considered. From Col. i. 20, "And, having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself; whether things in earth, or things in heaven," both universalism and annihilationism are sought to be deduced. Both theories, however, are at once destroyed by the simple fact that hell (gehenna) is not mentioned at all, and since both universalists and annihilationists hold (in fact, they must deny Scripture point blank to escape therefrom) that punishment in hell is for a season the lot of the wicked, it would be necessary for a corroboration of their theories to be found in this passage,

that hell and its denizens should be mentioned as being reconciled likewise, whereas it is only things *on the earth (epi tees gees)* and in the heavens that are referred to. In Phil. ii., where enforced universal recognition of the Lordship of Christ is spoken of, not only heavenly and earthly beings are mentioned, but *infernal beings* also. The latter are thus brought to bow to Him as the victims of His power put forth in their punishment, and are neither reconciled nor annihilated. It has actually been argued by one (probably many) warm advocate of the annihilation theory, and to whose writings we have referred, that this passage teaches the annihilation of Satan, and his angels and the wicked, since *all things* IN *earth* being spoken of as being reconciled, and hell being in the centre of the earth (we do not stop to enquire as to the character of the proofs of this), hell itself must be reconciled too, but the expression being *all things*, and not *all beings*, Satan, his angels, and the wicked MUST BE first annihilated. Can folly reach beyond this? Surely it would have been well for such teachers first to have consulted their Greek Testaments before venturing upon such interpretations as these. The simple fact that the expression is "*epi tees gees*," *on* or *upon* the earth, and not *in* the earth at all, swamps the whole theory in an instant, even supposing the assertion as to hell (gehenna) being in the centre of the earth was true, but which we do not admit until proved. That there will be a restitution of all things, according to Acts iii., and everything be restored to order under a new rule, is certain. But the guilty remaining in their sins will not be within the sphere of this blessedness, both the heavens and the earth (during the millennium as to its manifestation) will be purged from the power and presence of evil, there will be new heavens and a new earth, and there shall be no more sin *therein*, and this through the virtue of that blood whereby peace has been made and God glorified. It is blessed to know that because of this blood the vilest sinner *need* not perish, *need* not be found without the sphere of that blessedness of eternal duration, for all through grace made partakers thereof. The lake of fire and its denizens come not within the sphere of this reconciliation, the blood is of no value as to them, it has been despised, trampled under foot, and the God of Heaven, who *is love*, defied and

spurned. *It* remains the eternal abode of SUCH. There is no escape. All the scoffings of infidelity, and, alas! the worse than weakness of even Christians, will not suffice to *create* one. The revelation of God as to it will remain and cannot be shaken.

In considering the next passage, viz., Rev. xxi. 4, "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away." We will quote a few passages (examining also the same) from the previously mentioned, in page 17, "Six lectures on life and immortality in Christ only," as a specimen of the style of arguments and interpretations resorted to by annihilationists in defence of their doctrine. The writer says in reference to this passage, page 79, "This scene will take place after the millennium, after the final judgment, after death and hell are cast into the lake of fire, where they will be consumed," takes place when God says, 'Behold, I make all things new,' when He says, 'the former things are passed away.' *Then* God will wipe away *all tears* from the eyes of men, but this can never be, if in hell men are to weep for ever. *Then* there is to be no more pain, but this can never be, if sinners are to suffer excruciating pain for ever. *Then* there is to be no more death, but this can never be, if sinners are to die a never-dying death. We see, therefore, that the theology of the day runs counter to God's word. Nevertheless, *it is certain that there will be no more tears, no more death, and no more pain at the time God refers to*, notwithstanding man's theology. This absence of tears, pain, and death, will be an established and accomplished fact, not only as regards heaven, but as regards earth, and as regards hell, because all evil will have been destroyed;" and, further, in the same page, "I would observe that though the portion of the lost is named in the eighth verse, that is not done to shew *that they will be in the lake of fire after the transactions of our text have taken place.*" Now let the reader compare the foregoing with the following passages from pages 48—51, and see what a mass of contradiction and absurdity the writer falls into. After quoting various passages of Scripture, the writer says, "From the above Scriptures we see that the wicked and the hypocrites *will undergo the damnation of hell.*

From Rev. xxi. 8, we gather that *hell and the lake of fire are the same*, the place of the final end of the sinner." "We must, therefore, conclude that *every responsible child* of Adam will hereafter have *his portion in heaven or in hell.* This we are bound to believe, if we believe the Bible to be the Word of God." "*How long or how short a time* guilty sinners will be in hell I know not, *some will exist there longer than others*, but in the end they will all perish." "No doubt we may safely say, in keeping with what we have already seen of God's word, that those who are the least criminal will soon be overtaken by 'the second death,' and in this way then suffering will cease. *Others will be in the lake of fire* '*unto ages of ages*,' the literal rendering of 'for ever and ever,' but *as time moves on* the inmates of hell will be lessened in number, one after another the souls and bodies of guilty sinners will be destroyed, and will return to their original elements." Some of the passages in italics are so put by ourselves to draw the special attention of our readers thereto. "The suffering of the lost will therefore differ both in intensity and *in duration*." "By degrees the groans of the lost will grow fainter, and the wailing of their agonies become more feeble, *until at last* all the writhings of despair become hushed in eternal silence." "Then (speaking of Satan) only himself and his countless host of fallen angels will be the occupants of that everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels. But they will not exist for ever." "Probably the devil himself *will be the last* denizen of hell," &c., &c. We have quoted thus at length to give our readers a fair specimen of what these men have to say on this most solemn of all subjects. We will now seek to expose its fallacies and contradictions. From the quotations from pages 48, 51, it will be seen that the writer fully accepts the fact of there being punishment for the lost, and that the punishment itself consists in *having a portion in the lake of fire*, but, in his view, for a *limited period* only, but still *for periods* varying according to the guilt of each; that after all sinful men have been annihilated, Satan and his angels *still remain* in the lake of fire for a *further period*, Satan himself being the last to be put out of existence. But then from page 79, we have seen that he argues that the state of things presented in Rev. xxi. 4, takes

place *after the millennium and final judgment*, and that then all suffering, as regards heaven, earth, or hell, will have ceased. and that consignment to the lake of fire *itself follows* the millennium, and the final judgment of the great white throne. But how can this be? unless we imagine that *during the punishment of the lost and Satan and his angels*, an interval occurs, during which God awaits the expiration of their term of punishment, prior to introducing the scene of blessedness mentioned in connection with the new heaven and new earth; and that the redeemed are during that period kept waiting *somewhere* until the term expires. But then apart from the new heaven and new earth, where are they to dwell, the first having *passed away*, as seen in chap. xx? Any supposition as this involves flying in the very face of the plainest teachings of Scripture, which shew that the millennium having passed, the session of judgment having ended, and the sentences of judgment been put into execution, the state of eternal blessedness is *at once introduced*, and verse 4 of chap. xxi. is accomplished, *whilst the denizens of the lake of fire are undergoing their punishment*, yea, only just COMMENCING the same, and consequently the wiping away of all tears, there being no more death, sorrow, crying, or pain, have no application whatever to such, and which is actually the case. One would have thought that a child even would not fall into such blunders as these. Let any fair honest mind read verse 3 in connection with verse 4, and say whether the scope and meaning of verse 4 be not plain and simple enough. Verse 3 runs thus, "And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold the tabernacle of *God is with men*, and He will *dwell with them*, and *they* shall be His people, and God Himself shall be *with them* and be *their* God;" and then verse 4, "And God shall wipe away all tears from THEIR eyes," &c. *What application has this to the lost in hell?* Absolutely none. Is God going to dwell *with them*, and be *their* God? As to the attempt to limit the duration of the punishment of the lost, we shall have to say to that further on. In addition to anything already said, we merely remark here that *time* having ceased to be, and the state being *eternal*, to talk of various PERIODS of endurance is absurd.

Our last passage, and we are glad to have arrived thereat, is

from 1 Cor. xv. 28, "And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all." The interpretation of this passage and the arguments founded thereon are as fallacious as all *the rest*. The same writer we have previously quoted from, says, in reference to this passage, page 80, "Christ is here represented as delivering up the kingdom and sovereignty to God the Father. At *the end* of the *millennium* He will do so, all things will have been subjected to Him, and death and hades will have been cast into the lake of fire; *the universe of God shall have been delivered from the presence* of *evil*." But, again, we ask, how can this be? The judgment and award of consignment to the lake of fire, even according to this writer, do not take place till *after* the millennium, and also according to him, *duration* of punishment for an unknown period *is to be a fact*, how then will the delivering up of the kingdom to the Father, and God becoming all in all at the end of the millennium, secure the universe of God being delivered from the presence of evil in the sense this writer means? *The lake of fire will only just have commenced to be peopled*, and the sufferings of the lost will be continuing "for various periods" *after* the giving up of the kingdom, and the fact of God becoming "all in all" affects *their* condition in no way whatever. Their sentence has been previously pronounced *irrespective of any such consummation*, and the same consummation taking place in no way interferes with the nature, character, and period of *their* suffering. God becomes all in all, and a state of eternal blessedness is introduced, Satan, his angels, and the lost being in the lake *at the same time*, and so it is not at all necessary, in order to this blessed consummation, that annihilation should have put them out of existence, and if not for a period, the writer terms "unto ages of ages," page 50, *why not for eternity?* The fact is, the expression the writer terms "ages of ages" simply means eternity, and such is the character of their punishment. We think that we have now fairly accomplished the first part of our undertaking, viz., that of examining passages relied upon by annihilationists as establishing their doctrines, testing their interpretations, and exposing the fallacies thereof. We now proceed to what remains, viz., to

shew that Scripture teaches most unmistakeably the very reverse of their doctrine, and absolutely insists on the eternal denizenship of the lake of fire by Satan and the lost.

In approaching this part of our subject we do so with the painful conviction that in the case of the avowed infidel, and even the Christian for a season led to imbibe infidel notions and ideas, that it is almost hopeless expecting to convince either of their error, since in the one case the word of God is openly and determinately rejected, and in the other it has so far lost its hold on the conscience as to allow of mere conceptions and notions being tenaciously adhered to in spite of the plainest and most solemn declarations thereof, adverse thereto, yea, even the twisting, wresting, and explaining away the same declarations, even when the so doing necessarily involves the branding of the Son of God Himself with deceit, ignorance, and falsehood. Alas! alas! that we should have fallen upon days so degenerate as to find even Christians so pusillanimous as rather than face the storm of infidelity, which threatens to overwhelm Christendom, and seek by God's help to check and stem the same, on the contrary giving way at every point and sacrificing foundation truths, rather than miss a fleeting popularity and bear *the cross*, their only legitimate property in this sin-plagued and death-stricken scene. That in the case of one's brethren and sisters in Christ for a season led astray, the day may speedily come when the WORD may once more regain its hold and authority both over conscience and heart, is our earnest and hearty desire and prayer. If any of our readers should be wavering in their allegiance to this WORD, we trust that the perusal of this paper may be used to the steadying of their souls, and leading them to hold fast by that which *alone is truth*, and so preserve them from being carried away by the subtle devices of the enemy into quagmires and pit-falls, to their own inevitable disaster, confusion, and shame, and must not we also say *irreparable loss*, notwithstanding the sovereignty of that divine grace which secures their everlasting salvation. With mere popular statements on the subject of eternal punishment, we have nothing to do. That very great confusion and darkness reigns in the minds of many Christians on the whole subject cannot be doubted, but when the main

truth is adhered to in these popular statements, we infinitely prefer the same to the immoral deceits inseparably linked with all the attempts we have ever yet seen to get rid of the plain and unhesitating declarations of Scripture thereon. Our task lies in proving that the doctrine of eternal judgment is indelibly written on the pages of Scripture. In order to this we shall simply follow this course, viz., First, examine the words everlasting, for ever and ever, &c., and their use, and then quote various portions of Scripture in which the doctrine is plainly taught, examining and refuting the attempts made to turn the same from their true import. As for the meaning of the words and expressions used in the Greek, and translated "eternal, everlasting *(aionios)*, for ever *(eis ton aiona)*, for ever and ever" *(eis tous aionas ton aionon)*, we are not aware of a single passage, either in the Septuagint or the New Testament, where the sense and scope of the word or expression is not easily determined by the context itself, or which need trouble or confuse any averagely-intelligent and honest Christian. It is beyond dispute that wherever the words are found in connection with God Himself, nought but eternity, in its fullest possible sense, is meant; as, for instance, in the following passages:—

Ps. xc. 2: "Even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God" *(tou aionos eos tou aionos)*.

Ps. xciii. 2: "Thy throne is established of old: thou art from everlasting" *(apo tou aionos)*

And in Gen. xxi. 33, and Rom. xvi. 26, we have precisely the same expressions, thus, "And Abraham called there on the name of the Lord, *the everlasting God*" *(theos aionios)*, and "The commandment of the everlasting God" *(tou aioniou theou)*.

Rom. ix. 5: "And of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever" *(eis tous aionas)*.

Heb. xiii. 8: "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever" *(eis tous aionas)*.

Ps. xlv. 6: "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever" *(eis aiona aionos)*

Gal. i. 4, 5: "According to the will of God and our Father, to whom be glory for ever and ever" *(eis tous aionas ton aionon)*.

Heb. i. 8: "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever" *(eis ton aiona tou aionos)*.

In other passages the words and expressions are necessarily governed by the subject to which the context refers. Where

merely the subject has reference to *time*, the scope is limited to the same, but where it has to do with eternity, *no limit is possible.* For instance, the Hebrew servant was to have his ear bored, and serve his master *for ever*—Exodus xxi. 6 *(eis tou aiona)*—clearly, merely for the term of his natural life; and where Moses speaks of statutes being *for ever*, it simply means as long as the ordinances were to be observed; also where the land of Palestine is spoken of as having been given to the Israelites as an inheritance *for ever*, the period clearly does not extend beyond the millennium, for then the earth and all that is therein is to be burnt up, and new heavens and a new earth to be introduced. As to what the eternal state may introduce in connection with the new earth we know but little. We should, however, have no hesitation in throwing upon a disputant the burden of proving that the for ever in this case does not reach to the eternal state. In Isaiah xxxiii. 14, *everlasting* burnings *(ton topon ton aionion)* are spoken of, "who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings." The context being highly figurative, we do not press this passage as being eternal in its full sense, as it may only have had reference to judgment earthly then threatened, whilst perhaps at the same time reaching in thought beyond. The same may be said of Isaiah lxvi. 24, where the worm that shall not die, and the fire that shall not be quenched, are spoken of, the period during which the effect of the judgment is witnessed being the millennial age. We must not, however, forget that the same expressions are used by our Lord in speaking *of a future state* and the lake of fire. The eternal state, when time shall have ceased to be, is only fully revealed in the New Testament, and where we find the words and expressions we are considering having their full meaning, as clearly evidenced by the various contexts and their subjects. But this leads us to the consideration of passages where the eternal state is, beyond doubt, referred to, and that in connection with the punishment of the lost. We merely first remark on the authority of able Greek scholars that the etymology of the word rendered everlasting, eternal, &c., as early as the time of Aristotle, is *(aienon)* always existing, and which is sufficient to settle its force wherever found in connection with God or the eternal state.

The eternal character of all that cannot be classed as part or parcel of *this scene* is clearly demonstrated by the assertion in 2 Cor. iv. 18, where the Apostle, contrasting things seen and things unseen, states of the former that they are temporal *(proskaira)*, continuing for a limited time, transient, and of the latter that *they are eternal (aionia)*. We just notice that the term "things seen" clearly has reference to everything embraced in the world *of the natural man* (1 Cor. ii. 14), the sphere wherein alone *he* ranges; whilst the "things unseen," the things known only by revelation, and that on the principle of faith, outside this present scene with which *time has to do*, are eternal, of endless existence. This one passage alone is sufficient to establish the eternal duration of any future condition. But we now proceed to shew, from the consideration of a few passages of Scripture, that the doctrine of eternal punishment, the same being the lake of fire, is indelibly written in its pages, and demands the credence of every soul subject to God and the word of His grace, and that none can reject it (at the same time professing to receive Scripture as from God) without practically giving Him the lie, and charging Him with seeking to arouse needless fears, and resorting to deception in the use of terms calculated to convey false impressions on subjects of the most momentous import to all His creatures. One thing will appear at the outset, viz., that the fact of eternal punishment existing, and the purpose also existing on God's part to make us acquainted therewith, He could not have used expressions more capable of conveying the same to our minds than He has done. In selecting passages we purposely avoid any that present the slightest dubity as to their real import, either through symbolical character or otherwise. For instance, we avoid Matt. iii. 12, "Whose fan is in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." We do not avoid this passage because we ourselves doubt for a moment the truth as to eternal punishment being set forth *in principle* therein, but because it appears to us that its *primary application* has hardly reference to eternity at all, and because we think it to be unwise to quote passages to establish the doctrine which do not irresistibly bear on their very surface the doctrine

itself. Again, we avoid such a passage as that in Rev. xiv. 10, 11, because of its highly figurative and symbolical character, not again that we for a moment doubt its real import, but because an adversary may, we think, fairly claim something on account thereof. For instance, who would seek to enforce the *literal* application of the statement "he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone *in the* PRESENCE of the holy angels, and *in the* PRESENCE of the lamb," &c., and which would involve the idea of their being *ever living witnesses* of the torments of the damned, that is, *continuous beholders* thereof. We are aware that the word rendered "*in the presence*" differs from that rendered in 2 Thess. i., "*from the presence* of the Lord," and doubtless this has its import, but we merely refer to the rendering in our translation as illustrating the figurative character of the passage itself. The fact is we are in no need whatever to apply to such passages in support of the revealed doctrine of eternal punishment, and therefore we do not do so. The passages we shall discuss are Matt. xii. 31, 32, with the parallel passages in the other Gospels. Matt. xxv. 46, Mark ix. 43, 44, 2 Thess. i. 9, and Rev. xxi. 8, and we shall shew that each of these passages irresistibly affirms the doctrine. And first as to Matt. xii. 31, 32, Mark iii. 28, 29, and Luke xii. 10. On reference to page 16 it will be seen that we have already referred to these passages, but we do so again here that we may array in one solid phalanx a testimony to the doctrine we are establishing that cannot be overturned. If our readers will refer to page 16 they will find the passages fully quoted. In contemplating the declarations made in these passages by the Son of God, the One who could say of Himself *I* am THE TRUTH, one is amazed at any one professing to believe *in Him as such*, hesitating for a moment as to the reception of this doctrine, however much the same may clash with his own reasonings and ideas, for one thing is clear at a glance, viz., that *He* has stated there is a sin which men are capable of committing for which there is *no forgiveness*, and that the consequences thereof are *eternal judgment*, thus, "But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness *(eis ton aiona)*, but is in danger of eternal judgment" Mark iii. 29). We must refer our readers to pages 16 and 17

for our observations on the impossibility of annihilation being true in the face of such statements. We limit ourselves here to observing that the Scriptures are clear as to the unpardonable sin being committed by some, yea, a certain class, as seen in Jude, and even supposing there were only *one individual* guilty thereof it would be sufficient to necessitate the actual judgment itself. But then men try to evade the force of the expression eternal judgment, in fact, what truth of God that they do not like will not men, and also even Christians, oftimes seek to evade? We have seen in a paper entitled "The Christian World," some letters published therein, and written by a Mr. White, an attempt in this direction, even as follows. In his attempt to disprove the force of Matt. xxv. 26, he states, "That which is eternal is not always everlasting; eternal judgment is not everlasting *judging*, but the eternal effect of a judgment; eternal redemption is not *everlasting redeeming*, but the eternal effect of an act of redemption." What special pleading is this? In the first place he commences with a blunder in stating that "eternal is not always everlasting," the fact being just the very reverse, viz., that eternal can never be aught else than everlasting, and even something more, since it involves in its true sense that which can only be said of God, viz., self-existence and no beginning, as well as no ending, whilst everlasting can never be eternal in that sense, since it necessarily supposes a beginning, that is, it lasts for ever from its commencement. And then as to the statement that "everlasting judgment is not everlasting *judging*, nor everlasting redemption everlasting *redeeming*." Let me ask, does judgment simply involve a vocal pronunciation of the sentence resulting from the judgment arrived at? or are not the judgment and the execution of the sentence inseparably linked together? Of what value the judgment unless the sentence be enforced? When once the judgment has been arrived at and sentence pronounced, the *judging* has ceased, and all that remains is the infliction of the sentence, the party *judged* having to undergo the same. During the time that an earthly judge is hearing evidence for and against the prisoner brought before him, and sifting the same, he may be said to be in the act of *judging*, but when once all has

been heard and his mind definitely determined as to the guilt or innocence of the prisoner, his judgment may be said to be formed, and all that remains is for him to express the same in connection with the sentence attached thereto. To say that during the period that the sentence is being executed he is himself *judging* the prisoner, would be as great an absurdity as we have ever heard of. The effect of the judgment, whatever it may have been, is simply that the one judged has to undergo the sentence, and if the same be imprisonment for life, in prison for life he is found. The condition of the one judged will be found to correspond with the position into which he has been brought through the judgment delivered, and if the same *be just* it cannot be recalled. It is so as to the blasphemer against the Holy Ghost. He falls under eternal judgment, gets into a condition from which there is no recovery, his sentence being final, and that sentence is the lake of fire for ever, hence he must be found *there* for ever, the eternity of that condition being insured by the very fact of the sentence, resulting from the judgment itself, being the lake of fire for ever. And then as to the other statement about "redemption," &c. The effect of redemption is that it brings into a condition of everlasting blessedness, and the one redeemed remains in *the everlasting possession* thereof—it is the result of the completed work of redemption wrought out on the cross, the one redeemed eternally enjoying the fruits thereof, as on the other hand the one that is lost eternally suffers the consequences of his rejection of the same work. The effect in the one case must be found to correspond with the judgment delivered, in the other with the reward bestowed. To talk of annihilation being eternal punishment or eternal suffering is beyond absurd. With our previous remarks on these Scriptures in pages 16 and 17, this will suffice for our consideration of the same.

Our next passage is from Matt. xxv. 46, "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." Now here we have a statement by the Son of God Himself, which we maintain admits of no evasion, carrying, as it does, on the very face of it the doctrine of the eternity of misery for those that come beneath this sentence, as also just the

reverse for those who are partakers of the blessing. No honest person for a moment thinks of denying that the word used in reference to life is precisely the same as that used in reference to punishment, the *fact thereof* being too indisputable to admit of any denial. The ways in which the force of the passage is sought to be evaded we shall presently investigate. Now, what purpose could our Lord have had in putting the duration of punishment on a par with the duration of life, other than that of giving us to understand that *both were alike?* and that as the reward was eternal, so the punishment was eternal also. Could He possibly have used language better calculated to convey this impression? In using such language, and characterising the punishment itself as that of everlasting fire, as He does in verse 41, and as being similar to that in store for the devil and his angels, *eternity in misery not being a fact*, could not He in justice be charged with using language calculated to deceive, or, at least, with ignorance in making statements not in accordance with truth? We do not ourselves see how it is possible honestly to avoid the plain force of our Lord's language in this portion, a wresting or explaining away of the same being the only means of doing so. And this leads us to an investigation of some of the modes whereby it is sought to be turned aside from its primary import, and in doing so we shall select the most plausible of any attempts we have yet seen, and made by the most respectable of the annihilation theorists. It is satisfactory to find that the determined advocate of annihilation, to whose writings on this subject in "The Christian World" we have once previously referred, admits, in his attempt to evade the force of this passage, that the literal translation of the words in the Greek are "punishment eternal and life eternal," and so far so good; but then he immediately seeks to avoid its force by an argument which we have previously considered in page 37, and which we must maintain is utterly unsound. He also admits that this passage "has had a deeper influence on all human thought and feeling on things divine than any other six words published among men, except, perhaps, 'thou art Peter,'" and surely it is no wonder that they have done so, since it is impossible to accept the One who spoke them as being "THE TRUTH," and at the same time

believe Him to have spoken falsely or deceitfully here. The plain inference to be drawn from the statement is unmistakable, and leaves no room for misunderstanding. This writer then proceeds to give his explanation of the passage, in favor, of course, of annihilation. His arguments run thus, viz., that the language in this case must be interpreted by the plain sense of the general language used in Matthew's Gospel on the subject of future punishment, and he then quotes from that gospel all the passages where reference is made to future punishment, summing up with the inference that the general tenor of these passages require that the term everlasting punishment in Matt. xxv., must be interpreted "so long as God wills," and that God's will is revealed therein to be only for such time as "the penalty is fully paid, that penalty being capital punishment, *death, perishing, destruction of body and soul in Gehenna, loss of life*, words that bear only one signification, viz., that of extinction of life." Supposing we accept the argument as to the principle to be adopted in interpreting the passage, can we also accept the inference deduced? Certainly not. In the first place we cannot admit that the passages referred to teach extinction of being, and we assert that the writer absurdly misinterprets some of the passages themselves, and of which we will directly give an instance; and secondly, we cannot accept the reasoning, since it appears to us to involve in an insuperable difficulty. In all the passages quoted where the words "destruction and destroy" occur, the writer seeks to enforce the meaning as being nothing short of extinction of being, but without any just grounds whatever, since precisely the same word is used for the LOST sheep of the house of Israel in Matt. xv. 24, and for the destruction of old bottles into which new wine has been put, as seen in Matt. ix. 17, and it is clear that the LOST sheep, after whom the Lord came, were not extinct, otherwise his coming *must have been a fruitless errand indeed*, and in the case of the bottles, their being destroyed did not in the least affect the existence of the materials of which they were composed, but simply referred to their future uselessness any longer for the purpose for which they had been made. To illustrate his points the writer, in quoting Matt. x. 39, 40, where our Lord says that

"he who findeth his life shall destroy it," says "that is, *he shall destroy hereafter the life he saved here*," but how is this? On what authority does this writer found his assertion that *the life* here *subject to death* is ever resumed? The present life, as connected with the first Adam, is forfeited, hence death; it is also a perishable life. We refer merely to what we all understand by human life, as witnessed in this scene, that which is subject to actual death, not that part of man which, while *he is still alive here*, is spoken of as being *dead* in trespasses and sins (Eph. ii.), &c. The *life* that the lost have in the *resurrection* to judgment, they have by the power of Christ put forth for that purpose, see page 25, and is no longer a perishable thing like the present, or connected with this scene, which is *temporal*. The state then is *eternal*, as seen in 2 Cor. iv. Were the life of the lost in resurrection merely a resumption of *this life*, the same could *not exist in the lake of fire for five minutes*, whereas annihilationists even admit a long period of endurance of the same. Such interpretations as these will not do at all. And then as to the reasoning about the penalty being "capital punishment, extinction of life," &c. If everlasting fire and everlasting punishment meant extinction of being, why did not our Lord say so? It appears to us to be a gross absurdity to talk of everlasting fire and everlasting punishment meaning extinction of being. How can they mean anything of the sort? The *everlasting punishment is the everlasting fire, as an everlasting abode, not extinction of being at all.* Where is a word in Scripture to be found about this DOUBLE PUNISHMENT—first of the lake of fire, and then extinction of being, and that too *after the penalty has been fully paid, for the lake of fire is the penalty, not extinction.* We should have thought that the *penalty being fully paid* the victims would be free to come out, not have extinction of being ADDED after the penalty had been paid; whilst *if extinction of being be the punishment*, why the lake of fire at all? He also quotes 2 Thess. i, "Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction," &c., saying that the words *(aionion olethron)* mean nothing short of utter abolition, but if so, why has not the Spirit of God said so in plain language here and elsewhere, viz., thus, "shall be punished with torment in hell

for a time, and extinction of being at the close." Such language could not have left any confusion or difficulty in any one's mind. The fact is, the interpretations of these men are unsatisfactory from beginning to end, and remove no honest difficulties whatever, since torment in the lake of fire for any given period only is just as incomprehensible to our *natural* mind as being consistent with what in our fallen and blinded state we think necessary to the requirements of God as a God who is love, as an eternity in the same.

Another writer, to whom we have previously in this paper referred, seeks to evade the force of this passage by arguing that the Greek word translated punishment, viz., *kolasin*, and which only occurs in one other passage in the New Testament, viz., in 1 John iv. 18, and is there translated torment, "fear hath torment," means only cutting off and deprivation of life, and in 1 John iv. the expression "fear hath torment" only means that fear hath deprivation of experimental blessedness, which properly belongs to the Christian, who knows the perfection of God's love towards himself. Anything more unfounded than this assertion as to the meaning of the word as used in the New Testament cannot exist, nor anything more ridiculously absurd than the interpretations sought to be put on these passages. In the first place as to the word "*kolasin*" itself. On reference to our Greek lexicon we find the meaning of the word "*kolasis*" given thus, viz., "chastisement, punishment, painful disquietude, torment," and the verb "*kolazö*" to curtail, coerce, chastise, punish. The noun "*kolasis*" only occurs in the two passages before us, but the verb is used in Acts iv. 21 and 2 Pet. ii. 9. Let us look at these two passages, and see how this *asserted* meaning of deprivation will appear. Acts iv., "So when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding nothing how they *might punish them*, because of the people." Would any sensible person venture to argue that the word "*kolazö*," translated *punish here*, means "deprivation?" Would not those before whom the Apostles were brought, and who here *threatened them*, have inflicted *corporeal punishment*, had they dared? And if so, would not the same necessarily have involved *suffering?* Upon the next occasion when brought

before the council (chap. v. 40) they were "beaten," and corporeal *suffering* characterized their punishment. And again, in 2 Peter ii. 9, "The Lord knoweth how to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be *punished*." Is not the primary meaning of the word as plain and simple as possible? It is so both in Matt. xxv. and 1 John iv., and the far-fetched attempts at evasion made, only expose the weakness and emptiness of the theories that require to be upheld by any such courses. The assertion that in Matt. xxv., it means they go into everlasting deprivation of life, appears to us to be a simple wresting of Scripture. The sentence is "Depart, ye cursed, INTO EVERLASTING FIRE," and the *everlasting fire* is the *everlasting punishment*, not *deprivation of life at all*. Will this writer venture to assert (probably he may, for his work appears to us to be full of the most amazing assertions, having no foundation whatever IN FACTS) that the everlasting fire is not torment and suffering, but merely *deprivation of life*. If not, the punishment being clearly the fire itself, what other sense can the word have other than that of *suffering*, *painful disquietude*, *torment*, &c.? That such is its meaning is clear as noonday. And then as to 1 John iv., what can be more unwarranted than the assertion that the expression "fear hath torment" merely means "deprivation of experimental blessedness," &c.? Did ever any person, experiencing the sensation of fear, find the same to be aught else than that of disquietude, suffering, torment, not merely a deprivation of blessedness, but *actual active suffering*, mental here of course, though the whole body be affected thereby, just in proportion to the intensity of the same? A mere deprivation of a measure of blessedness that might be enjoyed, does not *necessarily* engender *fear*. The same may be found along with *passive indifference* thereto; but where *fear* is present, suffering is necessarily present too, and suffering IS torment, whether bearable or unbearable. It is so in this case referred to by the Apostle, and where the perfect love of God, as displayed in the gift and work of Christ, and its results, not being apprehended, and that as being *ever* towards *the believer*, and where the truth as to the believer's completeness in Christ, through his union with Him in death and resurrection, not

having been seen, and faith not being in exercise in reference thereto, *fear or disquietude* is more or less necessarily present, that is to say, the very opposite of abiding peace, and this fear is a thing that *is felt*, and it causes *torment*, induces *unrest*, is, in fact, *an actual sensation of a painful character*, and not merely a deprivation of blessedness; it is that, but something more also. It *causes the latter*, but *is in itself the former*. Fear hath torment, that is suffering, the *amount of suffering* being proportionate to *the degree of fear*. The word "*kolasis*" means suffering here, and it means suffering in Matt. xxv., and it is useless seeking to avoid its force in any such way, and which way appears to us to be barely honest. There is one other statement by this writer we must briefly notice, and it is this. He says, "If punishment signified endless misery, the passage would have been 'these into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into happiness eternal.'" He then concedes that misery does go with the first and happiness with the second, but denies that such truth is taught therein. Now surely this is an astounding statement for any intelligent person to make. The words addressed to those on the right hand are "Come, YE BLESSED of my Father, *inherit the kingdom prepared for you* from the foundation of the world," whilst to those on the left the words are "Depart, YE CURSED, into EVERLASTING FIRE" &c., and the punishment spoken of at the end is the everlasting fire and nought else, and yet in the very teeth of such statements this writer, counting upon the credulity of his hearers (for he has delivered lectures with these statements, as well as written them) and also his readers, contends that no such truth as that of happiness and misery is taught therein. Can bold and mere empty assertion reach beyond this?

Our next passage is from Mark ix. 42—50, "Into the fire that never shall be quenched," "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." Here again we have language capable of conveying but one impression to any simple minds, and we have Him concerning whom His enemies were compelled to admit that none spake such gracious words as He, and who could proclaim Himself as "THE TRUTH," repeating this most solemn statement no less than THREE times. In fact, this blessed One Himself, the revealer of the Father, the One whom

NO ONE knows but the Father (Luke x. 22), during His ministry spake *more* of the doom of the lost, and insisted by the use of the most stringent and unmistakable language upon the eternal and irrevocable character of their doom than any inspired prophet or teacher ever did. Supposing our Lord's reference to have been as annihilationists say to (Isaiah lxvi. 24), the same would not in the least affect the fact that the primary import of the figure and language is that of everlasting suffering. One thing is clear, our Lord cannot possibly have meant to convey *just the very opposite* of what He stated, viz., "where their worm SHALL *die*, and the fire IS *quenched*," and which the theories of annihilationists, if true, would absolutely demand. 2 Thess. i. 9, comes next, "Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord." Annihilationists assert that this can mean nothing less than extinction of being, the words "*aionion olethron*" being the strongest language possible whereby to express the same in the Greek language. See, however, our remarks in page 40 as to the use of the word destruction in other places, the word "*olethron*" being derived from the same verb translated destroy, &c., elsewhere. But to this assertion on their part, we reply, if the Spirit of God, speaking through Paul, meant him to convey the idea of extinction of being, why did He not lead him to say so, and not use the term "*everlasting destruction* from *the presence of*" instead. It would have been easy enough for such statement to have been made thus, "Who shall be punished by being annihilated after a period of suffering in hell." Why use the term everlasting at all, if extinction of being be meant? To put everlasting in conjunction with extinction of being would be absurd, *for annihilation must in itself be everlasting*, or it could not be *annihilation* at all, and why state "FROM THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD?" Let us just see what kind of a sentence their notions will make of it, viz., "*everlasting annihilation from the presence of.*" Surely this does not sound quite right. Is it not rather confusion of language? We must maintain that it is so. The fact is that the whole force of the passage lies in the sentence "*from the presence of the Lord*," the character of their punishment as being the lake of fire not here being mentioned, but simply

the eternity of their banishment from His presence, and utter demolition of their power, as found, as it will be in that day, in open and violent antagonism and rebellion against Himself. The teaching of the passage is plain and simple enough, and needs no such twisting as it is found necessary to resort to in order to substantiate a *wished-for* dogma. There is no need for us to remind any intelligent Christian that the judgment here spoken of has nothing to do with that of Rev. xx., where the great white throne is set up and the dead are judged, but that this judgment is one that has to do with men *living on this earth* at the time when the Lord is revealed in connection with the setting up of His kingdom on earth, and at the *commencement* of the millennium.

Our last passage is Rev. xxi. 8, "But the fearful and unbelieving, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." What need we to remark on this passage more than to draw attention to the transparent fact, viz., that the *second death* is the lake of fire, and not annihilation at all, and that the same being everlasting fire, and the lost being cast *there for ever*, the same becomes *their eternal abode.* How solemn and how awful are these things which God has revealed to us. Well may every persistent unrepentant, rebellious sinner that hears thereof tremble. How blessed it is to know that, nevertheless, God is love, and that *none* NEED *perish*, since Christ has tasted death for every man, and that *none* will have their portion therein but such as even the blessed God, who is indeed love, finds it to be a necessity to put there. That He will put, and that for ever, every finally-unrepentant rejecter of Himself in that terrible abode with Satan and his angels is irresistibly clear, it not being possible for language to be used capable of expressing the same more clearly and definitely than God Himself, by His Spirit, has done. The attempts made to avoid the force of these statements, and that too, alas! even by professed servants of Christ Himself, are but a sign of the appalling rate at which the apostasy of 2 Thess. ii. is developing on all hands. No sadder sight can be witnessed than that which is to be seen on all sides, viz., that of men who for years have occupied positions as teachers of

evangelical truth pandering to the rabid appetite of the infidel wild beast (Rev. xvii.), by throwing sop after sop to it, in the form of truths once taught and tenaciously held, *because revealed of God*, and that apparently for the purpose of conciliation, and in order to being permitted a little longer to occupy positions of worldly prominence in the midst of declining Christendom. Alas! alas! well may every Christian resolved on fidelity to Christ and His word, above all else, weep and lament thereat, well knowing how the end must result in the shame and confusion of all such, and the terrific triumph for a brief season of that power whose appetite can in no way be assuaged, in its desperate and determined enmity against the Christ of God.

We have now done, and fully conscious are we of the feebleness and imperfection of our endeavours to deal with this most solemn and momentous subject, and which is so much agitating many minds at this time. All we can say is that "we have done what we could," and have sought to contribute our mite in defence of what we believe to be foundation truth, so boldly assailed in these days. That the Lord may be pleased to use the effort to the help of some is our earnest and sincere prayer, and for this purpose alone has it been written.

F. C. B. F.

Sutton Coldfield,
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