PEOPLES PAPER AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM
UNDENOMINATIONAL
A RELIGIOUS NEWSPAPER
Volume XXXIII. No. 10 MELBOURNE, OCTOBER, 1950 Price—Fourpence Halfpenny

Jehovah Our God is One.

"TO US there is but one God. the Father, of whom are all things."-! COR 8:6.

NOTWITHSTANDING the widespread acceptance of the doctrine of the Trinity, we have held closely to the Bible teaching that there is but one God. Jesus called God His Father, and spoke of Himself as the Son of God. A father is a life-giver. A son is an offspring, one who receives life from a father. This distinction implies that the father existed first. And so Jesus says of Himself, "I proceeded forth and came from God."—John 8:42.

In our writings we show the clear teachings of the Bible, that Jesus in His pre-human condition was the Logos, the Word, or Message, from the Father; and that as such He was called a god, but not the God--the Father. On so important a question as the equality of the Father and the Son, we must not rely upon any man's testimony except that of the inspired writers of the Scriptures. We should accept no dictum save that of the Divine Word itself. Let us ask Jesus.

He replies, "My Father is greater than I"; "I can of Mine own self do nothing; as I hear I judge"; "My Father is greater than all"; "I ascend to My Father and your Father, to My God and your God"; "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent."—John 14:28; 5:30; 10 :29; 17:3; 20:17.

In our writings we point out that Jesus was the first of God's creatures, the only being directly created by Jehovah;

and that Jehovah did all subsequent creating through the Son. Thus we read that Jesus was "the beginning of the creation of God," "the First-born of every creature," "the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last" of the Father's direct creation. (Rev. 3:14;22 :13; Col. 1:15.) The Apostle John declares (John 1:1-3), "In the beginning [not Jehovah's beginning, for He had no beginning; but the world's beginning, or man's beginning] was the Word [the Logos], and the Word was with the God and the Word was a god. All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made." Could this subject be made plainer? Why confuse ourselves needlessly? Why fight against the plain statements of God's Word to uphold a theory which is without Bible support and was formulated in the Dark Ages.

We teach, as does the Bible, that the Lord Jesus came from Heaven to earth; was born of a virgin mother;

that He, “the Logos, was made flesh and dwelt among us,” and His disciples “beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” (John 1:14.) Jesus had not two natures, but one nature, having changed the higher, the spiritual nature, for the human nature. As the Scriptures declare, “He who was rich, for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich.” (2 Cor. 8:9.) And as He grew to manhood He grew in favour with God and man. He was perfect—”holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners.” — Luke 2:52, Heb. 7 :26.

Jesus Became A New Creature.

At thirty years of age, this Perfect One, having reached the perfection of manhood according to the Law, consecrated, or devoted, His life to God as the great Sacrifice for human sin, fulfilling the Scriptures, “a body hast Thou prepared Me,” “for the suffering of death.” (Heb. 10:5; 2:9.) That consecrated sacrifice of the Man Jesus,

God accepted, indicating His acceptance by the anointing of Jesus with the holy spirit at Jordan. Thenceforth He was dual—a perfect human body with a newly begotten mind—spirit-begotten. He then, as a New Creature, was to complete the sacrifice of His flesh; and His new mind—the New Creature—was to go on to perfection. He prayed that the Father would restore Him to the glory which He had with the Father “before the world was.” (John 17:5.) In His humility He asked no higher glory. His sacrifice was finished at Calvary, and His new mind, His spirit-begotten new nature was, in the resurrection, granted the new body which the Father had promised “Sown in dishonour,” He was “raised in glory”; “sown in weakness,” He was “raised in power”; “sown a natural body,” He was “raised a spiritual body.”-1 Cor. 15:43, 44.

Our Lord was not originally created in the way the angels were: for He was the direct creation of the Father, whereas the angels were the indirect creations of God, through the Son. St. Paul declares that all things are of the Father, and all things are through, by the Son. (1 Cor. 8:6.) He was the Father’s honoured agent in all other works of creation.

Our Lord Jesus became the Christ, the Anointed, when He received the anointing of the holy spirit at His baptism.

He was perfected as the Christ at His resurrection. He was a god (Mighty One) before He came into the world; He also was a god from the time He received the begetting of the holy spirit at Jordan; and He is still a god, set down at the right hand of the Father. But He is not The God, He never was and never will be. Note again His own words after His resurrection, when speaking to Mary Magdalene: “I ascend to My Father and your Father; to My God and your God.” (John 20:17.) Hear what St. Paul says, “To us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, . . . and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by [or through] whom are all things.” (1 Cor. 8:6.) Again, in referring to Jehovah, the Apostle calls Him, ‘”God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,” and again, “The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,” and “the God of our Lord Jesus Christ.”-2 Cor. 1:3; Eph. 1:3, 17.

A Common, But Unscriptural View.

The Lord Jesus is not the second person of a triune God. The word “triune” is unscriptural; so is the thought. St.

Paul sets the matter straight in his words quoted above. He also declares that Jesus “thought not by robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation.” No translation of this passage (Phil. 2:6), save in our Common Version gives the thought that Jesus considered Himself equal to God the Father, but all are to the contrary of this.

Our Common Version rendering is evidently a mistranslation. The entire argument of the Apostle shows that Christ humiliated Himself, not that He claimed equality with Jehovah!

The word “trinity” is not found in the Bible. The only text in the Bible which seems in any way to suggest a trinity is acknowledged even by trinitarians themselves to be a forgery, incorporated into the text about the fifth century. This interpolation forms a part of 1 John 5:7, 8. We quote the passage. with the interpolated words enclosed in brackets: “For there are three that bear record [in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one; and there are three that bear witness in earth], the spirit and the water and the blood: and these three agree in one.”

See Revised Version, Emphatic Diaglott, American Standard Union translation, Young’s translation, etc. This passage is pronounced an interpolation by such eminent authorities as Sir Isaac Newton, Benson, Adam Clarke, Horne, Griesbach, Tischendorf and Alford.

There was a time when our Lord Jesus did not exist, when Jehovah was alone. How else could the Bible declare that Jesus was the “beginning of the creation of God,” (Rev. 3:14.) What is the value of language, anyway, if we do not give words their manifest meaning? Jesus undoubtedly had a beginning. This beginning was ages before He came to earth as a human being to die for Adam and his race.

The Logos Transferred From Heaven To Earth.

The Lord Jesus had a Heavenly nature before He came into the world. He exchanged that nature, as we have stated, for an earthly one, in order that He might give His flesh, His humanity, a Ransom-price for the sins of the whole world. Having accomplished this great work, He was granted by the Father an exaltation still higher than His previous glorious position and nature, even though His previous station had been second only to Jehovah Himself. St. Paul declares of the position given Christ at His resurrection: “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him and given Him a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in Heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth [those now in the tomb, but yet to be raised to learn the Truth as it is in Jesus] ; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus is Lord to the glory of God the Father.”—Phil. 2:9-11.

When on earth Jesus was not a sinful man in any sense. His birth of the Virgin Mary was miraculous. His holy life was transferred to human conditions. He was made a man—”holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners,” and fit, therefore, to be the great Sin offering for Adam and all his posterity. He was simply the Man Jesus up to the time of His immersion in Jordan; but the anointing He there received constituted Him the Anointed of God, the Christ, the Messiah.

Made “Partaker Of The Divine Nature.”

Jesus was a god, a Mighty One, higher than the angels, before He became a man. When born a babe, He was not a god at all, but a human being; and as the perfect man of thirty He was not a god. But when He received the anointing of the holy spirit, of Divine power, He became a Mighty One, because of this spirit-begetting. And since His resurrection He is a god, greater than ever before, “partaker of the Divine nature”; for His Church are called to this great exaltation, and they are called to the obtaining of the glory of their Lord, that they may be with Him, as His Bride, and be like Him, members of His glorious Body.-2 Thes. 2:14; 1 John 3:2; Rev. 21:2, 9; 22:17; 1 Cor. 10:16, 17; 12:12, 13, 27; 2 Pet. 1:4.

Our Lord is the great Head of His Church, and Head and Body must partake of the same nature in glory. He gave up His human nature in death to purchase the human race. For parts of three days He lay dead in the tomb—not alive in any sense; for death is the absence of life. He had given up His human life never to

take it up again. It was the purchase-price for the world. He was resurrected to the Divine plane, an exaltation never before given to any creature of God. His Bride is called to the same glorious nature as her Head, whose inheritance she is invited to share. Jesus was raised from the dead by the power of God.—Rom. 6:4; 8:1 1 ; Acts 2:22, 24, 32, 33.

Confusion of Trinitarian View.

Notice for a moment the great confusion from which we are saved by following the Bible's own testimony respecting our Lord Jesus and by throwing out the ridiculous nonsense of the Dark Ages. We are saved from thinking of our God as three beings with only one body or one being with three bodies. Trinitarians do not know which of these creedal statements to take—some say one and some say the other. But both are wholly irrational: three are not one and one is not three. The oneness between the Father and the Son is explained by our Lord Himself. He prayed that His disciples might become one in the same sense that He and the Father were one—surely not that His disciples might become one person, but that they might be one in spirit; in mind, in purpose, as were the Father and Himself. See John 17:20-23. The followers of Jesus become one in mind and purpose by each giving up his own will to do God's will. And Jesus and the Father are one because Jesus surrendered His will to the Father's will, saying, "Not My will, but Thine be done"; "I came not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me"; "Lo, I come; I delight to do Thy will, O My God!" These are the words of the Lord Jesus to the Father.

Touching the rise of the Trinitarian view, Abbott and Conant's Religious Dictionary, page 944, says, "It was not until the beginning of the fourth century that the Trinitarian view began to be elaborated and formulated into a doctrine and an endeavour made to reconcile it with the belief of the Church in ONE GOD." "Out of the attempt to solve this problem sprang the doctrine of the Trinity." Trinity "is a very marked feature in Hindooism, and is discernible in Persian, Egyptian, Roman, Japanese and the most ancient Grecian mythologies."

Like some other doctrines received by Protestants from Papacy, this one is accepted and fully endorsed, although its educated adherents are aware that not a text of Scripture can be adduced to its support. Yea, more; whoever will not affirm this unscriptural doctrine as his faith is declared by the articles of the Evangelical Alliance to be nonorthodox—a heretic. Heb. 1:8 has been used by Trinitarians as a proof text that Jesus is Jehovah, and the fact is cited that the word God here is theos, the same as verse 9 which refers to the Father. They seem not to have noticed that the word god in 2 Cor. 4:4, which refers to Satan, is also theos in the Greek. Theos is used of any mighty one, the same as Elohim in the Hebrew.

Phil. 2:8, 9 implies that our Lord's present glory is greater than the glory which He possessed before He became a man; otherwise it could not have been an exaltation. Now having the Divine, immortal nature He cannot die. "Christ dieth no more." How straightforward and simple and reasonable is the Scriptural presentation compared with human traditions! In what a jumble of contradictions and confusion do they find themselves who say that Jesus and the Father are one God! This would involve the idea that our Lord Jesus acted the hypocrite when on earth and only pretended to address God in prayer, when He Himself was the same God. Such should conclude, too, that since we read that God cannot be tempted of any, it was only a farce when Jesus was tempted of Satan. Again, the Father has always been immortal, hence could not die. How, then, could Jesus have died? The Apostles are all false witnesses in declaring Jesus' death and resurrection if He did not die. The Scriptures declare, however, that He did die—"He poured out His soul [His being] unto death," not merely His body, as many assert.—Isa. 53:12.

If they admit that Jesus really died, they take the other horn of the dilemma; for believing that their three Gods are all one person as many do, when Jesus died they must all three have died. If they all died, who raised them to life,

How foolish all this sounds! Yet if Jesus and the Father are the same person, the same Being, then when Jesus died the Father must have died. Shall we thus contradict the Apostles and Prophets and Jesus Himself, and ignore reason and common sense, in order to hold to a dogma handed to us from the dark, superstitious past, by a corrupt apostate

Church? Nay! “To the Law and to the testimony! If they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them.”

Testimony Of Scriptures Re The Holy Spirit.

We next inquire, What say the Scriptures with regard to the holy spirit? The nominal churches, Protestant and Catholic, affirm that the holy spirit is a person, the third person of the Trinity. They claim that all this is “a great mystery.” Yes, truly it is a mystery, such as is characteristic of the confusion of man-made creeds held by Babylon. But to those who turn to the Word of God and let it speak, all is clear and plain. We suggest that whatever definition of the term “holy spirit” will meet all known conditions and harmonise all Scriptures bearing thereon may be understood to be the true meaning of the term. We will first give what we conceive to be such a definition, and then ask the reader to subject every Scripture where this term is used to this definition and see if it does not make harmony of all.

We understand the Bible to teach that the holy spirit is the Divine will, influence, power or disposition, exercised everywhere and for any purpose, at the Divine pleasure. God exercises His spirit or energy in a variety of ways, using various agencies, and accomplishing various results. Whatever God does through agencies is as truly His work as though He were the direct actor, since all His agencies are His creation — created by His own power; just as a contractor for building is said to build a house, though he may never have lifted a tool upon it. He does it with his materials and through his agents. Thus, when we read that Jehovah God created the heavens and the earth, we are not to suppose that He personally handled them. He used an Agent. “He spake and it was done. He commanded and it stood fast.” His holy power was exercised through His Only Begotten. God’s spirit was exercised in times past through the Prophets. “They spake as they were moved by the holy spirit” [power] of God. The masculine pronoun is often used in our Common Version Bible in referring to the holy spirit of God, because God, who is a spirit, is represented as masculine, as indicative of strength. The pronoun translated “he” when referring to the holy spirit can with equal consistency be translated “it,” and is often so rendered. See Diaglott rendering of John 14:17, 26, as an example. For further elucidation of this subject of the holy spirit, we refer the interested reader to the Fifth Volume of Studies in the Scriptures, chapters 8-11, where the subject is treated at length.

“One reads with father’s specs upon his head,
And sees the thing just as his father did;

Another reads through Campbell or through Scott,
And thinks it means exactly what they thought.

Some read to prove a pre-adopted creed,
Thus understand but little what they read;

And every passage in the Book they bend
To make it suit that all-important end.

Some people read, as I have often thought,
To teach the Book, instead of to be taught.”

“The Everlasting GospeL”—A 64-page booklet dealing with the Sabbath question and other important connected subjects, highly recommended, heavy paper cover, price 1/6.

“The Manner of Christ’s Return and Appearing.”—This important subject explained in detail in this 64-page booklet. Most enlightening, paper cover, price 9d.; 6 copies for 4/-.

“Our Lord’s Great Prophecy.”—Most helpful explanation of this timely subject, 50 pages, paper cover, price 9d.; 6 copies for 4/-.

“Peace Desired—War Continues.”—In this booklet of 24 pages the present world outlook is reviewed, and the only hope for peace set forth in the light of God’s Word. Price 5d. per copy; 6 copies for posted.

“Do the Dead Know Anything?”—The full and satisfactory answer to this question is given from the Bible in this 24-page booklet. Price 5d. per copy; 6 copies for 2/-, posted.

“The Lord is My Shepherd.”—The beautiful 23rd Psalm is explained in a very helpful manner in this booklet of 24 pages. Price 5d. per copy; 6 copies for posted.

PEOPLES PAPER.AND HERALD OF CHRIST’S KINGDOM.

(Monthly) 4 6 (85 cents) per annum, post paid.

Published by the Berean Bible Institute, l9 Ermington Place, Kew, E4, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.

Thy Word is Truth

IN last month’s “Peoples Paper,” at the close of the article, “Come Out of Her, My People,” it was indicated that articles would follow referring to the “sins” which clearly mark the systems of religion described under the general term of Babylon. In this issue the three articles presented explain from the Scriptures, as far as space permits, the truth on the Immortality of the Soul, the Trinity, and Everlasting Punishment. The errors held on these three subjects (and there are others) by the systems of Babylon have been a contributing factor in their fall from God’s favour.

In Rev. 18.2, 3, in particular, the reason for the Lord’s rejection of the Babylonian systems is clearly and forcefully described--For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornification (intoxicated with her false doctrines and worldly affiliation) , and the kings of the earth have committed fomification with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance (margin—power) of her delicacies.” Illegal union with the world and its ways is therefore the deciding factor with the Lord in rejecting once and for all time such systems which have “become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit (a dwelling place for impure principles and erroneous doctrines) , and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.”

There can be no doubt that doctrinal errors, handed down from the Dark Ages, have done much to bring about the downfall of the systems comprising Babylon—mother and daughters—allowing the spirit of the Adversary to supplant true love and reverence for an all-loving and gracious heavenly Father. Nominal Spiritual Israel is in a dilapidated condition because of the lack in understanding God’s Word. We seem to be in the time referred to by the Prophet, saying, “There shall be a famine in the land,” saith the Lord, “not a famine for bread. neither a famine for water, but a famine for the hearing of the Word of the Lord.”—Amos 8:11.

Many imagine that they are familiar with the teachings of the Bible, when in reality they are familiar with one or another of the creeds of the darker past, all of which contain some truth with considerable error, we must all admit.

Our great mistake has been in assuming that our confessions of faith and all of our creeds strongly and fully represent the Bible's teachings. This mistake has already been costly. Thousands of the most generous minds have been turned away from the Bible by the mistaken supposition that the creeds properly represent its teachings.

The necessary thing to be done is to resume Bible study, and that without our creedal spectacles. Our forefathers who made our creeds participated more or less in persecutions of each other which we to-day entirely condemn.

The belief that God is torturing thousands of millions of His creatures led some of our well-intentioned forefathers to torture one another in God's name, in a manner which we to-day cannot endorse as being either just or loving or Christlike.

Why then should we assume that those creeds are correct in all particulars? Should we not the rather see that if so good a man as John Calvin committed so great a mistake as to sign the warrant which sent a brother Christian, Servetus, to the stake, this proves that there was something wrong with Calvin's theological ideas, which lie at the foundation of nearly all of our Protestant creeds?

With the wonderful Bibles which we possess today, found in nearly every home, 'we should know more of its teachings than any of our forefathers could possibly have known. Not only has education aided in this respect, but our Bibles are conveniently formed, and we have study aids, in the form of concordances, translations, etc. Is it not time to strive as Levites and spiritual Israelites to turn afresh to the Bible and instruct the people respecting its teachings?

We are not advocating merely the reading of so many chapters a day, or the committing of verses to memory, etc.

We advocate a reconstruction of our faith upon the basis of the Bible only. Surely if all of God's people could take from their minds their creed spectacles and study the Word afresh in its own light, a great blessing would speedily follow. And for intelligent and diligent Bible study it is essential that exhaustive concordances be used Only by an understanding of the original Scriptures (Hebrew and Greek) can any student be "thoroughly furnished unto all, good works," as St. Paul exhorted.—(2 Tim. 3:16, 17). How helpful it is in a study circle when those taking part really understand and present the truth on the passage of Scripture under review, and are not just depending upon a margin reference or guess work in presenting thoughts.

There is a power for good in the Word of God which can be found nowhere else. Higher criticism has much responsibility in connection with the growing lawlessness of the world. "The Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul"—transforming the being. The higher critics in all of our colleges and seminaries are doing a terribly destructive work. It is safe to say that three-fourths of all the graduates of all colleges within the last fifty years have been unbelievers in the Bible, and that their influence has been used persistently to undermine the faith of others. The errors which led to infidelity are liable to influence others. The Bible itself is a study, and only what it teaches should be believed whether favourable to or contrary to our former creeds.

How truly informative and instructive is our Lord's prayer to the Father on behalf of His true followers—

’’Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth.” (John 17:17.) This is a clear indication that only truth can sanctify, and that error on any subject has the opposite effect, turning the minds and hearts of people away from the only true God and Jesus Christ, whom He Has sent. How encouraging, however, are the words of our Good Shepherd again—”My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.” (John 10:27.) Yes, though it may take considerable time, from our standpoint, all those of right heart condition shall be found, now in this harvest time of the age, and come fully into the truth which will sanctify and develop them for the heavenly Kingdom. And what privilege is now committed to those who are already numbered amongst the Lord’s “little flock,” of searching for and assisting the other “sheep” into all truth, by the Lord’s grace, and in harmony with His words—”He shall send his messengers with a great trumpet (the harvest truths) and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other (from the ecclesiastical heavens, the systems of Babylon). (Matt. 24:31.)

Further articles on other important subjects connected with the “sins” of Babylon will follow in later issues, including the very important harvest truths, by which means “the servants of our God are sealed in their foreheads” (Rev. 7:1-3), as well as in their hearts, in this harvest time of the Gospel Age.

.* *Both. Strong’s and Young’s Concordances are recommended for all earnest students of the Bible. At present Young’s Concordance only can be supplied, and while the retail price of nearly .£ 4 may seem high, it is no doubt cheap in view of the wealth of information it contains, in comparison with worldly things. A discount will be allowed to all who earnestly desire to procure one of these essential Bible study aids, and further information will be gladly supplied. Early application should be made.

Melbourne Christmas Convention.

The brethren in Melbourne wish to advise all friends that they propose holding the usual Convention at the Christmas period this year (D.V.) . The dates of the gatherings will probably be December 23rd to the 26th, inclusive, also further meetings on the New Year weekend. A cordial invitation to attend these gatherings is extended to all who love the Lord and His truth. Further information will appear in later issues of “Peoples Paper,” and is obtainable also from the Class Secretary—Mr. J. B. Warn, 44 Heath Ave., Oakleigh, S.E.12, Victoria.

The Truth on Immortality.

THE following article, dealing with this important subject, was published many years ago, being prompted at the time by a statement appearing in a religious journal under the heading, “What is the Soul?” which reads:

“To man is given the power to create an immortal soul, and father and mother walk hand in hand with God. It is fitting that the halo of love should shine around the mated pair, and that the new home should glow with light from the glory-world, for Eden’s morn is dawning again to sweet new souls—souls that are born of man and also born of God.”

When our friends of the religious denomination get sufficiently awake to inquire for a Scripture authority for all religious teaching, the editor of the journal and others will criticise what is published much more thoroughly than they do now; and a totally unscriptural article of the kind referred to will not appear in journals claiming “No creed but the Bible.”

The idea that God would go into partnership with the majority of parents who know Him not or who are His enemies through wicked works is absurd on the face of it, as well as unscriptural. Worse, it is blasphemy against God! The very idea! That God should be charged with the responsibility of the direct creation of the poor, misshapen, diseased little babes, the one-half of which have not vitality enough to reach maturity, is surely the product of a deficient or sadly misdirected reason. Let God be true, though at the risk of making out that many men are liars or foolish. God’s Word declares that infants are “born in sin, shapen in iniquity”; and the only exceptions to this rule are the comparatively few children of the sanctified. (1 Cor. 7:14.) That the image of God has largely given place to the image of Satan is manifest in the many who “go astray as soon as they are born” (Psa. 53:3) , and respecting some of whom our Lord declared, “Ye are of your father the devil, for his works ye do.”—John 8:44.

Alas that we must admit it, but who will deny that some dogs are far better born than are some of Adam’s degenerate race? Yes, some of them with better dispositions, too—more of meekness, gentleness, patience and love; and less of anger, hatred and strife. If God has so arranged His laws of nature that each can bring forth after his own kind, why should not man, the highest of earthly creatures, have the same powers? Why should it be claimed that in man’s case God interferes and helps produce the idiotic and mentally and physically unbalanced which constitutes so many of our race? Why should this be urged, not only without Scripture proof but contrary to the Bible’s express teachings?

There Is Always A Reason.

The reason is the desire to prove the immortality of the soul, which centuries of. Platonic philosophy has foisted upon the world as essential to any hope of a future life. Plato’s followers tell us that this wisdom of a heathen poet is implied in the Bible though never stated in it. We answer, to the contrary, that the Bible most explicitly limits immortality to the Father and the Son (1 Tim. 6:16), and holds out to the saints the hope of “glory, honour and immortality” at the end of life’s race.—Rom. 2:7.

The hope of eternal life, according to the Bible, is not a power in man to live for ever, but a power in God to raise man from the dead and to perpetually supply the conditions essential to an everlasting existence. Death is the wage or penalty of God’s law ‘against sinners; the death of Jesus was the ransom for sinners; and the resurrection promised in the Millennial morning is the salvation provided—a salvation from death, a raising up from the fallen condition of sin and its penalty to the life and perfection originally lost. “By man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead; for as all in Adam die, even so all in

Christ shall be made alive."-1 Cor. 15:21, 22.

Note the inconsistencies involved. (1) For God to interfere with human pro-creation and insert a Planonic "spark of deity" into every idiotic or degenerate babe to make them death-proof would be in direct contradiction to His sentence against the race, "Dying thou shalt die." (2) It would make meaningless our Lord's words, "Ye must be born again" (John 3:7), by implying that man's begetting and God's begetting are simultaneous. (3) According to this false theory the whole matter of eternal torment is God's responsibility and fault; because if God would but exercise reasonable discretion in bestowing the gift of immortality and not co-operate in the birth of those unfit for everlasting bliss there would be none to torment.

What serious confusion comes from false reasoning, human guessing, contrary to God's Word. We devote some space to this matter, not from opposition to the no doubt well-meaning writer, but because the error is widespread. Yes, we are ashamed to say it, this is the distorted view of Christendom as a whole. Let us whose eyes the Lord has opened to a clearer, saner, holier view of His divine plan be vigilant and wise and lovingly kind in helping to the light and food now provided all who give any evidence of hungering and thirsting after truth.

Reformation By Surgery.

The newspapers recount a peculiar case which contains a lesson. A boy of 12 years was about to be sent by his parents to a Reform School, because he was so incorrigible. An officer of the particular Juvenile Court noticed a scar on the boy's head, and inquiry revealed the fact that it came from a fall when the boy was five years old, and that his incorrigibility dated from about that time. He was sent to a hospital where a surgical operation was performed, and the pressure of a broken bone was removed from the brain. Gradually the boy returned to his former condition of mind and became obedient. His mother is quoted as saying:

"The Doctor states that the pressure of that piece of bone upon the brain had gradually dulled all the highest sensibilities, and if it had gone on my son would, in time, have become an utter degenerate. No one knows how thankful we are to-day that our boy has been saved from the Reform School, where he would have been constantly punished for things for which we now know he would not have been responsible."

It is impossible for us to know what proportion of the morally weak and bad, the wicked, the merciless and the untruthful are to some extent what circumstances and conditions, mental, moral and physical have helped to make them. Yet according to the general view the boy above described would have gone to eternal torment. That is to say, no one would claim that he was fit for heaven, and under the general assumption there would have been no other place to put him.

How grandly reasonable is the plan of God, which, while telling us that only a "little flock" of overcomers of this Gospel Age will, go to heaven, tells us also that God has provided that "times of restitution" shall shortly begin, in which all the weak and depraved and ignorant, however unfit for heaven, shall have one full chance of restitution to the full perfection of human nature in the Paradise of God on earth, under the whole heavens. All of this glorious provision, let us never forget, is in and through the ransom paid by our dear Redeemer who "gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time."-1 Tim. 2:6.

Great truths are dearly bought. The common truth,

Such as men give and take from day to day,

Comes in the common walk of easy life,

Blown by the careless wind across our way.

Great truths are dearly won; not found by chance,

Nor wafted on the breath of summer dream ;

But grasped in the great struggle of the soul,

Hard buffeting with adverse wind and stream.

Sometimes, ‘mid conflict, turmoil, fear and grief,

When the strong hand of God, put forth in might,

Ploughs up the subsoil of the stagnant heart,

It brings some buried truth-seeds to the light.

Not in the general mart, ‘mid corn and wine;

Not in the merchandise of gold and gems;

Not in the world’s gay hall of midnight mirth,

Nor ‘mid the blaze of regal diadem;

Not in the general clash of human creeds,

Nor in the merchandise ‘twixt church and world,

Is truth’s fair treasure found ‘mongst tares and weeds;

Nor her fair banner in their midst unfurled.

Truth springs like harvest from the well-ploughed fields,

Rewarding patient toil, and faith, and zeal;

To those thus seeking her, she ever yields

Her richest treasures tor their lasting weal.

—Longfellow.

Everlasting Punishment.

The wages of sin is death (everlasting destruction, 2 Thess. 1:9), hut the gift of God is eternal life (Rom. 6:23).

THE everlastingness of the punishment being thus established, only one point is left open for discussion: namely, the nature of the punishment. Take your Concordance and search out what saith the great Judge regarding the punishment of wilful sinners who despise and reject all His blessed provisions for them through Christ. What do you find? Does God there say—All sinners shall live in torture forever? No; we find not a single text where life in any condition is promised to that class.

God's declarations assure us that ultimately He will have a clean universe, free from the blight of sin and sinners— because "All the wicked will He destroy" (Psa. 145:20).

But while we do not find one verse of the Bible saying that this class can have life in torment, or in any other condition, we do find numerous passages teaching the reverse. Of these we give a few merely as samples"The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23.) "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." (Ezek. 18:4, 20) . "The wicked shall perish" (Psa. 37:20). "Yet a little while and the wicked shall not be" (Psa. 37:10). Thus God has told us plainly the nature of the everlasting punishment of the wicked—that it will be death, destruction.

The false ideas of God's plan of dealing with the incorrigible, taught ever since the great "falling away," which culminated in Papacy, and instilled into our minds from childhood, are alone responsible for the view generally held that the everlasting punishment provided for wilful sinners is a life of torment. This view is held, notwithstanding the many clear statements of God's Word that their punishment is to be death. Here St. Paul states very explicitly what the punishment is to be. Speaking of the same Millennial Day, and of the same class, who, despite all the favourable opportunities and the fulness of knowledge then, will not come into harmony with Christ, and hence will "know not God," in the true sense and "obey not," he says: "Who shall be punished." Ah, yes! but how punished? He tells us how: They "shall be punished with everlasting destruction" [a destruction from which there will be no recovery, no redemption or resurrection—Heb. 10:26-29] from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power" (2 Thes. 1:9). This destruction is represented in the parable as the everlasting "fire" prepared for the devil and his angels; it is "the lake of fire and brimstone," which is the Second Death (Rev. 20:14), into which the "goat" class of this parable are sent (Matt. 25:41).

Thus the meaning and reasonableness of this statement concerning everlasting punishment are readily seen when looked at from the correct standpoint. The fire of the parable, by which the punishment (destruction) is to be accomplished, symbolises destruction, and not in any sense preservation.

We might well leave this subject here, and consider that we have fully shown that the everlasting punishment of the "goat" class will be destruction; but we direct attention to one other point which clinches the truth upon this subject. We refer to the Greek word "kolasin," translated "punishment" in verse 46. This word has not in it the remotest idea of torment. Its primary significance is to cut off, or prune, or lop off, as in the pruning of trees; and a secondary meaning is to restrain. The wicked will be everlastingly restrained, cut off from life in the Second Death. Illustrations of the use of "kolasin" can easily be had from Greek classical writings. The Greek word for "torment" is "basinos," a word totally unrelated to the word "kolasin."

"Kolasin," the word used in Matt. 25:46, occurs in but one other place in the Bible, viz., 1 John 4:18,

where it is improperly rendered “torment” in the Common Version, whereas it should read, “Fear bath restraint.” Those who possess a copy of Young’s Analytical Concordance will see from it (page 995) that the definition of the word “kolasin’ is “pruning, restraining, restraint.” And the author of the Emphatic Diaglott, after translating “kolasin” in Matt. 24:46 by the words “cutting off,” says in a footnote:

“The Common Version and many modern ones render ‘kolasin aionion’ as ‘everlasting punishment,’ conveying the idea, as generally interpreted, of ‘basinos’—torment. ‘Kolasin’ in its various forms occurs in only three other places in the New Teastament: Acts 4:21; 2 Pet. 2:9; 1 John 4:18. It is derived from ‘kolazoo,’ which signifies:1. To cut off; as lopping off branches of trees, to prune. 2. To restrain, to repress. The Greeks write: ‘The charioteer restrains [kalazei] his fiery steeds. 3. To chastise, to punish. To cut off an individual from life, or from society, or even to restrain, is esteemed as a punishment; hence has arisen this third or metaphorical use of the word. The primary signification has been adopted [in the Diaglott] , because it agrees better with the second member of the sentence, thus preserving the force and beauty of the antithesis. The righteous go to life, the wicked to the cutting off from life, death (2 Thes. 1:9).”

Now consider carefully the text, and note the antithesis, the contrast, shown between the reward of the “sheep” and the reward of the “goats,” which the correct idea of “kalosin” gives—the one class goes into everlasting life, while the other is everlastingly cut off from life—forever restrained in death. And this exactly agrees with what the Scriptures everywhere else declare concerning the wages or penalty of wilful sin.

Consider for a moment the words of verse 41: “Depart from me, ye cursed [once redeemed by Christ from the Adamic curse or condemnation to death, but now condemned or cursed, as worthy of the Second Death, by the One who redeemed them from the first curse], into everlasting fire [symbol of everlasting destruction] , prepared for the devil and his messengers (servants) .”

Remember that this is the final sentence at the close of the final trial—at the close of the Millennium; and that none will then be servants of Satan ignorantly or unwillingly, as so many now are; for the great Deliverer, Christ, will remove outside temptations, and provide assistance toward self-improvement, which will enable all who will to overcome inherent weaknesses and to attain perfection. These “goats” who love evil and serve Satan, are the messengers (“angels”) of Satan. For these and Satan, and for no others, God has prepared Second Death—the everlasting destruction. Fire will come from God out of heaven and consume them. Consuming fire and devouring fire all can appreciate, unless their eyes are holden by false doctrine and prejudice. No one ever knew of a preserving fire; and as fire never preserves, but always consumes, God uses it as a symbol of utter destruction (Rev. 20:9) .

There are other symbols and figures of speech in the Scriptures which have been greatly misunderstood or misrepresented as supporting the Eternal Torture theory. When rightly understood these will be found to teach something quite different and to be in perfect accord with justice and love. God’s great purpose for mankind is a benevolent one, reasonable and satisfying to both heart and mind. We invite all interested to write to us if they have any difficulties regarding this subject. Every passage in the Bible where the word “hell” occurs has been thoroughly examined, and there is nothing in the Bible to teach so terrible a doctrine as that God would preserve the wicked alive just in order that they might suffer eternally.

Bibles Available.
Some very nice Oxford Reference Bibles are now in stock. They are well bound, in Brevier type (good size, dark) on India paper, with maps. Size 7 x 41 x 1 inches; weight just under 1 lb. Price 52/6, post paid.

A supply of Children’s Bibles is now on hand. These are in handy size 5i x 4 x 1 inches, and weigh about 12 ozs. In dark brown or green covers, well bound in cloth, the price is 4/6, plus 6d. postage.