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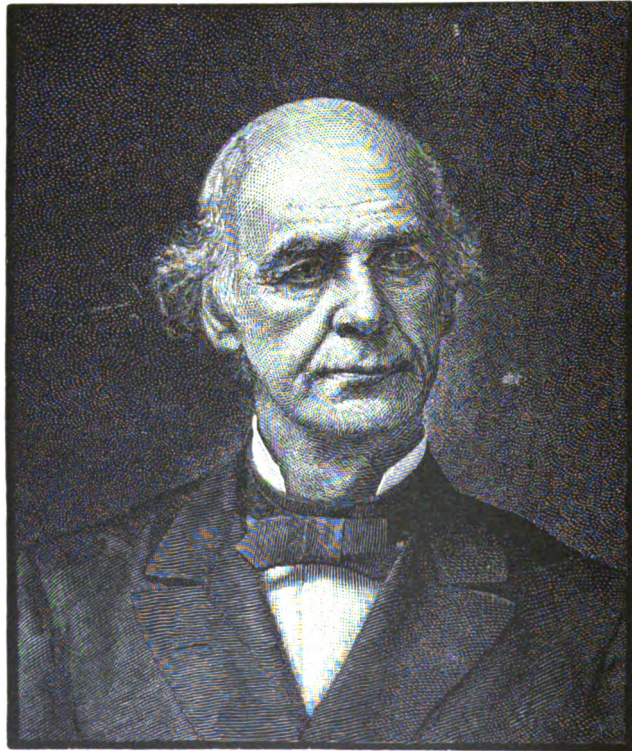
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Joseph Smith

CHAPTER XLIII.

ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT, THE WICKED, BOTH SOUL AND BODY, WILL BE BANISHED FROM THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD, INTO EVERLASTING DESTRUCTION.

All Souls are by Nature Immortal, and at Death they Return Immediately to God.—The Body also is Immortal, for Death is not Destruction.—The Body and Soul Exist Apart during the Whole Period of the Intermediate State, to be Reunited in the Resurrection Day.—The Bodies of the Just are Raised to Honor, and of the Unjust to Dishonor.—No Loss of Personal Identity in any case, and Individuality and Responsibility are Unimpaired.—All Souls at Death enter upon a Fixed and Unchanging State of Eternal Happiness or Eternal Misery, according to their Earthly Knowledge and Character.—All Elect Persons are Saved who are Incapable of being Outwardly Called by the Ministry of the Word.—Salvation Possible only in the Present Life and Time, is the Creed of the Church Universal.—Throughout the Old Testament, the World that now is and Present Judgment always placed in the Foreground, and no Intimation of Salvation in the Grave.—In the New Testament, the Lord of the Unseen World shows Irrefutably, by the Parable of the Rich Man, the Impossibility of the Reclamation of the Lost in Hades.—The Duration of the Doom of the Wicked described by the Same Term as is applied to the Blessedness of the Righteous and to God's Being, Attributes, Dominion, and Glory.

By Rev. JOSEPH T. SMITH, D.D., Late Moderator of the Presbyterian General Assembly, Baltimore, Md.

THE sole object of this paper is to set forth the doctrine of the Presbyterian Church, with its Scriptural basis, as understood by the writer, on the subject of a second probation. What that doctrine is may be ascertained with sufficient distinctness from several distinct sources. We can gather it from living expounders in Presbyterian pulpits, church courts, papers, and periodicals. We can learn it still more clearly from a long line of illustrious authors in the past. But for an exhaustive and authoritative statement we must go to its accepted symbols—the Westminster Confession and Catechisms.

Turning to the eschatology of the Westminster standards, we find first of all an assertion of the natural immortality of man. Man, every man, because the son and heir of God, inherits immortality as his inalienable birthright. All souls are by nature immortal. The Westminster standards know nothing of a conditional immortality for the righteous or an annihilation for the wicked. "God made man, male and female, with reasonable and immortal souls," and, again, souls at death "having an immortal subsistence immediately return to God who gave them" (*Confession*, ch. 32).

The bodies, too, which souls inhabit here, are immortal. Death is not destruction. The separation it effects between the soul and the body does not touch the integrity of either. Each exists apart, during the whole period of the intermediate state, to be reunited in the resurrection of the great day. "The souls of believers are, at their death, made perfect in holiness and do immediately pass into glory, and their bodies, being still united to Christ, do rest in their graves till the resurrection" (S. C., ques. 37). "At the last day such as are found alive shall not die, but be changed; and all the dead shall be raised up, with the self-same bodies and none other, although with different qualities, which shall be united again to their souls forever. The bodies of the unjust shall, by the power of Christ, be raised to dishonor; the bodies of the just, by his Spirit, unto honor, and be made conformable unto his own glorious body" (*Confession*, ch. 32).

Amidst all these transformations, and throughout the whole period of his existence, the identity of the man is preserved, and his personality unimpaired. There is no transmigration of souls; no absorption into an infinite Essence; no loss or confusion of personality. Each exists apart in his own individuality, and so is held personally responsible "for the deeds done in the body." He exists, too, during the intermediate state in a condition of full consciousness and activity. Immortal, retaining their identity and consciousness, all souls at death enter upon a fixed and unchanging state of eternal happiness or eternal misery. There is growth,

indeed, but no transmutation of character. There is change of place and of state, indeed, but the character always makes its own environment. "The mind is its own place. Which way I fly is hell: myself am hell." "The bodies of men after death return to dust and see corruption, but their souls (which neither die nor sleep), having an immortal subsistence, immediately return to God who gave them. The souls of the righteous, being then made perfect in holiness, are received into the highest heavens, where they behold the face of God in light and glory, waiting for the full redemption of their bodies: and the souls of the wicked are cast into hell, where they remain in torments and utter darkness reserved to the judgment of the great day" (*Con.*, ch. 32). On the day of judgment "the wicked, who know not God and who obey not the gospel of Jesus Christ, shall be cast into eternal torments, and be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power" (*Con.*, ch. 33). "At the day of judgment the wicked shall be set on Christ's left hand, and upon clear evidence and full conviction of their own consciences shall have the fearful but just sentence of condemnation pronounced against them, and thereupon shall be cast out from the favorable presence of God, and the glorious fellowship with Christ, the saints, and all his holy angels, into hell to be punished with unspeakable torments both of body and soul with the Devil and his angels forever" (L. C., ques. 89).

"Fearful," as this doom of the wicked is confessed to be, it is scrupulously expressed in the spirit and in the very phraseology of the Bible. Every line and syllable is fortified by express citations of Scripture, such as these: "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his angels" (Matt., 25 : 41). "Into hell—into the fire that never shall be quenched—where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched" (Mark, 9 : 43, 44). "In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thess., 1 : 8). "Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power" (2 Thess., 1 : 9).

After this general statement as to the condition of men after the judgment, the *Confession* makes special mention of two exceptional classes—infants and other elect persons. “Elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated and saved by Christ, through the Spirit, who worketh when, and where, and how he pleaseth; so also are all other elect persons who are incapable of being outwardly called by the ministry of the Word” (*Con.*, ch. 10).

All whom God hath predestinated unto life are effectually called by his Word and Spirit, “drawing them to Jesus Christ, yet so as they come most freely, being made willing by his grace.” With reference to infants, who are incapable of such outward call, there is positive evidence that those of believers will be saved; there is presumptive evidence that others were embraced with them in the election of life. Keeping within the letter of the Word, the *Confession* affirms positively the salvation of all elect infants. But the confident hope is cherished by Presbyterians that all infants are of the elect. They find nothing in the Word to forbid such hope. They find analogies and implications which afford a strong presumption in its favor; and hence, the salvation of all infants is cherished as a confident hope by all Presbyterians. So, too, with reference to all who, from imbecility, are incapable of being outwardly called. The Spirit of God is free, and works “when, and where, and how he pleaseth.” The grace of God is not tied to word or ordinances, but may operate, and does operate, apart from them. Imbeciles who cannot receive the outward call may be saved without it. So, too, of the heathen, and all who have never heard of Christ. The Spirit may regenerate, make meet for heaven, and save without the ordinary means of salvation. But his whole work in behalf of infants, imbeciles, and heathen is performed in this life. There is no word which extends his office into the life to come. “Redemption is certainly applied, and effectually communicated, to all those for whom Christ hath provided it, who are in time by the Holy Ghost enabled to believe in Christ according to the gospel” (L. C., ques. 59).

The fact that salvation is possible only in this life is found not in these specific statements alone. It is inwoven with the whole fabric of the Westminster standards. Everywhere, Christ is represented as a present Saviour; salvation as a present concern; redemption "as certainly applied and effectually communicated *in time* by the Holy Ghost." Take this fundamental assumption away and the whole complexion of the *Confession* would be changed.

That death ends probation is held, not by Presbyterians alone; it is the faith of the universal Church, Primitive, Mediæval, Modern, Eastern, Western, Anglican, Lutheran, Reformed. The Presbyterian *Confession*, the last and most elaborate of all the great Protestant Confessions, embodies the common faith of all. No one article in the creed of the Church universal answers more fully to the test of catholicity, "Always, everywhere, and by all."

Occasional aberrations from the common faith, indeed, there have always been; and among us the old heresy (as we account it) of a second probation has been revived. At first, it was uttered with bated breath, as the suggestion of a possibility, the whispering of a hope, the statement of a hypothesis; but its advocates, growing bolder, the possibility has now become a fact, the hypothesis an affirmation, and the hope an assured reality. The dogma that death does not end probation stands alone. It has so few affinities with the admitted verities of the Christian faith and so many seeming antagonisms with the acknowledged teachings of Scripture that its advocates have never been able to embody it in any system of truth which would secure common consent among themselves. When they pass beyond the bald negation, all is chaos—a very babel of discordant voices. There is no agreement among themselves as to the subjects of the second probation. Some would confine it to infants and imbeciles; some would embrace with them the heathen and the unevangelized of Christian lands; some would extend it to all who have not committed the sin against the Holy Ghost; some would extend it to all the lost, on the theory of a continued probation. So as to its period: some would confine it to

the intermediate state; some would extend it, indefinitely, beyond the judgment; and some hold to an eternal probation. So as to means and agencies: some hold that salvation is wrought out by the innate forces and recuperative powers of the soul itself; some superadd a higher education and more effective discipline than those enjoyed here; still others declare that the means of grace and the agency of the Holy Spirit are prolonged into the life to come. Beyond the blank negation that death does not end probation, there is no unity among the disciples of the "Progressive Orthodoxy." That negation we now propose to bring to the test of Scripture, the only arbiter whose decision is accepted by all as final and authoritative.

We would approach the Bible in the spirit with which the scientist tells us the student must always approach nature. He must empty his mind of all prejudices, prepossessions, sentiments, and theories which would hinder his search after facts. The true scientist does not search for a nature which is made after his patterns. He does not try to compel the facts he discovers to fit themselves into his theories. He schools himself to the single task of patient search. He resolutely accepts every unwelcome fact discovered, though it may shiver into atoms his most cherished theories. The crystalline spheres, cycles, and epicycles, with which he has so gorgeously filled the heavens, he is content to see vanish away before the fall of an apple. With the hardihood of the true scientific spirit we must approach the Bible, seeking only to find and honestly report what it contains, "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth."

Taking up the Old Testament, beginning our search at its Genesis beginnings, and turning over its first pages, we see everywhere one great, central figure. It is a present God, walking on earth, mingling with men, a busy actor in human affairs. The chief character in which he everywhere appears is that of a Judge. The Old Testament, and pre-eminently the Pentateuch, is a book of Judgments. Take your Concordance and look over the names, titles,

attributes, and offices of the Most High, and God the Judge appears more frequently than God the Creator, or God the Redeemer. In the very first hour after man's fall he erects his judgment seat in Eden, sits upon it in personal presence, arraigns the culprits before his bar, tries, and pronounces sentence of condemnation upon each apart—the serpent, the woman, and the man, and curses the wide earth for their sake. After man's expulsion from Eden, and while the exiled family is still lingering close by its closed gate, God the Judge arrests and arraigns the first murderer, tries, condemns, and passes sentence of outlawry upon him. Because of its enormous wickedness, he condemns the antediluvian world to the overwhelming judgment of the flood. He burns with fire from heaven the guilty cities of the plain, and buries them deep beneath the putrid waters of the Dead Sea. Proud Pharaoh, his chariots and his horsemen, he makes to sink like lead in the waters. The guilty inhabitants of Canaan he dooms to utter extermination. Judgment follows judgment, in terrible succession. Salvation is wrought out for his people by the destruction of their enemies. Upon the banks of every Red Sea of deliverance there stands a Miriam choir, with harp and song, celebrating his judgment in jubilant strains. "Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thy judgments are manifest." A present God, a present judgment, present pains and penalties visited upon evil-doers, to burn into the minds of men the great fundamental ideas of moral government, accountability, and retribution! Throughout the Pentateuch, there is scarce a glimpse of the hereafter, scarce an intimation of a judgment to come. The thoughts are fixed intensely upon a present God, a present judgment, a present retribution. As we pass on through the later historical books, the prophets, and the Psalms, corners of the separating veil are from time to time lifted up. Glimpses of the coming judgment and the great hereafter are given us. But all is dim and indistinct, far-cast shadows of the present God and present judgment. The sheol, hades, or grave of the Hebrews is a land of

mists and mysteries. Job has exhausted all the resources of language and imagery in the attempt to body forth and "give shape to that which shape had none." "A land of darkness as darkness itself, and of the shadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkness" (Job, 10: 22). It is a gloomy underworld, shut out from the air, and sunlight, and gladness of the upper world. It is a land where nothing is heard and nothing seen, the place of darkness and of silence. Its boundaries fade away on every side into gloom. Its inhabitants are ghosts, we know not "whether in the body or out of the body," flitting fitfully through the shades. In the earlier books all are confusedly mingled together, the bad and the good. In the later books there appears a shadowy kind of partition between—a phantom paradise and a phantom hell. Not from the world to come, but from the world that now is the chief sanctions of duty are drawn. The present judgment is placed in the foreground, while the judgment to come fades away into the dim and distant background. Solomon has summed up the teachings of the Old Testament Scriptures in a single verse, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest" (Eccles., 9: 10). Search through the Old Testament, book by book, chapter by chapter, verse by verse, and you cannot find salvation in its grave.

Turn now to the New Testament, and sit at the feet of him who holds the keys of death and of hades, the Lord of the unseen world, who came "to abolish death, and bring life and immortality to light." It was the grand object of his mission "to destroy death, and him that had the power of death," and to pour the light of life and immortality into the darkness and corruption of the grave. "He is the resurrection and the life;" and from him alone can we learn the mysteries of the life to come. He has clearly defined the boundaries and mapped out the whole territory of the unseen world. Sheol has vanished away, with many another shadow, and instead of the shadow we have the substance. It is separated into two great

divisions. The first is bounded by death on the one side and by the general judgment on the other. This is the intermediate state, the state of souls and bodies while separated between death and the resurrection. The second division extends from the general judgment on through eternity, and is the final and unchanging state.

As to the first, or intermediate, state our Lord has very little to say. Incomplete, preparatory, and of short continuance, he leaves it largely in shadow, and fixes his regard chiefly upon the final state beyond. In the Sermon on the Mount, his matchless parables, and all his earlier teachings, he seeks to unfold the true nature of the kingdom of heaven in its relations to God and men as established on earth. Only in his later teachings do we find the sublimer visions of the kingdom of heaven above.

One matchless parable he spoke about hades, which sheds more light upon the darkness of the intermediate state, than all the volumes ever penned—the parable of Dives and Lazarus (Luke, 16:19-31). The scene of the parable is laid in hades, or the separate state. Two personages are there introduced, Lazarus, the representative of all the righteous dead, and Dives, the representative of the wicked. They are in distinct apartments, Lazarus is in Abraham's bosom, paradise, the heaven of the separated soul: Dives is in hell, the hell of the separated soul. The one is blessed; the other is tormented. Both exist with full consciousness of the present, and distinct memories of the past. "Between us and you," says Abraham from paradise, "there is a great gulf fixed, so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot, neither can they pass to us that would come from thence." Language could not more clearly convey the thought that there is no possibility of the salvation of the lost in hades. A great, bridgeless, and impassable gulf yawns between paradise and hell.

To go over the teachings of our Lord in detail as to the final judgment and following retribution would far transcend our limits. Let us single out that marvelous word-picture of the final judgment

in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew. Let us fix our special attention upon the sentence pronounced upon the wicked at its close, and the recorded fulfillment which follows, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his angels." "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment." We select this vision of the final judgment because it seems to be the closing scene in this great drama of time. Here the act seems to close, the curtain drops, and all is ended. The sentence at its close is that of a judge presiding at the most solemn assize ever held, and determining the most momentous issues ever tried. Here, if ever, words would be carefully weighed. The wicked, on the left hand of the Judge, are sentenced to the punishment of "everlasting fire." The place, or, if you please, the state, is clearly defined and carefully distinguished. It is not the pit, the abyss, or the Tartarus, in which the souls of the wicked exist while separate from their bodies. This we are expressly told is destroyed at the judgment. "Death and hades are cast into the lake of fire" (Rev., 20: 14). The inmates of hades, now that their bodies are reunited to their souls in the resurrection, are cast into the lake of fire. "This is the second death," distinguished from, and following upon, the first death of hades. This lake of fire, the destruction of the Old Testament, is the final place or state of the lost after the judgment of the great day. Its distinctive New Testament name is gehenna, more frequently the gehenna of fire. The word gehenna is used twelve times. Once, figuratively, by the apostle James, when he speaks of the tongue set on fire of gehenna. Eleven times it is used by our Lord,—once figuratively, when he uses it with reference to the proselytes of the Pharisees. Ten times it is applied directly to the place of punishment of the wicked after the judgment. After the resurrection and judgment, we are told, soul and body are together cast into the gehenna of fire,—"into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched, where their worm dieth not and their fire is not quenched."

Such is the punishment of fire to which the wicked are con-

demned. But what is the meaning of the word "everlasting," "*everlasting* fire"? Does it denote punishment without end? In Greek there is but one word, *æon*, with its numerous modifications, employed to denote duration. As infinite space is denoted by a multiplication of the unit of measurement (whatever that be) by itself forever, so infinite time is denoted by the endless multiplication of its only unit of measurement, the *æon*. *Æon* added to *æon* forever is eternity. Duration is distinguished into three parts, the past, the present, and the future. The world (that is the time-world or age) is present time; before the world is past time; after the world is future time. These three, added together, make eternity,—the "for ever and ever," time without end. It is the word always employed to denote eternity. Thirty times it is applied to the eternal God, his being, his attributes, his dominion, his glory. Seventeen times it is used in doxologies of praise to God, praises forever, world without end. Sixty times it is applied to the felicity of the righteous. In the final sentence it is applied both to the duration of the blessedness of the righteous and the punishment of the wicked. By what rule of interpretation, then, shall we limit its meaning here? Language cannot express the idea of punishment without end more clearly than it is expressed in the terms of the final sentence.

The apostles, with one voice, reiterate the teachings of the Master. "The vengeance of eternal fire" (Jude, 7), "punished with everlasting destruction" (2 Thess., 1:9), "for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever" (Jude, 13),—declarations like these are constantly recurring. John, who has expanded the germinal teachings of the Master into a glowing Apocalypse, leads us to the very brink of the gehenna of fire, and bids us look upon the smoke of its torment ascending for ever and ever. "They shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever" (Rev., 20:10). If that phrase "for ever and ever" does not express the idea of punishment without end, human language cannot express it.

Confessedly, the language of the Bible seems everywhere to teach

the doctrine of eternal punishment; confessedly, the great mass of devout readers have always so understood it; confessedly, it is the doctrine of the universal Church. But, in the language of our *Confession*, it is a "fearful" truth, and the benevolent heart shrinks from its contemplation. Christianity has so glorified the goodness of God, and so exalted his Fatherhood, and so humanized us and quickened our sympathies with human suffering, that we are appalled at the thought of a human being lost forever. We all know how we are accustomed to treat painful and unwelcome truths, how our prejudices, our sympathies, and our sentiments often overbear the clearest evidence. The difficulty here is, not in the proofs which are addressed to our reason, but in the sensibilities and sentiments which direct the reason. We sympathize with Foster and Farrar in their stern condemnation of those who seem to delight in gazing upon the agonies of the lost, and in lingering around the hells of Milton and Dante. We go with them through the Bible, from book to book, searching among its symbols and its figures, lingering about every text which seems to afford the faintest hope of escape. I wish there was no sin in the world. I wish there were no suffering, no pain, no anguish, no tears, no bleeding hearts, no death. I wish the tribes of sensitive existences, which people air, and land, and sea, instead of preying upon and devouring each other, filling the earth with their shrieks of alarm and groans of anguish, would dwell together in peace, "the lion and the lamb lying down together." I wish all anger, and strife, and tumult, and war, and woe were banished from among men. I wish earth were a paradise of innocence and bliss. I wonder why God, with his infinite goodness and infinite power and resources, did not make it so. This mystery of evil confounds and appalls me. But it is idle for me to wonder or to wish. God has not made the world after my ideals. His ways are not my ways; nor his thoughts, my thoughts. With the heroism of the true searcher after truth I must bid away these alluring visions, and school myself to the task of learning simply what is.

The advocates of a second probation concern themselves chiefly with sentiments, suggestions, analogies, and deductions from partial truths. They have little patience with exact statements, or individual texts, or the letter of the Word. Delivered from the bondage of the letter, they rejoice in the freedom of spirit. They have passed through the wilderness, and ascended a Pisgah, whence their eyes sweep the whole horizon of truth.

From the mount of vision on which they stand, nothing of God is seen but his goodness. Justice, truth, holiness, all the divine attributes, are blended and lost in the white light of goodness. The rainbow round about his throne, with its prismatic colors distinct, has vanished away. The Lawgiver and the Judge are absorbed and lost in the Father. God is good, and his goodness is his glory. We cannot exaggerate in our estimate, for his goodness is as boundless as his nature. "God so loved the world, as to give his only begotten Son," and such love as that has neither measure nor limit. But what is goodness? In the language of Butler, "goodness is not a disposition to make all men happy, but to make the good happy." "Behold the goodness and the severity of God." In nature, in providence, and in the Bible, there they stand side by side, goodness for the good, severity for the wicked. Eden, in its bloom and beauty, for the innocent; Eden withered, earth cursed, for the guilty!

The distinction between what God is in himself and what he manifests of himself in his works is fundamental. God is infinite in power, yet he has not manifested all his power, nor exhausted all the resources of his omnipotence, in the worlds he has made. God is infinite in goodness, yet he has not manifested all his goodness in the works of his hands. Must God, because infinitely good, secure the highest happiness of all his creatures? That is a question of fact to be determined by actual observation. He could have made more and more glorious worlds; he could have peopled them with inhabitants of far greater capacities of happiness; he could have made the wide universe a heaven and peopled it with archangels.

In point of fact, the worlds he has made are filled with all manner of physical disorders. They are rocked by earthquakes, torn by volcanoes, swept by tempests, deformed by deserts, frozen by arctic colds, and parched by equatorial heats. He has made crawling worms, and loathsome insects, and poisonous serpents, and cruel beasts of prey. Meager as the capacities of happiness often are, few enjoy even up to the measure of their capacity. Surely infinite goodness does not compel God to make all his creatures capable of the highest degree of happiness; nor yet to make all happy up to the full measure of their capacity. Finite nature cannot display the infinite goodness of God. To display that, he must create an infinite being, another God.

And then justice may impose a limitation on the manifestation of the divine goodness. Goodness is voluntary, but justice is imperative. God must be just, for justice and judgment are the very habitation of his throne. No gift of his goodness can set aside the behests of his justice. There may be that in the justice of God, which, in the language of our *Confession*, requires him to condemn some to everlasting punishment "to the praise of his glorious justice." This we know assuredly, from every-day observation, that God's goodness does not require him to make all his creatures happy, nor prevent him from visiting them with the sternest punishment.

A second plea for the second probation is drawn from the nature of the gospel and the universality of the gospel offer. The Son of man came to bring salvation to the ends of the earth. He commanded his gospel to be preached to all the world. "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark, 16 : 15). He makes the rejection of the proffered salvation the ground of condemnation. "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned" (Mark, 16 : 16). "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light" (John, 3 : 19). If the gospel be designed for all men, and if men are condemned for its rejection,

must not the gospel be offered to every creature, if not in this world, then in the next? It is the purpose of God that the gospel should be published to all the world, and that purpose will be fulfilled speedily, according to the measure of him with whom a thousand years are as a day. Those who hear and reject the gospel shall suffer an aggravated doom. There is a gradation in punishment. He who knew his Lord's will, and did it not, shall be beaten with many stripes. "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required" (Luke, 12:48). It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah, in the day of judgment, than for those who reject the offered salvation.

But is the rejection of Christ the only, or the primal, ground of condemnation? No. Sin, every sin, "deserves God's wrath and curse both in this life and in that which is to come." The apostle argues this question at length in the Epistle to the Romans. He declares that the rejection of Christ is not the only ground of condemnation. Those who have not the written law are a law unto themselves. God has written it on their hearts. They have within themselves a judge interpreting and administering the law. "Their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing, or else excusing, one another" (Rom., 2:15). The heathen are not judged by a law which they know not, nor condemned for the rejection of a Saviour who has never been offered to them. They are judged and condemned by the law written on their hearts. "These having not the law, are a law unto themselves" (Rom., 2:14).

The goodness of God, we are told, requires that the offer of salvation should be made at some time to every man. We are not competent to pronounce upon the question what the goodness of God requires of him, for we see that he deals very unequally with men. He does not afford them all equal advantages. He does not make all happy. Everywhere he seems to prefer holiness to happiness, and sacrifices the happiness of his creatures to promote their holiness. Sin, not suffering, is, in his account, the transcendent

evil. That the goodness of God does not save men from suffering here we see. That it forbids everlasting suffering we can know only when we can measure the evil of sin, know all the demands of justice, and comprehend all the interests of God's great empire. The lost, be it remembered, are not punished for the sins committed in this life alone. They carry with them a nature prone to evil, a character formed, and habits fixed; and so sin forever. Hence, we read of their "eternal sin," and eternal sin deserves eternal punishment.

Joseph E. Smith