

will be following the "doctrine and commandments of men," and if you follow the theory of man to man you must look for Salvation.

We frequently hear the most learned divines of the day telling the people, "Come to Jesus tonight. Tomorrow may be too late. Your spirit may have left you by the morrow and if you have not confessed Jesus as the Christ you are doomed to everlasting torment." The poor deluded souls then give the preacher their hand, and if they desire baptism they accommodate them by sprinkling a few drops of water on their heads, which has no resemblance to a birth (John: 3-5) burial (Romans: 6 5.) or resurrection.

The Roman and Colossian Saints were "buried with Christ in baptism," and when anything is buried it is completely covered. Then this is the end of all argument, if we are desirous of being buried with Christ in baptism we must be completely covered.

After so long a deviation from what was intended to be a few words on the subject of "salvation of the dead," I return to that theme by quoting the words of Jesus to the Pharisaic ruler (John 3:5) "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of the water and of the spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven."

How it is generally conceded that there is nothing impossible with God.

This, however is a mistake, for Paul informs us there is one thing impossible even with God, and i. e. He "cannot lie." (Titus 1:2.)

Now after Jesus telling Nicodemus that in order to enter the kingdom of heaven a man must be born of water i. e. baptism in water, and also of the Spirit, We still find clergymen telling people that baptism is non-essential; for, say they, one man was saved without having any water applied, and why not others? And this "one man" whom they quote to support their vain and delusive theory is the penitent thief upon the cross, whom Jesus promised to "be with Him in Paradise" (Luke 23:43.)

Said Paradise is claimed by uninspired teachers to be heaven. It now becomes my duty as far as possible to correct this erroneous idea, which is one reason for the growing skepticism in the world to day.

It can be proved that Jesus after relating to Nicodemus the conditions necessary to be met to secure salvation viz., to be born again. Told the thief that he would go with Him to heaven, when he, (the thief) in all probability never had been baptized, then we can prove that we cannot depend upon the words of our Redeemer. Remember His promise was not to be with Him "in heaven," but "in paradise." Now let us designate where the Savior and the thief went on the self same day of their crucifixion, for that was the day they were to be together in paradise. On the third day after making the thief the above promise, the same Jesus arose from the grave and was met by Mary Magdalene, who, upon learning it was Jesus, would have embraced Him whom she termed "master," but the command of Jesus was, "Touch me not for I am not yet ascended to my Father." (John 20th chapter.) Here are His own words telling that worthy woman that he had not been to heaven, or where the Father dwelt (which is in heaven.)

Peter, the chief Apostle, I think all will admit is a competent person to tell

us where Jesus was during the three days that the spirit was separated from the body. He (Peter 3:18-20) informs us that Christ had suffered for sins, the just the unjust, and for no other reason than "that He might bring us to God," and that is why He went and preached to the spirits in prison; and from (Peter 4:6) we learn that they to whom He then preached "might live according to men in the flesh, but be judged according to God in the Spirit."

Here, then, is the last account we have of the thief in the old anti-deluvian prison, listening to Jesus preach to those rebellious spirits who had rejected the counsels of God by refusing to accept the conditions of salvation they had had but offered to them; and for failing to repent and to accept the Prophet Noah's teachings, which came from God, they had been shut up in prison for two thousand years, until Jesus of Nazareth, in fulfillment of the words of Isaiah 24:22, visits them. What advantage, I ask, would it be to them to hear the Gospel if there was no chance of obeying it? It would only tend to increase their misery, and this principle is not consistent with the character of Deity. Isaiah further predicts that the mission of Christ was to bring out the prisoners from the pit, and they that sit in darkness out of the prison house (Isaiah 42:6 7); and that He would proclaim liberty to them (Isaiah 61:1.)

Read the words of Jesus (John 5:25,) and then take in connection therewith the words of Peter (18:20) and at a glance we see the fulfillment of the many predictions, some of which already have been referred to, concerning the preaching of the Gospel in the spirit world.

In Matthew 4:5 6 we learn that before the great and dreadful day of the Lord Elijah the Prophet should be sent to turn the hearts of the fathers, to the children and the hearts of the children to their fathers lest the whole earth be smitten with a curse. Now the question naturally arises as to how this work is to be brought about. Many tell us that John the Baptist, when he came before the Messiah, came in the spirit of Elijah; but if that were admitted which I by no means allow, then he utterly failed in accomplishing that for which he was sent, for there was no turning together of hearts. Salvation for the fathers is secured by the children performing a vicarious work for those who perhaps never had the opportunity of accepting the Gospel in the flesh. It can also be secured for those who hear the glad tidings but fail to understand and obey them in this life, though this last class, like the disobedient of Noah's day, will have to go to prison until they have paid the "uttermost farthing" for their disobedience.

A vicarious work always has been instituted. In the days of ancient Israel the priest offered sacrifice to the people. Christ atoned for the original sin, which could only be accomplished by the infinite atonement which was made by Him.

That the Corinthian Saints well understood and practiced baptism for the dead is evident from the following passage: "Else why are ye then baptized for the dead if the dead rise not at all? Why are ye then baptized for the dead?" (Corinthians 15:29.) This passage has caused theologians more anxiety than any other in the Bible. In vain have

they tried to evade the principle so clearly taught in this passage.

In the year 1836 the Prophet Elijah appeared to Joseph Smith and informed him that the time spoken of (Malachi 4:5 6) had fully come and that the work to be accomplished preparatory to the second coming of Messiah was that of salvation for the dead; and the energy with which the Saints enter into this work is a living testimony to the world that there is virtue in the mission of Elijah. "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, I of all men would be most miserable," said Paul; but knowing that there was still a chance for progression beyond the grave he rejoiced in his persecution. But "The things of God are only known by the Spirit of God," and depending upon the wisdom of man causes the delusion.

B. W. DIXON.

WISCONSIN ECHOES.

FOND DU LAC, Wisconsin,

February, 1st 1897.

I left my home in Mt. Pleasant, Sanpete county, Utah, on October 20th, 1896. I went to Salt Lake City, where I was set apart to fill a mission to the Northern states. On the evening of the 22nd I left for Kansas city, and arriving there was appointed to labor in Fond Du Lac, Wisconsin, in the Wisconsin conference, with Elder F. M. Stevenson of Lewiston, Utah, who was released to return home on the 12th of December, 1896. Elder Edward W. Croft of Paris, Idaho, was then sent to take his place, and in connection with the last named Elder I have visited quite a large portion of this city.

In visiting the people we find a great deal of prejudice existing against our people, and in many instances find that some who are very bitter against what are known as the Mormons can scarcely give a reason why they are so; and in questioning them we learn that they know nothing concerning us only what they have read in newspapers, they never having seen a Mormon, and never having read one word of their belief, or of the doctrine taught by them.

On arriving in this city we called on the mayor, B. F. Sweet, who received us very kindly, and gave us the opportunity of tracting and preaching as much as we pleased, and said he was well acquainted with some of the leaders of the Church who, he thought, were very nice gentlemen. He had done considerable business with them and found them to be strictly honest. He is the patentee and manufacturer of the common sense sleigh which is used so extensively in our State. He showed us through his large factory, which covers about two acres, was very gentlemanly with us, and wished us success in our labors.

There are in this city quite a number of good, honest people, some of whom treat us very kindly, and although we have been refused a number of churches which we have tried to obtain for the purpose of preaching to the people the plan of salvation, we are by no means discouraged, as we have held quite a few meetings in private houses, and find that if we can only get a chance to explain the principles that we advocate, we always make friends. Our labors so far have been as successful as we could reasonably expect, as we are the first Mormon Elders who have labored in