

## GOD AND MAN.

"There is no end to my works, neither to my words; for this is my work and my glory, to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man."

These words, spoken by God to Moses on the mount, indicate that His works and words are all for the ultimate benefit of man. And why? Because He is the Father of the spirits of all men; and fathers have affectionate parental solicitude for their children. Should children become unfortunate, entailing misery upon them, the tender care of a loving father is especially manifested towards them, as is, and ever has been, the case with God and fallen man.

The term man, as here used, includes woman also—the male and female, the one as necessary as the other to man's existence.

We speak of God as Father; and we must be spoken of as children—children of a God in our spiritual creation, which was independent of the temporal creation. Therefore the Apostle reasons in this wise, "We have fathers after the flesh whom we reverence; how much rather be in subjection to the Father of our spirits and live."

That which is spiritual is also eternal. He who is without beginning of days or end of time, begets that which is like unto himself. One part of man therefore is eternal, and the mortal part must become immortal to blend with and forever be associated with the eternal. This is the labor of man's life, to exchange the mortal for the immortal and thereby be prepared for the eternal.

Now, the question arises, how is this to be done? We must learn how to come in possession of the mortal, which is death with all its entailments, and then take the directly opposite course to secure opposite results. We are now in time with mortality and death; these are the opposites of eternity, with immortality and eternal life.

We are informed that by sin—transgression of the law, came death with all its consequences of mortality, and that by obedience, the grace and favor of God may come unto eternal life.

All, then, of immortality is included in the one single fact of obedience to divine law, which is the law of God—the Father of our spirit, who is immortal and eternal. To learn the law and keep it becomes the whole duty of man, necessary to his highest possible attainments.

To demonstrate the truth of this reasoning, we have only to refer to what has been the history of man, and what logical facts proclaim must be his future. God, our Father, who is the Creator of all things, created the heavens and the earth to be a temporary home for His children, and gave to them a material organization in which the spiritual could dwell and form an eternal union. As one principle or element can never exist in perfection without relation to another, so it became necessary that the spiritual and temporal should be united in an eternal bond, in order to be made partaker of the fulness of the Father's being and glory.

When man was placed upon the earth, provided with all a Father's

wisdom could devise for His children's happiness, there was a law given to him which if broken, the penalty was to be death—a separation of the body from the spirit—counteracting or destroying the very purpose for which he came to earth. More than this, he was to be cast out where he could not see his Father's face. This was both a temporal and spiritual death; an entire separation of body and spirit, and the child from Father's presence.

What a fearful condition to be plunged into by one sinful act of man, when in the exercise of his agency and self-control he chose what would bring to him evil and dissolution, instead of the good secured by a Father's favor. Man was now hopeless and helpless. Death, his mortal enemy, now stared him in the face, haunted his brief mortal existence with no visible means of escape from the terrible consequences of violating the Father's law—an act for which he could offer no excuse, it being a negative law so far as he was concerned. It was a requirement of him not to do that which required an effort on his part; hence no plea of justification could be urged. The now shame-faced culprit could only plead that he had of his own free will listened to the tempter's voice rather than to a Father's law. A violated law demanded justice; an attribute of the Great Eternal whose word was irrevocable—"Thou shalt surely die." Such is man today and ever has been—subject to death and shut out from his Father's presence.

And is there no hope for man? Oh! what a blessed word is hope, a virtue of Deity as eternal as is justice. It may now claim its rights on fallen man—may now find a field worthy of its unbounded favor in a plan devised by which the lost may be recovered—the fallen be redeemed.

The tidings of that plan comes heralded to earth; a sacrifice is provided to atone for sin, and if you will now choose to accept my law, and do my will, you shall again enter into and abide my presence, after the demands of justice have been satisfied; and you shall symbolize the sacrifice which I have prepared by shedding the blood of the firstlings of your flock, and I will satisfy the demands of justice in your behalf by sending my first born Son, whose blood shall be shed for you in the meridian of time; for without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins; and that must be innocent—an offering free from guilt—of one who has power over death and can restore body and spirit to their former eternal union, that my work in the creation of man may not be frustrated, but be to his immortality and eternal life, and to my glory."

The promised Deliverer appeared midway between the time of man's fall and the time of his final restoration, with power to demonstrate the fact that by virtue of His mission the spirits and bodies of all men should be reunited after death; that there should be an end to the power of death; and without the exercise of any agency on his part he should be made man again and be brought into the presence of the Father, to give an account of the acts of his life, as to having accepted or rejected the atonement made in his behalf.

Evidence of acceptance was to be by obedience to law, as the only competent test; while disobedience to law should be evidence of his choice to remain subject to the power of death. Remaining in sin and thereby approving the conditions which brought death, will not prevent man from appearing in the divine presence, as man, with spirit and body, raised from the dead to render a final account of deeds done in the body; but as the Father is unchangeable and will not allow sin to dwell in His presence, all these must then again be cast out from His presence the second time. This is called the second death, from which there has never been anything revealed giving hope of redemption to those on whom the sentence shall be passed.

The first sentence passed upon man in the Garden of Eden was terrible in its far reaching consequences, as a world of woe and death has witnessed from that day to this; but far more terrible must be the consequences of that condition which the second death promises to those over whom it shall have power, with no ray of hope for a release from its torment, the extent of which never has nor ever will be revealed to man. Among all the sufferings of the present we may have hope of final deliverance. Not so to those who are made partakers of that second death.

Man's condition and relation to his Maker are such that the first principle of his nature to be put into active exercise is that of faith. To worship an unseen God faith is necessary; for that is the assurance we have of that which is unseen. We must believe that He is before we can seek Him with any hope of obtaining favor, or that He will reward those who diligently serve Him, by keeping His commandments; or punish those who are guilty of disobedience to His Law.

A Belov'd worthy of our worship and adoration "must be one with whom we have an affinity, one possessing similar qualities and attributes, in order that mutual sympathy may constitute a bond of fellowship by which each becomes necessary to the other's happiness. This is characteristic of the relation of parents and children, and is evidence of the restoration of the relation between God and man, which existed in the beginning before the fall of man was compassed by the evil one.

With this faith in God hope is always associated; it is an attendant virtue, and as necessary to a living faith as the mortality of man is to the Father's glory. These co-workers and charity—which is the love of God—are implanted in man for his exercise of them on earth, and they ever abide with the Father in the holiest condition of spiritual existence. Faith prompts to obedience, hope sustains and is as an anchor to the soul in its most trying adversity, and charity, which is love, is the fulfilling of the law; placing man in harmony with God and the heavens, and secure to him all the good and happiness that can be derived from them, or that they are capable of bestowing.

Possessing these virtues, love becomes the characteristic of humanity, as it is the most prominent excellence of the Deity. It is written, "God is love," and it must be under the con-