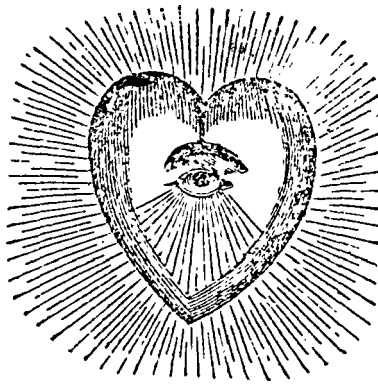


THE



SEER.

All ye inhabitants of the world, and dwellers on the earth, See Ye, when He lifteth up an Ensign on the Mountains.—*Isaiah* XVIII, 3.

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No. 1.

THE TREATMENT OF THE UNITED STATES TOWARDS THE SAINTS.

Question.—First, In what manner have the people of the United States treated the divine message contained in the Book of Mormon?

Answer.—They have closed their eyes, their ears, their hearts and their doors against it. They have laughed at, ridiculed, derided, and treated it with the utmost contempt. They have scorned, rejected, and hated the servants of God who were sent to bear testimony of it. They have invented the most abominable, wicked and malicious lies, and published the same against it. Their priests have hypocritically and piously read these lies from the pulpit, and warned their congregations from one end of the Union to the other, to neither hear, read, nor investigate it, nor any thing in favor of it. They have denounced it as “a most vile and wicked imposition;” “a horrid blasphemy;” “a soul-destroying and most damnable doctrine, emanating from the bowels of hell.” Their editors have for years reiterated, through the columns of their papers, these abusive unjust denunciations and vile falsehoods, without giving any chance in their columns for a reply or correction of these bare-faced and foul misrepresentations.

Question.—Second, In what manner have the United States treated the saints who have believed in this divine message?

Answer.—The people, not satisfied with having scorned, ridiculed, lied against, denounced, and rejected the message, have, likewise, poured out their abuse like a flood upon the heads of the innocent who received it. They have proceeded to the most savage and outrageous persecutions: have fallen like demons upon their defenceless prey; burned hundreds of their houses; destroyed their furniture, and their stacks of hay and grain; shot down their cattle and flocks for sport; dragged little children from their hiding places and placing the muzzles of their guns to their heads have blown out their brains, with the most horrid oaths and imprecations. They have taken the fair daughters of American citizens, bound them upon benches used for public worship, and there, in great numbers, ravished them until death came to their relief. They have thrust ministers of the gospel into loathsome dungeons, bound them in chains and hand-cuffs, and fed them on human flesh. At one time they drove twelve hundred men, women, and children from their own comfortable homes and firesides; seized upon their property and their lands, which by their hard earnings they had purchased from the General Government, and compelled the lawful owners to wander in the wilderness, and upon the bleak frosty prairies, without

house, shelter, or home. At another time, after butchering scores of defenceless men, women, and children, fifteen thousand were driven from their own habitations and lands, and compelled to brave the storms of another dreary winter, while they wandered, faint and hungry, for several hundred miles through the inhospitable regions of Missouri, being scorned, hissed at, and spurned from their doors, and threatened with continual death. At another time, the Great Prophet of the last days, by whom the sacred history of one half of our globe was revealed, and others of the servants of God, were thrust into prison, and there some seventy or eighty individuals, painted and blacked for the occasion, are permitted, in open day, to fall upon their defenceless victims and murder them in the most shocking manner. At another time, thirty thousand men, women, and children, after seeing much of their property destroyed, and many of their numbers murdered, were forced at the point of the bayonet to again flee from their houses and lands, and launch forth in the cold month of February, among the snow-drifts and piercing colds of the almost uninhabited prairies of Iowa, leaving only a few hundreds of the old, sick, and infirm, until the season should become more favorable. And after having arrived in an Indian country, and suffered hardships indescribable, what was their astonishment to find themselves called upon to furnish five hundred men to fight the battles of the United States against Mexico! They themselves had just been deprived of all the sacred rights of American citizens; had just been driven by the force of arms from the Republic; had suffered the loss of millions of dollars, and were then in the very act of fleeing for their lives to the dens, and caves, and deserts of the Rocky mountains. And to add to all their calamities, the government had looked coldly on, and seen all these evils heaped upon them year after year;

they had seen them deprived of every right guaranteed in the Constitution; they had seen them whipped, immured in dungeons, driven from settlement to settlement, and from state to state, and at last expelled from the States, and told that they must not stop short of the Rocky mountains. And yet this same government, that had afforded them no protection, provokingly asked them to drop their families upon the prairies, to leave them upon the western plains, in the midst of savage tribes; to forsake helpless women and children, exposed to the pitiless storms of an approaching winter, far from the abodes of what is termed civilized man; without house, without home, without food, without any apparent prospect but starvation and death. But here the scenery does not close, for scarcely had the five hundred men bid adieu to their weeping families, under these heart-rending circumstances, and commenced their long and tedious march against Mexico, when the sad and mournful news reached them that their aged fathers and mothers, their sick brothers and sisters, whom they were obliged to leave behind in Nauvoo, were surrounded by an army of several thousand strong, their defenceless houses cannonaded for several days, several killed, and the balance driven by the point of the bayonet across the Mississippi river, and told to flee for their lives beyond the Rocky mountains! Oh, how encouraging must this news have been to those brave and honest men who were then marching, hungry and thirsty, across the burning sandy deserts against the Mexican foe! Oh, how cheering must have been the reflection, that they themselves, with their helpless wives and children, had only a short time previous been driven from the nation in whose service they were then enlisted; and that their aged fathers and their sick relatives had just shared the same fate! This is a short but true account of the treatment of this nation towards one of the greatest messages

that God ever sent to enlighten the world, and towards His servants who were sent to proclaim it, and towards the honest humble souls who have received it.

Question.—Has the General Government any power to protect her citizens in the enjoyment of the rights guaranteed in her constitution?

Answer.—She has the power, but in the cases which we have mentioned she lacked the disposition.

Question.—But were not these wholesale murders and wholesale banishments inflicted by the sovereign states of Missouri and Illinois? and have the United States any power to interfere with the acts of sovereign States?

Answer.—When a sovereign state rises up in rebellion and open violation against the most sacred rights, vested in the general Constitution, and by force or arms deprives thirty thousand men, women, and children of their houses and lands, and forces them at the cannons' mouth, and under the most fearful threats of extermination and death, to leave not only the State, but also the Republic; then it is most palpably evident that these sovereign States are at open war against the Constitution and the dearest rights of American citizens. Each citizen of every State, is also a citizen of the United States; he has State rights and United States' rights, and when a sovereign State forcibly and without law deprives him of both of these rights, he has no appeal only to the General Government; and it is her province to restore the injured party to his rights and protect him therein, and to bring the sovereign State to punishment for her treason and rebellion against the Constitution.

Question.—Has not each sovereign State a right to act according to the wishes of the majority? and should not the voice of the people in each State rule?

Answer.—They have a right to comply with the wishes of the majority, when those wishes are included

within the limits of the constitution; but the moment they transcend these, or undertake to rule by the voice of the people in violation of the rights of American citizens, their sovereignty should no longer protect them from the superior power of the United States. For instance, if the voice of the people in a sovereign State should do away with a republican form of government, and establish a king instead of a governor, the General Government would then have power to call that sovereign State to an account, and to protect the minority of her citizens in the rights called for by the constitution. The voice of the people, therefore, has no right to rule only within the limits of the constitution. Should the democrats, because they are the majority in the sovereign State of Illinois, force the whigs to yield up their constitutional rights, drive them at the cannons' mouth from the State, and threaten them with a wholesale extermination if they dared to stop within a thousand miles of the Republic, we think that there would be some power in the General Government to put a stop to the exercise of such sovereignty. We think that the voice of the people thus unconstitutionally exercised, would not screen her from the justice and punishment which she would so richly deserve. Would not the United States by military power immediately chastise such a sovereign State, and restore the whigs to their houses, their homes, and their rights as American citizens? Every man in the Union will answer yes. If this would be done in the case of the whigs, who are a large minority, should it not also be done in the case of a smaller minority? If the General Government has the right to protect one hundred thousand from a wholesale banishment, she has the right to protect thirty thousand from the same unjust calamity. In the one case she would have the power and disposition; in the other she has the power but not the disposition, and this makes the great difference.

If a foreign foe should make war against the city of New York, and drive her citizens a thousand miles from their homes, you would not hear the General Government pretending that they had no power nor right to chastise that foreign foe. If the sovereign State of New York should commit the same depredations upon the city, should they not be chastised as an internal foe, far more dangerous than a foreign enemy? Is not rebellion against the dearest rights of American citizens far more outrageous and intolerable than the aggressions of foreign nations? If the United States have power to protect large bodies of her citizens from foreign invasion, is it not an absurdity to say that she cannot protect them from home invasions? Where then is the argument that will justify the General Government in their cruel neglect towards thirty thousand American citizens, whom they have seen robbed and expelled from their homes by the marshalled hosts of the sovereign State of Illinois? Is there the least shadow of an excuse for suffering a State to go unpunished who thus suffers her own citizens to trample upon the rights of the minority, and deprive them of houses, lands, homes, and all the dearest rights of American citizens, and banish them, by wholesale, a thousand miles from their country? If sovereign States can exercise this power without being amenable to the General Government, where then is safety? Where then can the minority, against whom the majority shall form a dislike, find protection from the sword and the bayonet? Where can they appeal for protection, in the enjoyment of their sacred homes and firesides, if not to the General Government? What shall save the minority, in any sovereign State, from being expelled from their country at any time that the majority shall think proper to attack them with powder and ball? Away, then, with the unjust assertion, that the United States have no right nor power to

protect American citizens from being butchered, and forcibly driven from their country by the marshalled armies of sovereign States! The assertion is too glaring to blind the eyes of ignorant savages; and when made to enlightened freemen, it is an insult of the most aggravating nature.

Question.—But were these thirty thousand citizens expelled from their homes and from the State, by the armies of the State, acting under State orders, or by mob armies?

Answer.—It matters not by which it was done—it is certain that it has been done; and, however it may have been done, it does not justify, in the least, the criminal neglect of the General Government. First, if it were done by State armies, and by State authority, then the United States are deeply guilty for not bringing that rebellious State to justice, and for not restoring those thirty thousand injured citizens to their country—to their lands, and to their Constitutional rights; and protecting them therein as American citizens. Secondly, if they were driven from the country by mob armies, then the State, if she had power to protect her citizens, and did not do it, is equally as guilty as if she had expelled them by her own orders; and, in this case, the United States are equally as guilty as in the other case in suffering a sovereign State to permit American citizens to be thus treated. Lastly, if Illinois has not the power to protect the minority against the aggressions of the majority, then it was the duty of the United States to have furnished relief, and assisted the State in protecting the minority in their constitutional rights. And her neglect to do this, renders her equally as guilty as in the former two cases. Therefore, it matters not whether those thirty thousand were cannonaded out of the State by the orders of the State, or by the orders of a mob through the neglect of the State, or by the armies of a mob whom the State had not sufficient force to over-

come. In either case, the neglect of the General Government is equally criminal; and the acts of those rebellious armies will forever be considered as virtually the acts of the General Government. And there is no way in which they can wipe away the odium, and stain, and blood-guiltiness which are upon them, and which cry loudly to the heavens for vengeance. It is true, should they bring Missouri and Illinois to justice; should they restore those exiled citizens to their country, their lands, and their homes, and protect them therein; and restore the millions of dollars worth of property which those States have suffered to be violently taken from them; it would manifest, in some measure, a repentance on the part of the General Government, and serve, in some small degree, to remove the stigma that is upon them; but all this would not restore the lives of hundreds of American citizens who have been murdered and butchered by their cold and unfeeling neglect.

Question.—Have those injured exiled American citizens ever memorialized the General Government upon the subject of their wrongs, and sought redress from their hands, and protection in their constitutional rights?

Answer.—Yes: After fifteen thousand American citizens had been driven from the State of Missouri, under the exterminating orders of Governor Boggs, having previously applied to the judicial and legislative authority of that State in vain, they sent their delegates with a memorial to the President and to Congress, who had the unblushing impudence to refer them for redress to the very State whose Governor had driven them from her borders, and whose Legislature had voted two hundred thousand dollars to pay her troops for their blood-thirsty and unconstitutional acts. Yes, they were told to go and seek redress from their murderers, and from the murderers of their wives and children.

And again, when threatened with like calamities by the State of Illi-

nois, memorials were again sent to the President and to Congress, earnestly imploring protection. I, myself, as the Agent and Delegate of that injured people, waited about ten weeks at the Capital for a report upon these memorials; but they were treated with silent neglect! and in a few weeks afterwards the Prophet and others were murdered; and but a short time elapsed before thirty thousand were forced from their homes and banished from the country. What has the Government done, in one single instance, to protect them or restore them to their rights, during the long period of twenty years' suffering and banishment? Just nothing at all. They have been treated as though they were not American citizens—they have been deprived of every sacred right in the Constitution—they have been whipped, mauled, and beaten, until their bowels have gushed out; they have been robbed, plundered, and driven, year after year, from county to county, and from state to state: they have been incarcerated in dungeons, bound down with strong chains, like wild beasts, and there fed with human flesh cut from their murdered friends. They have been tortured, shot, and murdered in various ways; and to cap the climax, they have, *en masse*, been cannonaded, not only from a State, but from the United States; and threatened that if they stopped short of the Sandy Deserts, west of the Rocky Mountains, they should be butchered and exterminated without regard to age or sex. What more can this nation do to fully and entirely reject the divine message which God has sent into the world to warn them of their sins, and to save them if they repent? They can do nothing worse than what they have already done. They can react those murderous scenes over again, and thus fill up the cup of their iniquities; but they cannot perpetrate deeds of a more horrid nature than those of which they are already guilty. EDITOR.

F A I T H .

What is faith? This is a question often asked, and often answered in different ways. We shall not attempt to give the different views of people upon this principle, but only to clearly define our own. Faith is simply the belief, the confidence, or the assent of the mind in relation to any subject, or proposition, or thing, whether true or false, which it supposes to be true. Faith is the result of evidence. True evidence, when believed, produces true faith: false evidence, when believed, produces false faith. Neither a true nor false faith could exist without evidence. A child, seeing others walk, believes that he can walk, and accordingly makes the exertion and succeeds in taking a few steps. Now he would never have made the exertion without having some faith that it was possible; this faith in the child's mind is the result of evidence. A man, seeing others swim in water, believes on this evidence, and other circumstances, that it is possible for himself to perform the same act. He makes the attempt because of his faith. Truthful parents relate many facts and incidents to their little children, who, having a degree of faith in their words, follow their directions, and demonstrate by actual experience that those words are verily true. These frequent demonstrations beget almost unlimited confidence in what their parents tell them. Their words are considered sufficient evidence on almost any subject. These same parents, being, in some things, deceived themselves, teach their errors to their children; the children, having proved in every preceding instance that their words were true, receive their evidence in relation to what is false. the result is a false faith, founded upon false evidence, which they sincerely suppose to be true. The faith of the heathen in their idolatrous gods is the result of

false evidence; and their faith is weak or strong just in proportion to the apparent weakness or strength of the evidence. The faith of the Roman Catholics, that the Bible and tradition without any new revelation, are a sufficient rule of faith and practice, is just as much the result of a false traditionary evidence, as the faith of the Protestants in regard to the Bible alone being sufficient. The faith of Christendom in their newly invented "*god, without body or parts,*" is just as much the result of false evidence, as the faith of the Hindoos in their gods of more ancient invention.

Before we can have faith in any thing we must first have evidence, for in all cases evidence precedes faith, and in searching after evidence we are exceedingly liable to be deceived. All the inhabitants of our globe were for many ages deceived in supposing that the earth had no diurnal rotation upon its axis: they believed that the apparent diurnal rotation of the heavenly bodies around the earth was real. This universal and long continued delusion was the result of receiving false evidence, handed down and rendered sacred by tradition. Among all the antediluvian world only eight persons had the true faith; all the rest perished with a false faith.

A false faith in regard to some things is far more dangerous than in others. To believe that the sun performs an annual revolution around the earth, though it is known to be false, is not attended with any very dangerous consequences; but to believe a divine message, sent from heaven, is false is attended with consequences of the most fearful kind, involving the present and future happiness of the soul. So, likewise, to believe a religion, invented by uninspired men, to be of divine origin, is equally fatal in its consequences.

Faith most generally leads to works

corresponding in nature with the belief. Faith in the heathen systems of mythology caused whole nations and generations to worship according to those systems. Faith in the corrupt systems of modern Christianity causes the nations of Europe and America to practice in accordance therewith. Faith in new revelations leads people to practice according to the requirements contained in them.

It is sometimes the case, however, that people practice contrary to their faith, being governed by some motive of a more powerful nature. A person may have a degree of faith in the Book of Mormon, yet, through fear of persecution, or some other cause, he may refuse obedience to its requirements. A farmer may believe that if he sows his fields and cultivates them they will yield an abundant harvest, but, through laziness, he neglects to act according to his faith, and therefore does not reap the reward. When faith, either true or false, is sufficiently powerful to lead to action, it produces effects accordingly. The faith of Paul that Jesus of Nazareth was an impostor led him to do many things against him: his faith, after seeing the light and hearing the voice from the heavens, led him to spend his life in advocating his doctrine. The faith of some led them to think that they were doing God service in killing the Apostles; the faith of others made them willing to die for their testimony concerning Jesus. The murderers of the apostles, and the apostles themselves, both had faith and works; the one had false faith and wicked works; the other had true faith and righteous works. Faith alone will not save men; neither will faith and works save them, unless they are of the right kind. Indeed the faith and works of the greatest portion of mankind will be the very cause of their damnation. True faith and righteous works are essential to salvation; and without both of these no man ever was or ever can be saved.

Unless the true principles of sal-

vation be revealed and established by sufficient evidence, there could be no true faith and works by which mankind could obtain salvation; for in the system of salvation, works follow faith, and faith follows evidence, and evidence accompanies the revealed truth. For instance, God reveals the great and sublime truths contained in the Book of Mormon. Next, He sends evidence sufficient to convince mankind of the divine authenticity of these truths. Thirdly, this evidence produces faith in the minds of those who candidly and carefully examine it. Fourthly, this faith will lead the honest to do the works required of them in that book. And lastly, through the atonement of Christ these faith and works, combined together, will surely save them in the kingdom of God.

The evidence which God always gives to establish the divinity of His revelations, is sufficient to produce faith in the heart of every person living, who examines it in a proper manner. Hence every creature in all the world, who has come to years of understanding, and who has evidence placed within his reach, is condemned if he does not believe it. There are some who say that, if the evidence were sufficient, they would be compelled to believe; but this is not true,—the evidence may be sufficient, and yet they may refuse to examine it; or they may examine it with prejudiced minds, or they may be careless in their examinations, or they may refuse to examine it in the manner in which God has directed; or they may examine it with a determination not to embrace it, even though it be true; or they may be partial in weighing the evidence for, and apparently against it, with a most anxious desire and hope, that they shall find it false. All these obstacles, and many others that might be named, prevent them from believing that which an honest, candid, unprejudiced, and prayerful mind would believe. Therefore it is not for the lack of evidence that

they disbelieve, but it is their own evil hearts, and the darkness which they bring with them in their investigations. When God reveals a truth, as it is always accompanied with sufficient evidence, all people, because of their agency, can believe or disbelieve it, as they choose; and if they believe it, they can also obey or disobey it, as they choose: and herein is the condemnation of man, because they prefer unbelief to faith, and disobedience to obedience.

When the Apostles were commanded to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature, they were informed that he who believed the Gospel and was baptized should be saved; and he who believed not should be damned. To believe the Gospel, as the Apostles preached it, was not sufficient, but Jesus added the condition of baptism, clearly showing that their faith must be manifested by their works, otherwise it would be of no benefit to them. Jesus very well understood that the works necessary to salvation never would be performed without faith, which always precedes them; and as this faith was in their power to obtain through the evidence offered by the preaching of his Apostles, he determined to damn every creature in all the world that would not believe the message they taught.

There are some who believe that faith alone, unaccompanied by works, is sufficient for justification, sanctification, and salvation. But what would it benefit a hungry man, in a field, who believes that in the house there is a table spread for him, with an abundance of food, if he make no exertion to approach the house and obtain the blessing? What profit would it be to a rich man who has faith in the words of Jesus, concerning the feeding of the hungry and the clothing of the naked, unless he have works corresponding to that faith? What blessing would be obtained by believing every word which Christ has spoken, unless we do them? It is not the person who merely be-

lieves in the sayings of Christ, that is justified, but it is he who shows his faith by obeying them. When Jesus speaks of believers, he has reference, most generally, to those whose faith had been sufficiently strong to lead them to obedience. It is to these kind of believers that he refers in the following passages: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my words, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come unto condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "He that believeth on him is not condemned."

Jesus here refers to a class of believers who should fully prove their faith by their obedience. Such, and such alone, should be freed from condemnation—should pass from death unto life—should become the children of God by having a faith that would lead them to obey. All other believers are without justification—without hope—without everlasting life, and will be damned, the same as unbelievers, because they profess to believe on the words of the Son of God, but will not obey them.

Jesus says, "If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings." As a man's love is manifested by his works, so is his faith.

John says that, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God." It is evident, from the whole Epistle in which these words are contained, that none were to be considered as really believing that Jesus was the Christ, only those who manifested it by keeping his commandments; for he further says, "Hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him and

keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him." And again, he says, "Every one that doeth righteousness is born of him." "Whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God." "He that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him." "Every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." "He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love." "He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because, as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear; because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. We love him because he first loved us." "This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous."

From all these passages it is easy to perceive that salvation depends upon our loving God; and that loving God is the keeping of his commandments; and the keeping of his commandments is the only sure evidence of our really believing that Jesus is the Christ. Let no persons, therefore, flatter or deceive themselves with the idea that they believe from their heart, that Jesus is the Christ, or that they are born of God; or that they have passed from death unto life, or that they love God, unless they are certain that they have kept his commandments and sayings. Millions are deceiving themselves with a false faith and with a false hope—deluding themselves with the notion that they are born of God, when they have not attended even to the first commandments in relation to their adoption. All such will meet with a bitter disappointment.

The first effect of true faith is a sincere, true, and thorough repentance of all sins; the second effect

is an immersion in water for the remission of sins; the third is the reception of the ordinance of the laying on of the hands for the baptism of the Holy Ghost: these are the first commandments in the Gospel. No man has a saving faith without attending to these three requirements. No person can be a believer in Christ, in the scriptural sense of that term, without complying, in the strictest manner, with these commandments; without receiving these, it will be in vain for him to pray for a forgiveness of sins, or for the baptism of the spirit, or for salvation: and if he flatters himself that he loves God, or that he can obtain eternal life without obeying these first commandments, he is woefully deceived. Indeed, these are the introductory principles, and the only principles by which men and women can be born into the kingdom of Christ, and become his sons and daughters. After attending to these, there are other commandments for them to obey; but if they undertake to obey the others first, they will find their endeavors unacceptable in the sight of God. For instance, God requires his sons and daughters to keep the Sabbath day holy; but no man can keep the Sabbath holy until he has attended to the first three commandments of the Gospel, after which he can keep the Sabbath according to the mind of God, but not before. There are many commandments which none but those who are born of God can keep. And for a man to undertake to keep them before attending to the first three, would be like a child's undertaking to read before it had learned the alphabet.

A faith, then, that brings remission of sins or justification to the sinner, is that which is connected with repentance and baptism. Faith alone will not justify; faith and repentance alone will not justify; faith and baptism alone will not justify; but faith, repentance and baptism will justify and bring remission of sins through the blood of Christ. What does Paul mean, when he says,

“Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ?” He means that faith is the starting point—the foundation and cause of our repentance and baptism which bring remission or justification; and being the cause which leads to those results, it is not improper to impute justification to faith. What does that scripture mean that says, “If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation?” It means that real faith in the heart is that which leads to obedience; for a man who does not obey, only has a degree of faith, and not a living faith in the heart which in all cases will lead to repentance, confession, baptism, laying on of hands, &c. All will admit that to believe with the heart leads to and includes repentance. Why not also admit that it includes every other commandment of the gospel? Because believing with the heart in the resurrection of Christ is the moving cause of obedience which brings salvation, it may well be said that salvation is the result of faith.

There has been much dispute among mankind in regard to justification. Some have supposed that we are justified by the blood of Christ by simple faith alone, without performing any works either of the law or gospel. Others suppose that we are justified by the blood of Christ by simply adding repentance to our faith without any further works. Others contend that all mankind will be justified and saved through the blood of Christ, without either faith or works. All these admit that the atonement of Christ is necessary to justification. The only dispute seems to be in regard to the conditions required of the creature by which he receives the justification purchased by the atonement. Those who believe that simple faith alone, without works, is the

only condition required, generally urge the following passages in support of that view: “For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works.” (Rom. 4: 2—6.) Those who believe works necessary to justification, quote the following: “What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him?” “Faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works. Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham, our father, justified by works, when he had offered Isaac, his son, upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. Likewise also was not Rahab, the harlot, justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith, without works, is dead also.” (James 2: 14—26.) Paul and James seem apparently to contradict each other; and this has been the cause of differences of opinion in our day: but these apparent contradictions can easily be reconciled, if we take into consideration the two different sub-

jects upon which they were writing. Paul was writing to a people who were inclined to believe in circumcision, and other works of the ancient law which had been done away in Christ. And he shows clearly that circumcision and many of those ancient laws were given in the earlier ages, not to take away past sins or to justify those to whom they were given, but for various other purposes; and that by complying with those works, they did nothing more than what they were indebted to do, and that the reward attached to these acts was "not reckoned of grace, but of debt;" or in other words, the reward of grace is a forgiveness of past sins; but the reward of debt is a freedom from the condemnation, not of past sins, but of the sins which would exist in case we refused to pay the debt: for instance, God commanded Abraham to circumcise himself and all the males of his house, not to justify himself or his house of past sins, but for another purpose. When this commandment was given, it brought Abraham under obligations to obey it; it was a debt he owed to the Lord; if he paid it, there would be no condemnation arising from disobedience in relation to that particular commandment, and he would have the reward of a clear conscience, so far as the payment of that particular debt was concerned; but in all this there is no reward of grace manifested in the forgiveness of any sins which may have previously been committed. Therefore as obedience to these particular laws did not bring remission of sins, Paul could with propriety say that Abraham and others were not justified by works, that is, by such works of the law as circumcision, &c., which were given for a very different purpose than that of justification. It was very necessary that Abraham should do those works, though they were not works intended to bring remission of sins or justification, yet the performance of them would prevent the sin of negligence, and would also bring such blessings as were attached to them by way of promise. But af-

ter these laws and circumcision were done away in Christ, then Paul could say, "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." If those laws and ordinances which were given to Abraham to perform, were not intended to justify him of his past sins, much less would they justify those who lived after Christ, when they were done away. After Christ, these works given to Abraham to perform, were not considered even as a debt binding upon any: they were works, therefore, that would be sinful to perform. The faith of that man that "worketh not," that is, that does not perform works that are done away, "is counted for righteousness."

But as Abraham was justified by faith, it may not be improper to inquire whether there were any other class of works, connected with his faith, that were of a justifying nature. Paul says, "The Scripture foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying: In thee shall all nations be blest."—(Gal. 3: 8.) From this we learn, that the same gospel that was to justify the heathen through faith, and bless all nations, was actually preached to Abraham. Now in the gospel there are certain works to be connected with faith for justification: by these works of the gospel, he manifested his faith and obtained justification; and not by the works of the law, such as circumcision, &c. Paul says, "Faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision. And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had, yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised: that righteousness might be imputed unto them also; and the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of our father Abraham,

which he had being yet uncircumcised.”—(Rom. 4: 9–12.) From these passages we learn, that Abraham was justified before circumcision, consequently the gospel of justification must have been preached to him before that law was given. That there were works connected with the gospel preached to Abraham, is evident from the fact that all the heathen nations who lived in the Apostles’ days, could be justified and become his children by walking, as Paul says, “in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham.” There were certain steps pertaining to the gospel and faith of Abraham, in which he walked; otherwise he could not have been justified. Whatever works these steps of justification included, the very same were required of the heathen after Christ. These steps of the gospel, since Christ, we have already observed, are Repentance and Baptism, which bring remission of sins and justification, being the results of faith, or in other words, the steps of faith that Abraham walked in. Therefore “to him that worketh not” the works of circumcision and other laws that are done away, but performeth the works of the gospel, “his faith is counted for righteousness,” the same as Abraham’s was who walked in the steps of the same gospel, and was justified in the same way. This view of the subject perfectly reconciles the teachings of both Paul and James, and shows most clearly that both were correct, when their statements are applied to the two different subjects upon which they were writing. EDITOR.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON DOCTRINE.

BY THE EDITOR.

Question. How many ways has God ordained to obtain eternal life?

Answer. Only one.

Q. How many dispensations has God sent into the world?

A. Many hundreds.

Q. Has not God’s plan of saving men been different under different dispensations?

A. Not in the least, so far as certain laws and ordinances are concerned.

Q. What is the plan of salvation?

A. It is to believe and do all things that God requires of us, and then we shall be saved through the atonement of Christ.

Q. Has God required mankind under different dispensations to believe and do the same things?

A. In some respects He has, in others, He has not.

Q. What are those general laws and ordinances necessary to be believed and obeyed in all dispensations, in order to obtain a complete salvation?

A. They are, first, Faith in the atonement of Christ; second, Repentance of all sin; third, Immersion in water for the remission of sins; fourth, the Baptism of Fire and of the Holy Ghost through the ordinance of Confirmation, or the laying on of hands.

Q. Could not any man from Adam to Christ receive a full salvation without being Baptized in water and with the Holy Ghost?

A. No; unless some other person authorized has been or shall be baptized for him after he is dead. Neither can any man from Christ to the end of the world, enter into the Celestial Kingdom without embracing these same principles.

Q. Who has authority to Baptize and Confirm?

A. None but those whom God has called and ordained.

Q. Have the Roman Catholics authority to baptize?

A. No: for they have no inspired Apostles and Prophets among them:

neither have they any new revelations, and without these things no one ever was or ever can be called to the ministry?

Q. Is the Roman Catholic Church the Church of Christ?

A. No: for she has no inspired priesthood or officers, without which the Church of Christ never did nor never can exist.

Q. How long since the Roman Catholic Church lost the authority and ceased to be the Church of Christ?

A. She never had authority, and never was the Church of Christ; and consequently she could not lose that which she never was in possession of.

Q. If the Roman Catholics are not the Church of Christ, where has the Church of Christ existed since inspired men ceased from the earth?

A. She has existed in heaven where the gates of hell never can prevail against her, because she is built upon the rock; and the inspired Apostles are in heaven with her whom the Saviour promised to be with always, even unto the end of the world.

Q. What has become of the Apostles' successors?

A. The Apostles had no successors after those died off who were called by inspiration and new revelation.

Q. After the Church of Christ fled from earth to heaven, what was left?

A. A set of wicked Apostates, murderers, and idolaters, who, after having made war with the saints, and overcome them, and destroyed them out of the earth, were left to follow the wicked imaginations of their own corrupt hearts, and to build up churches by human authority, and to follow after the cunning craftiness of un-inspired men; having no Apostle, Prophet, or Revelator to inquire of God for them: and thus, because of wickedness, the Church, and Priesthood, and gifts, and ordinances and blessings of the everlasting Gospel, were taken from the earth, and reserved in heaven until the fulness of times, when it was predicted that they should again be restored among men to continue until the end should come.

Q. Who founded the Roman Catholic Church?

A. The Devil, through the medium of Apostates, who subverted the whole order of God by denying immediate revelation, and substituting in the place thereof, tradition and ancient revelations as a sufficient rule of faith and practice.

Q. Did the great Protestant Reformers restore the Church of Christ to the earth?

A. No: for they had no inspired Apostles, Prophets, or Revelators among them, without which the Church could not be restored.

Q. But did not any of the Protestant Reformers have authority to Baptize and Confirm?

A. Not any of them: for they pretended that ancient revelation was a sufficient rule of faith; and, therefore, that no new revelation was needed: and without new revelation no man could be called and authorized to administer Gospel ordinances.

Q. But did not the first Protestant Reformers receive their ordination and authority from the Catholics?

A. Yes: and in this manner they received all the authority that their mother church was in possession of; and the mother having derived her authority from the Devil, could only impart that which his Satanic majesty was pleased to bestow upon her. If thorns could bear figs—if a bitter fountain could send forth sweet water—or a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit, then the whore of Babylon could confer divine authority upon her harlot daughters. But whatever authority the mother might have pretended to confer upon the daughters, she afterwards was very careful to take from them by excommunication. Therefore, unless the Reformers received fresh authority from heaven by new revelation, they had no authority at all.

Q. Are all the Baptisms administered by the Catholics and Protestants, and the different sects which have, from time to time, dissented from them, illegal, because the ministers were not authorized?

A. They are, every one of them, illegal, and null, and void, and without effect; and will not be considered baptism in the day of judgment any more than the acts of unauthorized men in human governments are considered legal.

Q. Was not the Protestant Reformation a great benefit to the world?

A. Yes: it served to weaken the power of the mother church, and produced a great division in Satan's kingdom—the mother being opposed to her harlot daughters, and the daughters against their most abominable mother: and in this family war, the harlot daughters became also sorely displeased with each other. And in the midst of the contending elements, wise men became convinced that the civil government could not safely be entrusted with any of the contending parties: hence arose governments supporting religious freedom: whereas, if it had not been for the divisions in Satan's kingdom, freedom of conscience would have been wholly unknown in the nineteenth century. The iron yoke of Romanism would have sorely galled the necks of all nations upon whom she had power to place it. It was to weaken this corrupt, soul-destroying power; and to stir up contention, division, and war in all her borders, preparatory to the establishment of religious liberty, that God moved upon the hearts of the great Protestant Reformers of the sixteenth century.

Q. Is not sincerity a sufficient qualification to entitle a man to salvation?

A. No: sincerity is *necessary* to salvation, but is not *sufficient* for salvation. Paul, in his sincerity, verily thought he ought to do many things contrary to Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus said to his apostles, "The time cometh that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service." (John 16: 2.) No one, who believes the Bible, will have the presumption to say, that those who killed the apostles could be saved, and yet Jesus says, that those murderers were to be so sincere, that they would really think that they were doing God service. Idolaters are

frequently sincere, so much so, that they are willing to sacrifice their own lives to their idols. But the scripture says, that no idolater can inherit the kingdom of God. Millions of sincere persons will be shut out of the kingdom of heaven; and yet no person will be permitted to enter that kingdom unless he is sincere. The sincerity of some of the Catholics and Protestants in their religion, will in no wise qualify them for salvation. He that would be saved must not only be sincere, but embrace the true gospel, be baptized into the true Church, and continue a faithful member of the same unto the end. This is the only way to be saved with a full salvation. As neither Catholics nor Protestants are members of the true Church, they cannot claim celestial glory. However sincere, they are unprepared to dwell with God and receive the fulness of his glory.

Q. How long since the Church of Christ has been absent from the earth?

A. We have no history or knowledge of the Christian Church on the Eastern hemisphere after the second century. The Christian Church on the Western hemisphere ceased near the beginning of the fifth century. The Christian Church, therefore, was absent from the earth for above fourteen centuries.

Q. What has become of all the nations and generations during these fourteen centuries?

A. They have lived without prophets, without inspired apostles, without revelators, without the voice of God, without the ministry of angels, without heavenly visions, without authorized ministers to baptize or minister any other ordinance of the gospel, without the miraculous gifts of the Spirit, without the true Church, and consequently have died without salvation. And thus about fourteen thousand millions of the human race have gone down to their graves in ignorance and darkness, since the Church was taken from the earth.

Q. Will all these generations be damned without remedy?

A. All these have died without hearing a message sent to them by divine authority ; they have died without rejecting a message, and therefore will not be under the same condemnation as those who lived when messages have been sent, and who rejected the same. All these will be punished according to their works, and will be shut up in prison like those who perished in the flood, and will eventually have the gospel preached to them, even as Jesus preached the gospel to the antediluvian spirits ; those who receive the gospel in prison will be redeemed therefrom ; and those who reject it, will be sent down to hell with those who reject the same while here in the flesh. This eventually gives the same privilege to both the dead and the living that they may all be judged by the same law. Hence the apostle Peter, after having informed us that Christ “went and preached unto the spirits in prison which sometime were disobedient, when once the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah,” also informs us of the reason ; “For, for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh.” (1 Peter 3 : 19, 20 ; also 4 : 6.) The purpose to be accomplished in preaching to those who are dead and in prison, is to place their spirits in a condition to “*be judged according to men in the flesh,*” who hear the gospel in this life. Thus both the living and the dead will be judged by the law of the gospel. Those who receive it will be saved ; those who reject it will be damned.

Q. Why did not God send some one inspired with authority to build up his Church, during this long period of fourteen centuries ?

A. Because the nations had become so extremely corrupt through the traditions handed down from their Apostate fathers, that they would not have suffered the true Church to be built up among them. Liberty of conscience was not tolerated sufficiently to permit a message by divine authority to be published in their midst. If

God had sent forth servants to restore the true Church to the earth, before He had prepared the way by the establishment of governments favorable to religious liberty, they would have been killed off as the former day messengers were, and the church would again have been driven from the earth ; and such wickedness would have left them in a far worse condition than what they would have been in if no message had been sent. If a message had been sent, and they had rejected it, it would have deprived them of hearing the gospel in prison with those who died in ignorance. The condition of things in the spiritual world will be more favorable to their hearing and receiving the gospel than it would have been under the tyrannical and corrupt powers of an Apostate Church. God, therefore, has dealt with these Apostate generations in that way that will, in the end, save far more of them than could have been saved by giving them a message in this life to trample under their feet. Other generations are in more favorable circumstances to have the gospel in this life, and in such cases, greater numbers can be saved than there could be by postponing the offer of salvation until they enter the spirit world. Hence God takes into account the favorable or unfavorable circumstances in which generations are placed, and sends them the gospel in this life or in the world of spirits, just according as He sees that it will have a tendency to save the most : this, therefore, is the reason why He has sent no divine message to the inhabitants of our globe, during the long and dreary night of fourteen centuries.

Q. But inasmuch as it is the object of God to save men, why not send the gospel to each generation here and in the next world also ?

A. Because if they reject the gospel here, they have not the privilege of entering into the prison in the spirit world, and of again hearing the gospel among those who never heard it while in the flesh : God’s justice requires those who reject the gospel to be damned, instead of being favored

with a prison among those who are less guilty. Those in prison are in an intermediate state: they are not saved, neither are they irrecoverably lost: but when the gospel is preached to them it will decide their fate, redeeming those who receive it, and damning those who reject it; the one rising to light, glory, and happiness—and the other falling to darkness, damnation, and misery. And thus will the living and the dead be judged by the same gospel; and the mercy and justice of God be manifested to all without partiality. It will be perceived that the message of the gospel either saves or damns, instead of sending their spirits to an intermediate state.

Q. Is this intermediate state, which is called in the scriptures a prison, a place of punishment?

A. Yes: but the severity of the punishment is not as great as is experienced among those who are sent to hell. Their punishment will be in proportion to their sins and the light which they have rejected. Indeed, the long ages of darkness, ignorance, doubt, and uncertainty which will slowly roll away, will of itself make them wretched and miserable. How tedious and wearisome must have been the condition of the antediluvian spirits to remain the long period of two thousand years and upwards without any ray of hope, until Jesus opened their prison doors, by preaching the

gospel to them while his body was sleeping in the tomb.

Q. Will God's kingdom or Church be again restored to the earth?

A. It has already been restored.

Q. When did this restoration take place?

A. On the sixth day of April, in the year eighteen hundred and thirty.

Q. In what part of the earth was this kingdom first organized?

A. In the town of Fayette, Seneca county, and State of New York.

Q. How many persons were included in the first organization?

A. Only six.

Q. In what manner did the Lord proceed to restore his Church to the earth?

A. He first sent an holy angel to a young man, named Joseph Smith, and directed him where to obtain the sacred history of the ancient nations of America, and also the Urim and Thummim, and commanded him to translate these records into the English language.

Q. What was the use of this sacred history?

A. It contained the fulness of the gospel, as Jesus Christ himself preached it to the Aborigines of America, soon after his resurrection. Every principle and ordinance of the gospel, in this sacred book, is so exceedingly plain, that it leaves no uncertainty upon the mind, as it regards the way of salvation.

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