

THE KING AND KINGDOM OF HELL,

LECTURE

DILIVERED BY

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As our subject this evening trenches, more closely than ordinary, upon the sacred precincts of theology, we feel bound to imitate the authoritative, theological custom of prefacing our address with a text of Scripture; indeed we realize such an urgent necessity for strengthening our position with all the fortifications which time-honored custom can supply, that we shall transcend our reverend models by giving you *three texts*, for our discourse, instead of one only.

The first, to which we would call your attention, is the remarkable address of Jesus to his disciples where he says, "I have chosen . . . twelve and one of you is a Devil" and—Our second text will be found repeated in two different portions of the book of Revelations, and consists of the words "the great Dragon, that old Serpent which is the Devil and Satan;" whilst my third will be taken from the gospel according to Henry Ward Beecher, and is reported in many a recently published daily journal, to read thus: "The doctrine, that God has been for thousands of years, peopling the earth with human beings, and during three-fourths of that time leaving them without an altar or a church, and then destroying them for their lack of faith, is to transform the Almighty into a monster." "A heaven presided over by a Demon, who, for thousands of years,

only peoples the earth with millions of human beings, to sweep them off into hell; not like dead flies, but without even taking the trouble to kill them, is such a heaven as I don't want to go to. The doctrine is too horrible—I don't believe it and I won't." Brave words these! noble words! and, as coming from an hitherto orthodox pulpit sufficiently pregnant with ominous suggestions to arouse all the lesser lights of orthodoxy, compelling them to flutter their plumes in alarmed expectancy, seize upon the planks of their canvass-torn creeds, with all the despair of drowning mariners and regarrison the crumbling walls of their Satanic strongholds, ere the angelic armies of love shall have time to destroy the very corner-stone and citadel of christian faith—to wit, the "king and kingdom of Hell."

As the very linch-pin, on which the car of christianity runs, is the vicarious atonement—as this all-important doctrine necessitates the existence and sacrifice of a God-man, as the God-man's sacrifice implies the otherwise irredeemable condition of a fallen and ruined race; as the fall of said race implies an unequivocal failure, in the executive power or intention of its author, and this original failure implies a higher potency in the principle of evil than of good; the whole scheme of christianity hangs link by link, up to its final analysis, on the existence, influence, and superior power of a personal Devil; and, yet again, as our christian friends insist on attributing all creation, even that of his formidable and successful rival to the authorship of the one God, it follows that, God made the Devil, for t' express purpose of destroying his creature—man, also that he created man, chiefly for the satisfaction and behoof of the Devil, and, that without this original subdivision of his power and kingdom, and this primeval failure on his own part to realize his own purposes for good, he never would subsequently have divided himself up into two beings; left one-half of his God-head to take charge of the universe, whilst the other half came down to this little planet of ours, this dew-drop, in the immensity of space, and there and then compelled his creatures to put his second half to death, in order that his entire being might become reconciled to the short-comings and imperfections of his ruined and Devil-governed creature man.

However unsatisfactory it may be for reverend Christians to hear that faith rehearsed in plain words, which

they believe in, all the more faithfully, because plain words are so seldom applied to it; the time has come, when they must not only endure such profane analysis and be prepared to meet questioning, reasoning with answering logic, or they will see their theology slipping from them, and under the brave, bold, affirmations of the broad humanity which breathes from the lips of our modern Parsees.

Theologians must content themselves with seeing the great citadel of their faith—the kingdom of Hell—stormed by the legions of science, history, reason and humanity; and if, beneath the combined forces of these invincible legionaries, this dreary but long-cherished vestige of mythical superstition should be levelled with the earth it has so long burdened, farewell to the king and the kingdom together, and with them an equally long farewell to that complicated and mysterious piece of machinery, which has so long upreared itself upon the king and kingdom of hell, yeilded Christianity; the corner-stone of which is a personal Devil; the first story of which is an imbecile creator; the second, a perverted and ill contrived creation, with a long succession of chambers and galleries formed of blottering creeds and impossible dogmas, the whole crowned with the horrible spectacle of a dying God, crucified at the hands of his feeble and impotent creatures; and an ascended Saviour palliating the lesser crimes of his created ones, because they have been guilty of the greater crime of murdering himself. Age after age this horrible, unnatural and impossible system of belief has held sway over the minds of those, who call themselves the leaders of civilization and the rulers of public opinion; and if it has at last taken a Beecher to arouse humanity to the shocking impiety of its religious tendencies, all honor to Beecher for such a glorious awakening, and all haste to the effort, which every true religionist is called upon to make, to improve upon the clarion cry, which proclaims the dawn of the day of reason; in virtue of which it is, that we this night undertake to promote the progress of enquiry concerning the origin of that monstrous superstition, entitled "The King and Kingdom of Hell." Whence came the belief of humanity in the actuality of this hideous myth. Let us in the first instance take a brief glance towards the Christians' great *vade mecum* of all religious truth—the Bible. What authority can

the world derive from this *unimpeachable* record concerning the king and kingdom of Hell?

In the first place, it is now a well understood fact, among all the most candid as well as accomplished biblical scholars of modern times, that the Bible *in its literal sense*, is a mere incomprehensible mass of contradiction, plagiarism and impossibility. Commingled with fragments of Jewish tradition, history and law, are immense masses of cabalistic writings, which were never designed to reach the vulgar mind or become susceptible of general interpretation.

It would require volumes of judicious, unprejudiced and scholarly commentaries to eliminate the spirit from the letter of the Jewish scriptures; and when all was done, plain, unlearned but all too-confiding Christian believers would stand aghast, to find that the long cherished idol of their faith and worship was little more or less than a plagiarized transcript of Oriental myths, which had grown hoary with the burden of thousands of years of time, ere the Jews themselves had a national existence.

But, assuming it were possible to roll back the dawning intelligence of the age, into the night of an unquestioning, blind and ignorant credulity, in the strict letter of biblical assertions, wherein would the Christians find authority for the enunciation of their monstrous doctrines of hell, a personal devil and endless punishment? Certainly, not in the books of the Old Testament; for the doctrine of continued life beyond the grave is not even hinted at in the Old Testament writings; and except in the re-appearance of the spirit of Samuel to Saul, and a certain passage in the book of Job, which, by the way, is just as susceptible of a temporal as of a spiritual meaning; there is not one distinct item of doctrine to be found in the Old Testament writings, indicative of belief in life beyond the grave. The best Greek and Hebrew scholars of the age allow that the terms Gehenna, Sheol, pit, grave, etc. signify the place of rest—literally the tomb, the state of death or eternal sleep—a condition which leaves no room for the implication of any future state of being.

Whatever diversity of opinion may have existed, among the different Jewish sects on this subject, it is quite clear that the Christians could have derived no other authority for their favorite doctrines of diabolism, than such, as the character of their cruel and

capricious God-Jehovah, affords in certain passages of the New Testament, the real meanings of which have afforded food for controversy to thousands of the ablest minds of the present century. Granted, however, that the devotees of the eternal hell doctrine can find, in one or two sentences attributed to Jesus, some slight foundation for its fiendish and inhuman propositions, the general context of Jesus's teachings, especially the beautiful parables, in which those teachings were conveyed, directly contradicts the idea of finality, whether for punishment or reward, to any soul, beyond the term of its impenitence.

Take, for example, the touching parables of the prodigal son, and the lost sheep; both directly illustrative of the Divine Father's dealings with the truly penitent sinner. The same ever merciful spirit is implied in the story of the humble publican and the self-righteous Pharisee; of the sorrowing Magdalene and the penitent thief on the cross.

In the narrative of the crucifixion, moreover, and the answer which Jesus is reported to have rendered to the dying penitent "to-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." Those, who pin their faith upon the letter of scriptural teachings, will find the strongest argument that biblical writing can afford, concerning the doctrine of *no finality* beyond the grave. Paradise, as all Oriental scholars will allow, was a term generally applied throughout the East to signify a place of rest, a mid region or sphere of enjoyment, in which pure souls continued their probationary existence, prior to the yet more remote and beatific conditions of heavenly bliss; in short, paradise was simply a mid-region, like the Purgatory of the Catholics, or the Hades of the Greeks; it was esteemed by all the nations of the East as a succession of spheres or probationary states, in which the pilgrim soul's earthly experiences were continued but not consummated. It was, doubtless, to meet this awkward dilemma, and reconcile the gospel narratives with the gospel words as *literally* translated, that the Apostle's creed so emphatically insists upon the fact, that the Christian's God did not ascend into Heaven, until the third day after the resurrection.

If this arrangement of the scheme is to be rigorously insisted upon, our theological friends should have been more exact in their definitions concerning that Paradise, where Jesus and the penitent thief were to meet

and know each other, even on the *first day*; that is, always providing a strict rendition of gospel texts be insisted upon. If, on the other hand, "the sacred word" is to be submitted to such merciless emendators, as the late learned John Stuart Mill, and others of that ilk, who even in a mere superficial review of the *infallible* text, offered at least ten thousand emendations of the New Testament, why then the words "everlasting fire" and "Paradise" may both be accepted or rejected in the same category, and hapless saints may stand side by side with hapless sinners, each "shivering on the banks of Jordan's stormy flood," all uncertain as to whether they are to afford an eternal grill, as a choice spectacle for the edification of the saints in heaven, or themselves become one of that dreary praying band, whose chief delectation, throughout eternity, will be the sight of their unregenerate friends and neighbors, unendingly living in an unending death, the horrors and agonies of which would make a demon blush to acknowledge himself the contriver of.

Yes, worthy Christians! we grieve to say we cannot help you, by founding your presumptuous and horrible faith, in your friends' and neighbors' eternal torments, on any authentic and well defined biblical statements. The Old Testament, "the book of books," on which the faith of all your generations is founded, is an absolutely *materialistic* record, affording abundant evidences that its authors believed in temporal rewards and punishments; regarded death as the end of all things, and the grave as the *finale* of all human efforts, while the New Testament affords you only a few words of *good cheer* on your favorite hell doctrine, but it also renders a great many parables of inferential character, unhappily opposed to this glorious stronghold of your faith; in a word, if you want hell in all its sublime hideousness, torture in most savage atrocity, and punishment for all who don't go to *your church*, or worship at *your shrine*, in its most malignant and unending monstrosity, you must not pin your faith on the teachings of the meek and lowly Jesus; not on the doctrines of him who prayed for mercy even on his murderers; nor yet on the character of that loving Father, who ever welcomes back his returning prodigals, and careth ever for the falling sparrow; but you must seek authority from the grim old christian fathers; from the ingenious

inventors of the Athanasian and Apostles' creed; from the savage Tertullian, the fierce Knox, the gloomy Calvin, and all that tribe of bitter Christians, to whom the *Auto-da-fe* of a burning heretic is as dear as the sunlight of heaven, and the shrieks and groans of the rack and thumbscrew are sweeter, than the celestial voices of an angelic host. Dealing with the king as we have striven to do with the kingdom of hell, that is, to find authority or even excuse for faith in his existence in biblical writings, we discover the same total lack of evidence, or rather the same direct proof of human perversity, in the fabrication of a monstrous and unnatural myth. In the Old Testament, the only actual definition which occurs of a spirit of evil, or evil principle acting upon man, is to be found in the universal allegory of the serpent tempting the woman, as recorded in the first chapter of Genesis. To those, who do know that the whole of this paradisaical story, including the creation of the world, the temptation and the fall of man, and his subsequent expulsion from Eden, is a well worn allegory, borrowed by one Eastern nation from another, and common, throughout them, all, for thousands, and tens of thousands, of years before the time of Moses, we really can have nothing to say. To those who do not know all this, and perceive in the Genesis narrative the re-hash of the most ancient of all mythical legends, argument, however conclusive, can find no common ground; we must content ourselves, therefore, by pointing to the fact, that the Old Testament records contain but one allusion to an embodiment of the adverse principle, and that is to be found, only, in the book of Job, and in such a fashion, that even the blindest bibliocator could scarcely found upon it, his belief in a personal devil. We allude to the picturesque and of course *imaginary* scene, in which, according to the fervid methods of Oriental allegory, the writer affects to describe a counsel in heaven, where "among the sons of God, came Satan also."

Now, allowing that any such scene as that which the Poet describes actually took place, and that there was, with equally marvellous actuality, some *heavenly reporter* present, who took notes of the conversation between the Lord and Satan; granted all this, and supposing a *Bible worshiper*, endowed with a digestive apparatus capable of swallowing such a story as fact; what evidence

have we for converting the Satan of the heavenly drama, into the malign, hideous, all-powerful and all-consuming fiend, to whom theology devotes nine-tenths of its unbelieving victims?

The Satan of the poem seems to be a very harmless sort of a personage—perfectly under Divine control; submissive to orders, and though somewhat skeptical on the question of Job's unimpeachable integrity, by no means, that sort of a roaring lion so graphically set forth in Christian pulpit oratory; He comes "among the sons of God," to report himself like the rest, to take orders for future conduct, and to act a part, as clearly sanctioned by "the Lord," as if the Lord himself had done the work of afflicting Job in person.

If then, Christians have no other foundation, on which to erect their statue of Hell and its monarch, than the amenable and by no means ill-disposed character of Job's Satan, then must they be content to think, that their Devil is neither so black as he is painted, or that the economy of the earth, especially in the direction of blains, evils and other calamities of a like nature, could get on without his agency. As to the New Testament Devils, it is perfectly useless for the most bigoted of Bible worshippers to pretend ignorance of their true character. The fact that every disease, which could afflict humanity was called a Devil, and attributed to demoniacal possession, is made sufficiently evident in all the records of healing, effected by the merciful Jesus, epileps, blindness, palsy, deafness, dumbness, in fact all forms of disease, were deemed the possession of Devils and the chief methods of cure resorted to were expulsion by powerful exorcism. As an illustration of how universally the term Devil was used to signify evil in any form, whether of a physical, spiritual, or moral character, we refer to one of the very texts on which this discourse is founded—to wit "I have chosen you twelve and one of you is a Devil."

In this category, Jesus, the speaker, unmistakably refers to Judas, his betrayer, and in this remarkable sentence, (of course assuming that the Bible is to be interpreted literally,) we have the most conclusive evidence that the *founder* of Christianity defined the word Devil, as synonymous with the spirit or soul of a bad man.

The Devil alluded to as operative in the temptation in the wilderness, like the Satan in Job, is of course

significant only of the adverse principle of temptation, but in this narrative, as in that of Job, seeing that neither Jesus nor Job were even guilty of writing the record themselves, and that no mention is made, in the one case any more than the other, of who the heavenly reporter was, from whom either story came, we must be inclined to rank both under the same category, and attribute them to the ordinary style of allegorical writing, in which all the Oriental Scriptures were composed. Viewing the matter as we have done, from the standpoint of a searching, though necessarily brief, analysis, we may naturally be asked, from whence then could the popular idea of the King and Kingdom of Hell have originated, since no shadow of a foundation for such a doctrine can be found in the Christians all-authoritative text-book, the Bible? To this query, we should have to remain speechless, were we not fortunately guided into the path of discovery, by the second of our texts, namely, the sentence occurring twice in the Book of Revelations; "and he laid hold on the Dragon, that old Serpent, which is Satan and the Devil," etc. etc. Now it will be, at once, apparent to every intelligent mind, that the great Dragon of the Revelations, the old Serpent of the Garden, the Satan of Job, and the Devil of everywhere else, are all in this passage distinctly shown to be one and the same personage. The only question that remains, therefore, is to find out, if possible, who and what is this ubiquitous individual, and where if at all, his location may be found.

For the solution of this all embracing question, we must ask you to follow us through a very brief and very small portion of that far-famed and world-wide system of belief, which once prevailed throughout the entire East; which for tens of thousands of years ruled the nations in the form of the astronomical religion, and laid the foundation of every system of theological belief and creedal faith that has ever obtained on earth, from the beginning of time to the present day. The foundations of this famous system were laid in pre-historic ages, antedating all man's multiform methods of recording his opinions, and running like a silver thread through all epochs of time, and all varieties of peoples. Taking a very brief, and necessarily superficial, view of this system as it looms up through the vestiges of Orientalism, we find that the sun as the centre of our solar system, and the source of all life, light, motion

and animated being, was universally regarded as the physical symbol of the unknown and unknowable, divine, central, spiritual sun, worshipped as Deity. The course of the all-potential luminary through those groups of stars, from time immemorial, called the twelve signs of the Zodiac, formed the groundwork of that marvelous and complex system, wherein sun and stars became impersonated heroes, gods, demigods, and good and evil angels. The central figure of this celestial drama was the great light-bringer, and his position during the various seasons of the year, gave rise to a nomenclature assigned to the constellations, among which, his path was assumed to run. Thus, the sun when passing through the spring signs, was hailed with joy as the redeemer of the earth from the sufferings and privations of winter, as the lamb (typical of the vernal season) he was worshipped as the Savior of the race. At midsummer the raging heat of his beams suggested the title of the Lion, for the constellation through which he then moved: thus a special signification attached to the ascendant signs of every month, until the sun was about to cross the autumnal equinox. The dreadful anticipations of the approaching winter induced the ancient astronomers to assign a malignant character to all the winter signs. The most dreaded and potential of these, was the autumnal dragon or great serpent; so termed from its vast size and the appearance of a long train or tail of glittering stars following it, suggesting to the fervid and imaginative minds of the Orientals the idea of the great dragon *drawing after him one-third of the host of heaven*. As this sign heralded in the darkness and consequent miseries of the winter season, the angels whom it symbolized were said to be adverse, malign and rebellious; and finally, when the sun, crossed the autumnal equinox, it was assumed that the evil angels had succeeded in putting him to death—*crucifying* him, between the two darkest of the winter months. About the twenty-fifth day of December, the sun by passing through the sign called indifferently the goat, the stable, or manger, appeared to rest for a season, in the bosom of the brilliant sign of the wintry virgin, which, with her companion constellation Bootes (or Joseph) together with the Spica (ear of corn) and other coincident paraphernalia of the celestial bodies formed, the groundwork of the famous legend of the immaculate conception,

or the birth of the Sun-God, through the maternity of a pure virgin (the betrothed of Jesus) brought forth in a manger, pursued by the fierce remorseless monarch of the wintry skies, hiddeu away in Egyptian darkness for a season, and then reappearing again as the triumphant redeemer or young Lamb of Spring. When it is remembered, that this curious and complex system of impersonating the heavenly bodies, and giving them veritable names, characters and histories, occupied the minds and taxed the imaginative powers of ancient sages, for tens of thousands of years, was changed, altered or amended and adopted to the changes of season in different lands, and the precession of the equinoxes, during many cycles of time, it will be acknowledged that we can but give, in five minutes, notice of such a scheme—its most imperfect and fragmentary outlines; indeed, we should not have called attention to it at all, had we not desired to impress one special phase of its curious ideality upon our auditors:—it is this: Early in the spring months, there appears high in the heavens a beautiful star called Vesper, or the evening star. From its height in the heavens, it was said to occupy "the seat of pride," and from its exceeding beauty, it was, sometimes, designated Venus. At certain seasons of the year, this same star is found to have, sunk low, down to the edge of the horizon. From its descent to the lowest point of the heavens, it is assumed to have "fallen from its high estate." Being visible only at early morning, it is now called "Lucifer, or Sun of the morning;" as the herald or forerunner of the great Dragon, the largest and most dreaded of all the constellations, it is termed the leader of the rebel hosts, or the Arch-Angel, under whose evil influences one-third of the host of heaven is supposed to have fallen from a primitive state of grace. Here, then, is the true origin of the Satan or adverse principle, the Lucifer, Great Dragon, and old Serpent of my text, the far-famed and venerated Devil, or monarch of Hell, of the enlightened Christians. Humilliating, as it may appear to the common sense and intelligence of the age, to find that the cherished idol of Christian fear and Christian faith, during the last thousand years, is nothing more than an ancient astronomical myth, we can assure our auditors, that all the scholarly analysis which can be brought to bear upon the vestiges of antiquity, will simply resolve every phase of theological belief,

now extant, into a similar source, and that, not only the Christian Devil, but every iota of its faith, *excepting none*, can be, and sooner or later, *will be*, equally, surely, resolved into a blind and superstitious impersonation of ancient astronomical myths, and that the King of Hell, like the Christian's crucified King of Heaven, will be found to have his only origin, in the impersonation of astronomical myths, whilst the Kingdoms of both will be located, where the wise and beneficent Teacher of Nazareth placed them, within the human heart, and dependent only on its proclivities for good or evil. During the early days of Christianity, and whilst the worshipers of the new faith were obliged to hold secret service in groves, in caves, or even the shelter of catacombs or graves, it was the custom of the persecuted worshipers to station one of their number, as a sentinel, on the out-skirts of their place of concealment, and the better to baffle their enemies, and scare them off from their prey, this sentinel was generally disguised as a wild man of the woods, or Satyr. From the reports of terrified heathens, who supposed, these disguised out-posts were the Christian's Devils, arose the fabled attributes of the horns, hoofs and tail, in which Christianity has so long rejoiced to array its dreaded monarch of Hell! It is to the brilliant and poetic imagination of John Milton, that Christianity owes the restoration of its favorite hero, to the "diminished," but still sublime splendors of "the Arch-angel ruined." Whether there is any more actuality in the famous Fiend of Paradise Lost, than in the hooped and horned Satyr of the early Christians worship, we leave our auditors themselves to determine. As to the kingdom of the fabled Lucifer, the Typhon of the Egyptians, the Satan old Serpent and Dragon of the Hebrews and the Devil of the Christians, we find ample authority for its fiery nature and brimstone adjuncts, in those same antique legends, from which all other forms of modern theology have been borrowed. The Jews' superstitious fear of death, led them to suppose there was a worm of a contagious nature feeding on the bodies of the deceased, the ravages of which could never be stayed except by fire. As the valley of Hebron was the place of sepulture, appropriated to criminals, they were accustomed to keep fires continually burning, in order to consume these much feared vestiges of mortality; and it was this custom which gave rise to the threat,

put into the mouth of the savage Jewish Jehovah, that evil doers should be condemned to the power of "the worm that never dieth," and "the fire that is never quenched." The brimstone part of the legend our Christian friends owe to the Egyptians, whose custom of consigning the bodies of their criminals to the bituminous debris of the ditch.

And now, friends, having traced a few historical points bearing on this long mooted and much vexed question, let us ask in the name of reason, sense, justice and piety, whether it is possible to believe the Almighty to be the demon, which the doctrine of a localized hell and a personal devil would imply? Would common sense permit us to believe that the creator of the universe made man—his very noblest work—so imperfect, that he could not fulfill the purpose of creation? Why even our poorest mechanics would teach us a better lesson, and demonstrate the absurdity of our supposing the infinite architect of this wonderful universe could have miscalculated the effect of his work, or failed to ultimate his actual design in man's creation. On the other hand, will reason or justice allow us to suppose, that the father of the race could willfully have created nine-tenths of his creatures for the savage and brutal purpose of eternally tormenting them? Could we thus deem of a human father, we should regard him as a monster not fit to live; could we now suppose that there was one human being burning and blazing in the depths beneath our feet; one living creature, unknown and unrelated to us, though he might be writhing even in temporary torture, under the ground we now rest on; do you think we should imitate the Christians' God, and seek to increase those tortures from time to eternity? Do you think instead of striving to help him out of his inconceivable agony, or even to kill him to put an end to it, we should glory in heaping despair upon his sufferings, and mock him with the demoniacal threat of living on, consuming ever, dying—yet never becoming dead—never ceasing to suffer; never being still, calm, or at rest in death?

Oh shame! horror and blasphemy! at the very necessity of asking such questions. No, my friends, human beings are so much better, more kind, more just and more reasonable than the Christians' idea of God; that if even the worst criminal, that ever lived and sinned, were now writhing in some pit beneath our feet, even

for a single moment, in the nameless tortures to which theology condemns the sinner of a minimum of time, to suffer, throughout an eternity, we should tear up the ground with reckless haste and unselfish pains, until we could reach him, and even if it cost some of us our lives; the generous instincts of our dear humanity would prompt us to give the lie to this base and abominable theology, and sacrifice ourselves, rather than not rescue a miserable fellow creature from a fate so horrible. Depend upon it, my friends, if there ever was or could be, a demon, enthroned in the seat of heavenly power, imbecile enough to create living creatures for no other purpose than to destroy them; and savage enough to damn his creatures throughout an eternity, for the sake of the imperfections he has made, there would soon be another war in heaven—brave Lucifers enough in the form of pitying angels, to rescue all the souls that such a God could destroy. Destroy! did we say? Destruction would be the tenderest of ~~mercies~~ compared to the Christians' idea of eternal punishment; but what of that? If angels are as believed, the arisen souls of good, kind, pitying humanity, the angels would weave their arms together, until they formed a chain long enough and strong enough to draw up all the souls of the condemned, even from the lowest depths to which Christian *justice* would doom them; or if that failed, they would weep tears of pity enough to extinguish the fiercest fires, which Christian "*loving kindness*" could enkindle. Again, I cry shame on this monstrous and inhuman doctrine and blasphemy on the idea of connecting our heavenly Father's sacred name with such unhallowed brutality. The day has come, when the light of reason and the analysis of common sense *compel men* to weigh the affirmations of ecclesiasticism in the scales of truth, and finding them utterly wanting in fact, as they are antagonistic to all the known and beneficent laws of God in nature, they will, they *must*, shout forth their protest against this blasphemy of the age, through such clarion voices as that which has so lately rung out through the pastor of Plymouth pulpit, finding its echo in the heart of every true believer whose lips utter the tender words of supplication, "Our Father which art in Heaven." Not that we would for one moment be supposed to infer that there is no retribution for wrong doing, or no Hell for wrong doers. The monarch of Hell lives and reigns where Jesus found

the devil, in Judas Iscariot, that is the spirit of a bad man, and the Kingdom of Hell, like that of Heaven, is an actuality, only their locations are *within*, not without the soul, and the one can no more "be found by observation—lo, here, or lo, there," than can the others. As to their nature, reality, and the tremendous actualities, which belong to each, our time and opportunities, this night, do not permit of our offering any enlarged descriptions. It is enough for me to say, the glorious unfoldments of the new spiritual revelations, and the actual experiences of those who are now in your midst, and who, as spirits themselves, are in the very kingdom, good or evil, which they have carried with them beyond the grave, are all sufficient to enlighten the earth on the stern and momentous questions of compensation and retribution in the life hereafter. It is enough for the present to say, the books are open, the real judgment upon life and its consequences no longer remains a mystery or even a doubtful speculation. It is enough to add, moreover, that in the retributive life of the hereafter punishment, is reform, and progress is still the genius of eternity, though its every step must be traversed by the pilgrim soul for itself, and not through the vicarious merits of another. We make our hell as we make our heaven—within us. We carry both with us, and we live or continue to live in either state only so long as we determine to do so. In our Father's kingdom are many mansions, and the beautiful parable of the prodigal son, is as truly illustrative of God's providence over his creatures here, as hereafter. Go to! those foul and horrible doctrines which we have been discussing. We repeat it, from pulpit and press, from market-place and on change; but above all, from the deepest recesses of the human soul and worshiping spirit—that spirit which prompts us to ask that "our trespasses may be forgiven, as we forgive one another." From every source, human and divine, the fiat has gone forth, inscribed on the walls of every ecclesiastical town where the hideous doctrines of a personal devil and a local hell are preached; "Mene, Mene, Tekel Upharsin," "Thou art weighed in the balances and found wanting." "Thy kingdom is divided" and is given to the rule of that god who is a spirit, and who is worshipped only in spirit and in truth.