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SEPARATE EXISTENCE OF THE SOUL

Editor News:

It seems impossible that anyone endowed with the consciousness and sensibilities common to our race and capable of observing the developments of life incident to our history in this world and departure out of it, should live long without asking the question: "If a man die shall he live again?" But while everyone finds something within himself prompting him to ask this question no one not aided by revelation has been able to answer it satisfactorily to himself. The Bible alone has drawn aside the veil separating time from eternity, so as to reveal to us the fact and the character of the existence of the soul, when dislodged from the earthly tabernacle.

But even the Bible does not disclose the mode and surroundings of the life beyond in such a way as to meet all the requirements of curiosity. It does not tell us about the nature of the separate life, the locality of the abode of the soul, and the pursuits and activities which pertain to it in the invisible world. Many questions arise touching these things which no man can answer, even with the help of revelation is not to gratify curiosity, but to command our faith. In harmony with this design "life and immortality are brought to light." The momentous fact of life eternal is set before us with impressiveness of language and imagery so as to cut off excuses if we live in doubt. The Scriptural idea of the soul's continued existence, and the allusions, direct and indirect, to this period which we denominate the intermediate state, are plain enough, when rightly considered, to assure us that death does not consign us to unconsciousness.

It is proper here to glance at some passages which relate to the continued existence of the soul, and which cannot be otherwise construed without great violence: "And fear not them which kill the body but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." A parallel passage, "Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear. Fear him which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell." The single point here to be noted is that the soul is not killed when the body is killed. This fact lies upon the surface of the passages, and will not be affected by the most critical prying into the profoundest depths of their meaning. Men may kill the body but they cannot kill the soul. This strikes away the "No Hellite" conceptions of the soul as dependent on the bodily organism and clearly marks its survival of the shock that prostrates the body to the dust. If these passages mean anything, they mean that the soul is not dependent on the body for its existence; that it is not identical with the body; that it is not a part of the body; that it does not die with the body, and therefore is not of the nature of the body. What ever it is, whatsoever its attributes, its capabilities, its conditions of being or its ultimate destiny, the dissolution of the body which liberates it from its earthly connections, leaves its vitality untouched and its intrinsic energies unimpaired. With its bodily connection severed it enters a new world, a new state where it finds new associations all adjusted to the development of its spiritual life, and looking to the final waiting in the "manifestation of the sons of God."

The criticisms of soul-sleepers and destructionists are not forgotten, but we fail to find any force in them. There are many facts mentioned in the Scriptures, which are rich in suggestiveness at least on this subject. The transfiguration of Christ revealed the presence of Moses, who had been dead many hundred years. There is no intimation that he appeared in a glorified body, or that he had yet experienced the resurrection of the dead, nor dare we imagine that the scene was merely phenomenal, deceiving the disciples by an optical illusion, in which phantoms played the part of historical personages. The testimony is too plain. Moses and Elias appeared talking with Jesus, and they talked about the decease of Jesus at Jerusalem. To the Sadducees who denied the separate existence of the soul, as they did the existence of angels, Christ once said concerning Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, "they live," although they had been so long dead. These old patriarchs were alive, while their bodies slumbered in the grave. Their souls did not die with their bodies. As to the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, if it be a parable, it represents Lazarus as living with Abraham, after he had died in poverty at the rich man's gate, and it also represents the painful consciousness of tor-

ment after he was dead and buried. But it is said that these are only appearances and representations, not realities. Let us be careful here. It matters nothing whether this Scripture be taken as a parable or a history, so far as its meaning is concerned, but whatever view we take, it must be conceded that Christ represented these men as continuing to exist. Now that representation was either true or false. Men exist after death or they do not. Christ represented them as existing. The people to whom the representation was made believed it true and the Saviour knew they believed it true, and that if He did not correct their impressions they would be confirmed in this belief. Yet He did not attempt to controvert their prevailing thought, but made this representation of the state of the dead in good faith, and with the most impressive silence respecting any misapprehension likely to arise in the minds of any who believed in the separate existence of the soul. What if this representation is a parable? Christ's parables are not fables. He did not deal in fiction. Every parable He uttered was founded on facts. This point is worthy of particular note, especially as sometimes reference is made to parables of our Lord to justify the rise of fiction, as a suitable medium through which to communicate religious truth. Whether it be right or wrong to use fiction, or whether it be possible to employ it to advantage or not, it cannot be shown that Christ resorted to it. We must therefore conclude that when He represented the souls of men as in existence after death, He meant that we should believe that they do exist. He spoke of the existence of spirits "without flesh and bones." Think on this and read His (Christ's) own words. And He also speaks of the continued life of patriarchs and prophets in such a way as to confirm the Pharisees, who believed in these things, as against the Sadducees who disbelieved them.

We are unable to see any other way of interpreting our Lord's response to the appeal of the dying penitent, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise," thereby teaching an immediate entrance of the soul into conscious rest. Paul was caught up into Paradise, and he spoke of it as "the third heaven," but he betrays no consciousness of the presence of his body, or of its participation in rapture of the soul. Indeed he could not tell but that he was "out of the body" in that wonderful experience, which shows that he did not doubt the possibility of disembodied existence. Christ entered paradise the day He was crucified and the soul of the penitent entered "with Him," without awaiting the coming of the Son of Man in the clouds of heaven.

In harmony with this view there is another fact of special significance. It is that when the Saviour comes in the clouds with the angels, with the sound of the trumpet to raise the dead, the saints are to come with Him. "When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." "Now, if we believe that Christ died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him." During the intervening period they are "absent from the body and present with the Lord," and when he comes it will be "with all His saints," as well as with the angels. It cannot be that they will then appear "with Him" in full possession of their resurrected bodies, for in this respect they are then to be caught up in company with those who are alive and remain; to meet the Lord in the air. They come with Him, resume their rising bodies, and with the living translated saints are caught up to be forever with the Lord. This brings up to a passage bearing on the subject, and requiring careful study. It extends from 2nd Corinthians 4:15 to the ninth verse of the chapter following—too long to be transcribed here. Notwithstanding the division of chapters this is a single paragraph, and the keynote is struck in the opposite tendencies of "the outward man, and the inward man." Much has been said about the peculiar language here employed but the result of the most critical scrutiny is that the most obvious sense of the words is the true sense. The "outward man" is the body; the "inward man" the soul. The body is "perishing," gradually going down to earth, but the soul is not perishing. The inward man differs from the outward man in nature, substance and quality; it is not subject to the same laws of life, nor liable to the same fate in death. So opposite are these two natures, manifesting a veritable duality in each individual, that as one yields to the inevitable law of dissolution, the other becomes more and more vigorous and shows itself possessed of additional powers yet to unfold, as it escapes the depressions and enthrallments of its connection with a nature tending to death. "For which cause we faint not, but through our outward man

perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." Hence the apostles spoke of the afflictions of the body even to dissolution, as being light and momentary. The soul survives them all, and enters the higher state scarcely conscious of the burden left behind, except as its participation in the afflictions of earth enhanced its appreciation of the exceedingly abundant glory which is eternal. And this glory appears to the eye of faith while the burden is yet being borne and reveals itself with greater clearness and increasing value, as the "inward man" turns away from material things which are temporal, and fixes its gaze upon the realities of the world to come. The things which are not seen are eternal. And this approximation of the soul to invisible things is not arrested by the dissolution of the outward man." The whole tendency during the bodily life is in the opposite direction and it cannot be that the culmination of the temporary afflictions will reverse the order of all previous experiences. For "we know if this earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." The outward man here becomes our earthly house, distinguished from a permanent home, or building place, and giving the character of tabernacle, so that the soul's stay on earth is merely a tent life. Its connection with this world is veiled and unseen, and is preparatory to a higher life and giving it expression as uninterrupted by death, the apostle blends metaphors, recognizing the continual life of the soul, and yet reaching out in thought to everlasting habitations beyond the resurrection. This involves some obscurity and calls for careful observation of the scope of argument. We must therefore, before becoming confused with this mingling of metaphors, note the emphatic point in the statement. It is that which indicates the time when the soul is to have the dwelling place which is not the "earthly house of this tabernacle." Whatever the building of God may mean in its ultimate signification, it is to receive the soul and become the house or dwelling place of the "inward man" during the time the outward man, the body, or tabernacle, is lying in the dust of the earth.

The earthly house will dissolve and then the building of God will be occupied. It is well, also, to observe the leading points of contrast in this language. It is not the perishing body with the resurrection body, but the temporary residency of the soul on earth with its permanent abode in heaven.

This puts the whole future existence in opposition to the brief life in this world, making the contrast more striking and impressive than a mere antithetic comparison of the material and the spiritual. And the fact that the final glory of the redeemed is brought into the account does not necessarily imply that its fullest development will be found in the body, for the idea of a progressive development is by no means incompatible with Scriptural thoughts and figures, and is not excluded by metaphors here introduced. The great fact postulated with emphasis is that in passing out of the dying body, the conscious selfhood, the "inward man," enters upon a career of everlasting enjoyment which beginning as it does in a disembodied state, continues its approach to the infinite source of blessedness until the redemption of the body itself is accomplished. The groaning in this tabernacle is easily understood, but the use of the words "clothed" and "unclothed" induces a slight obscurity. The building of God, the house, not made with hands, appears to become at once the dwelling place and the clothing of the soul. It supplies the place of the body. In the truest sense it becomes a house of the soul, "The house from heaven," or of a heavenly nature and origin. The language confessedly obscure may without violence imply an investiture of the soul with some spiritual form, and vehicle which shall ultimately take upon itself the resurrection body, and make the connecting link between the undying nature, and which out of corruption shall put on immortality. The fact is plain that the inward man, which does not perish with the outward man, enters at once the building of God: it rises from earth to heaven and begins its eternal life, but this is not all that was in the Apostle's thought. He saw in that house not made with hands, all needful provision for the permanent home, and while groaning in this earthly tabernacle and contemplating the coming blessedness, he longed first to be disembodied and then to be finally established in the home of the redeemed when mortality is swallowed up of life.

After this allusion to the ultimate triumph the Apostle comes back to the leading thought of immediate union with Christ when death occurs: "Therefore, in view of all the provisions for the soul when one with earth,

"we are always confident, knowing that whilst we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. (For we walk by faith, not by sight.) We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." In the thought of the Apostle there is a conscious selfhood, which is distinguishable from the body which now lives in the body but neither blends with it, nor depends upon it, so as to be incapable of another life, and which is not destined to share all the experiences of the physical nature. This interior selfhood grows stronger while the body grows weaker. It departs from the body in death, but does not die, and when the body falls into dust it returns to God who gave it." It is then absent from the body, yet still living, being present with the Lord." It was in view of this continued life of the proper person that our Saviour said, "If any man keep my sayings he shall never see death." The separate life of the soul is thus plainly revealed, and appears so positively interwoven with these Scriptures that we cannot explain them with consistency or satisfaction without taking this doctrine as an established truth. And to be present with the Lord means more than to lose connection with earth. Paul saw in it something desirable, something far better than to live in the body, and spoke as if anxious for the consummation: "For I am in a straight betwixt two desires, having a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better." This means nothing less than conscious communion with Christ. Whether the selfhood that departs from the body finds prepared for it a special vehicle in which to live, or whether the soul itself forms a spiritual vestment for the conscious self and divine life within it, or whether the soul including all the qualities and characteristics of the spiritual nature remains "unclothed" till the period of the resurrection of the dead, we may not positively affirm, but that the departed saints live with Christ, and in joyful fellowship with him, is the plain sense of this passage, and agrees with the whole tenor of the Apostolic writings.

Wherefore we labor, and whether present or absent, we may be accepted of Him.

The scene which John describes in the Revelation wherein appeared the company of the redeemed from earth, consisting of the one hundred and forty-four thousand of the tribes of Israel, and the innumerable multitude from all nations, clad in white robes and palms in their hands, is sufficient of itself to settle the question in hand, and cannot be explained with any hypothesis that denies the soul existence separate from the body. In an other vision John saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the testimony of Jesus, and described them as under the altar, waiting in hope of a grand consummation yet in the future, which points to the resurrection of the dead, and the retribution that follows.

Dear Editor, permit me to point out a few discrepancies, and unfounded declarations as made by the gentleman who writes in behalf of the "No-Hellite" doctrine.

In his reply to my article entitled "Gehenna and the Second Death," he says that he makes no claims to scholarship, or character of large proportions. I suppose he meant reputation of celebrity. A man who hasn't a character as bright as the Morning Star, certainly means to limit the efficacy of Jesus' blood, or acknowledge that he does not want such. Character is what a man really is. If I were in the poultry business and a man would tell me that he did not have much character, I am sure I would be afraid of him for my chicken's sake, "but I am persuaded better things" of the brother. Mistakes of the head are not always of the heart. But I wish to say that none but scholars versed in the original can discuss the question at issue, with the intelligence it demands, but with the same stroke of the pen he assumes the role of a critic. In both of his articles he seems to want to speak in God's stead. He seems to think all he says must be accepted. If he is not a scholar I presume he is quoting from Mr. Russell, or one of his disciples. We would like to have better authority than these on such an important subject. If this narrow-minded egotist does not reveal the spirit of a boasted Pharisee, and the faith and doctrine of a Sadducee "I will take a pilgrimage to see one." He tells us that he is not a scholar. This statement I accept as correct. Then ignorance and brass remains to qualify him for the position he takes.

The self-esteem gentleman also undertakes to tell us what the word "Gospel" means. As the blind is trying to lead the folks I will proceed to give the meaning in part by the best and accepted authors. He says "Gospel" means "good tidings." That is true but how much more does it mean? Gospel comes from Anglo-Saxon "Gode-

(Continued on Third Page.)

Savings Department

In connection with our general and commercial banking department we have decided to open a new department which will be known as our Savings Department.

This department will be run entirely separate from the other departments of the bank and on the same principle as regular Savings Banks.

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SERVE GOD ALONE.

Written for the News.

We cannot serve God and Mammon. No man can serve two masters. If God be God, serve him and Him alone. We cannot serve God and the world, and if we haven't enough grace in our heart to keep us from taking sides with the ungodly, we need to get on our knees and pray until we can say I am no more of the world. We are commanded to let our light shine before others that they may see our good works and be constrained to serve Him too. What is the matter with the churches today? It is pride and pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall. Woe unto those blind leaders who strain at a gnat and swallow a camel, who say it takes money to preach the gospel and we must send the gospel to the heathen. When Jesus was here He said for us to take no thought for what we should eat or what we should wear. And what did he do when he went into the temple where they bought and sold? He overthrew the tables of the money changers and the seats of them that sold. He made a scourge of small cords and drove them out and said, "It is written my house shall be called a house of prayer and ye have made it a den of thieves." And the same Jesus is watching over the people today. Yes, saying, "Spare them, Father. I have died and they still defile the temple of God, buying and selling." We should have great respect for the house of God, having nothing in the church that is worldly or contrary to the will of God, but let the past be past and do better in the future. Live for Jesus and him alone.

EARNEST.

Cholera Infantum Cured.

"Something like two years ago my baby, which was then about a year old, was taken seriously ill with cholera infantum, vomiting and purging profusely," writes J. F. Dempsey, of Dempsey, Ala. "I did what I could to relieve her but did her no good, and being very much alarmed about her went for a physician but failed to find one, so came back by Elder Bros. & Carter's store and Mr. Elder recommended Chamberlain's Colic, Cholera and Diarrhoea Remedy. I procured a bottle of it, went home and gave the baby a dose of the remedy. It relieved her in fifteen minutes and soon cured her entirely." For sale by Whitwell Drug Co.

1000 WATCHES FREE

The Weekly Commercial gives a small, regular 12 size, thin model, nickel finish, watch for a club of only twenty, three months' new trial subscriptions at 10 cents each, \$3.00, the amount collected to be refunded with the 30 names. Each trial subscription must be new, not now taking the weekly, and only one to a family. The watch is fully guaranteed, nice enough for anyone to wear, a good time keeper, and cannot be purchased from any jeweler for less than two dollars. Drop us a postal card for sample copies and blanks.

THE COMMERCIAL APPEAL,
Memphis, Tenn.

Confederate Pensions.

In a list of 328 pensions added this quarter to the confederate pension list of this state and published Sunday in the Tennessean, we find the following from this section.

Fourth class, \$5.00 per month.—L. B. Burnett, Jasper; John W. Carnes, Dunlap; A. J. Childress, Whitwell; H. D. Hall, Jasper; William Penn, So. Pittsburg; R. H. Price, Jasper; F. M. Shirley, Whitwell; J. W. Snapp, Jasper; Widows, \$5 per month.—Esther Condra, Monteagle; Temperance S. Pryor, Jasper.

Intense Colicky Pains Relieved.

"For some years I suffered from intense colicky pain which would come on at times and from which I could find no relief," says I. S. Mason, of Beaver Dam, Ky. Chamberlain's Colic, Cholera and Diarrhoea Remedy was recommended to me by a friend. After taking a few doses of the remedy I was entirely relieved. That was four years ago and there has been no return of the symptoms since that time." This remedy is for sale by Whitwell Drug Co.

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