

PACIFIC CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

"GO YE, THEREFORE, TEACH ALL NATIONS."

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Pacific CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

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Bro. Newton Stone's Questions.

(Continued.)

The other Scriptures to be examined are those in which Paul speaks of his expectation, that he will go to Christ immediately upon his death. These passages are as follows: 2 Cor. v. 6-8, "Therefore we are always confident, knowing that whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord; we are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." Phil. i. 21-24: "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labor; yet what I shall choose I wot not (know not). For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better; nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you." We think that this expectation by Paul, which is so evident from these passages, arose in this way. In the prayer of our Savior, as recorded in John 17th chapter, he makes this petition to his Father, 24th verse: "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me." He had already shown, that by "they whom thou hast given me," he means his apostles, and his prayer is, that they may be made an exception to the rule, and upon their death received into his presence, that they may be with him, and behold his glory. Let it be noted, that this prayer in their favor, is a proof of the correctness of our conclusions upon this subject, for if all Christians enter into heaven immediately after death, there would have been no necessity for this petition. We are aware of the fact that at the time this prayer was uttered, Paul was not an apostle, but it must also be admitted that he afterward became one, and as he himself says, in 2 Cor. 11th and 12th chapters, "I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles." "Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labors more abundant," &c. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord." "And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations." "For in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles." We think we are justified in concluding, that our Savior desired this favor for his apostles, both as a reward for their labors, and because it would be a fitting continuation of the life of those who received such abundant revelations, and were so fully imbued with the power of the Holy Spirit, as

it was necessary those should be, whom he commissioned to found and establish his church. Hence we think that Paul had it revealed to him that he was to be a sharer in this great blessing, and because of such revelation he could use the language he does in regard to the other apostles, and, to his expectation, immediately after death. Enoch was taken from the Patriarchal dispensation to heaven; Elijah from the Jewish; and what more fitting than that those grand soldiers of the cross, the apostles; and especially Paul the grandest of them all, should be taken from the Christian dispensation to the immediate presence of God.

The Scriptures that we have examined in the course of this investigation, speak directly, if not alone of the condition of the righteous dead and their resurrection, excepting the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. The most that could be claimed from them in regard to the condition of the wicked dead, would be by inference.

We desire to close this investigation by the consideration of two passages, which we believe to be plain in their teaching, as to the wicked dead. 2 Cor. v. 10: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things in body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." We leave out of this quotation two words, which were confessedly placed in it by King James' translation, as in their judgment, necessary to complete the sense, but which we believe in this instance, as in some others, to obscure it, and also to make a tautology. Correctly rendered from the original it teaches that both the reward and punishment are to be received in the body. Rev. xx. 12: "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the dead were judged according to their works," "and they were judged every man according to their works," "and whosoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the lake of fire." These passages plainly teach, it seems to us, that the whole being of man shares in the punishment, and that this takes place after the final judgment, or great judgment day.

The Lord willing we will endeavor to answer the first question next week.
R. H. MOSS,
Monmouth, Feb. 12, 1881.

Bro. Newton Stone's Questions.

Dear Bro Campbell:

In the January No. 1, of the P. C. MESSENGER, Bro. N. Stone asks you three questions, which you request some one else to answer that has more time than you. I have the time, but don't know whether I can answer satisfactory or not. I cannot attempt an exhaustive answer of either of the three questions, but will give as condensed answer as I can.

1. "Did the church of Christ cease to exist at any time since it was established?" Bro. S. seems to believe that the church has been established and hence the question is, has it ceased to exist since. It will be needless to prove that the church and kingdom of Christ are identical, as nearly all Bible readers admit that from the Bible standpoint then that kingdom that Jesus set us was to be an everlasting kingdom. See Daniel ii. 40, "Shall never be destroyed." Matt. xvi. 18, "On this rock (Christ) I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

I will give you an extract from McGarvey's Commentary on Matthew, that will be more satisfactory than any thing that I could say about the meaning of the passage: "Gates of hell—not correctly rendered hell, but hades. Hades is contemplated as a walled city, waging war against the church. Its gates are made the symbols of its power, because the military forces of an ancient city always issued forth from its gates, and the gates may be considered as sending them out. All the power by which hades, the place of disembodied spirits, assails, are included in the figure, the powers of Demons, of Satan, and of death. The test is a pledge that the church never would be tempted into total apostasy, nor be depopulated by the death of all its members." Again in Rev. "God says come out of her—my people." So you see now after the lapse of 600 years when the church had apostatised, God still has a people in it, and calls to them to come out. And if you will examine Mosheim, Neander, Wadington, and Archard's history of the Baptists, you will find that when the church went into apostasy, God's people did come out and kept coming out for many years, and became a distinct people to this day. They have, no doubt, much of the smell of the fire on them, and have brought many of the relics of their mother with them, but thank God their faces have been towards Jerusalem, and we still toil on the road back, along the old landmarks. The mists and fogs are slowly clearing away, a relic is dropped here and another there, all along the road. 'Tis true there are many more yet on hands that can be spared; but slow was the fall, slower to rise.

2. "What and where is Paradise?" A few extracts from Smith's Bible Dictionary will throw light on this query. "Paradise is a word of Persian origin, and is used in the Septuagint as a translation of Eden. The theories of the Rabbis were that it was a far off land, a region where there was no consuming cold or scorching heat, and the common prayer of the dying Jew, that their souls might rest in the paradise, in the Garden of Eden. . . . We can assume nothing in the robber out-law but the most rudimentary forms of popular belief. The answer to his prayer (to-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise) gave him what he needed most, the assurance of rest a peace. The word Paradise, spoke to him, as it did to other Jews, repose shelter and joy." This definition, I believe, is not questioned among Christians generally, and is corroborated by the Savior, in his comforting promise to the robber. That he did not mean by Paradise Heaven is evident from the fact that he said to Mary, after he arose, "I have not yet ascended to my God." See also Josephus' on "Abraham's Bosom and Hades." The Jewish views in relation to which also the Savior substantially endorses, in the biography, or as some suppose the parable, of the "rich man and Lazarus." To this place, there can be no doubt, were gathered the souls of the just, until Jesus opened up, by a new and living way, through his flesh, the door of the holy of holies, when he ascended up on high and "led a multitude of captives." See margin of Polyglot Bible, Eph. iv. 8. Hitherto no one had ascended to heaven. See John iii. 13.

Bro. Stone's third inquiry is, "Do spirits go to God when freed by the

death of the body." This we can answer by direct statement of Solomon. Ec. xi. 7, "Then shall the dust return unto the earth as it was; and the spirit to God who gave it." Many questions can be asked just here: Why do all spirits go to God before the judgment; and if they all go to him, do they remain with him, and where is God, &c. But we must remember we walk by faith and not by sight, or sense. In divine revelation we shall not be governed by our reason, or sense, but by the word of God: In the investigation of this inquiry we have a large and contested field. The Materialist or Sadducee and Soul Sleeper say no, there is no such thing as soul or spirit existence out of the body. Others say, the good spirits go to Paradise or Abraham's bosom, and there await the general judgment, and others, the good go to the home of Jesus, and wait there, and the wicked into hades. I shall give only a few brief proofs that the righteous go to God, and heaven. When I say the righteous, I mean the righteous man or woman. I know this sounds foolish to the Sadducee, to speak of a man after the death of the body. But we are in good company, Paul says he knew a man whether in the body or out of the body, he knew not, and surely the divinely inspired Paul knew whether there could be such a being as a man out of the body. I shall not prosecute this inquiry any further unless desired, as it will be involved in the question in hand to some extent.

In John xiii. 36, Jesus says to his disciples, "You shall follow me afterwards." Read the context. In John xvii. 24, he prays to his Father that they might be with him that they might behold his glory. In John xiv. 3, he says: "I go to prepare a place for you," in his Father's house. Paul speaking of him as our forerunner into heaven, not into Paradise, or Abraham's bosom. But he has entered heaven itself, and is at the right hand of the Father.

Again in Heb. xi. 16, he says: "He has prepared for them (his, saints) a city." Now the substance of all this is we shall follow Jesus into the home he has prepared for us in heaven. This is in keeping with Paul's "desire to depart and be with Christ," (Phil. i. 23), and to be "absent from the body and present with the Lord," (2 Cor. vii. 8). And Stephen could say, when under the inspiration of the Spirit: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," while he beheld his Master afar off, through the open heavens, at the right hand of God. Finally, John in Patmos, sees and hears a great company that no man can number, around the throne of God. And an angel explains, that "these are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God," &c. Rev. vii. 14, 15.

I have now in a brief way attempted to answer your inquiries, Bro. Stone, and if they are not sufficiently full and satisfactory, and you desire it, I will give more evidence, especially on the home of the just.

Yours in the glorious hope of the just,

I. N. HODGEN.

—In warm weather put your eggs in cold water some time before you are ready to use them.

—A true test for eggs is to drop them in water, and if the large end comes up they are not fresh.

Preachers and Preaching.

Scio, LINN CO., OR.

Feb. 3, 1881.

Dear Messenger:

I desire to say a few words about Preachers and Preaching, in Oregon, and more especially in the Willamette valley.

I suppose that every one who is at all conversant with our work as a people, in this valley, are aware that we only have one preacher to where we have the need of three, at any rate this fact must be well understood by every active minister.

Now if we are thus short of ministers, what must be the lack of preaching which the nature of our work demands should be done? Is it not evident that the lack must be very great? And the more so since the percentage of deficiency is greater in this particular than what it is in reference to the number of ministers. Now there is a question in my mind as to whether or not there can be any thing done as things now stand, to relieve this state of affairs. For it is certain that we can never do the work which the Lord has called us out to do, while this great deficiency as to Preachers and Preaching continues. And while I doubt the ability of any man to give a sufficient practicable solution of the difficulty, yet in the hope that some good might flow from inquiry and suggestions made, I have raised the question, and in this direction I beg leave to offer the following thoughts before closing.

Could there not be steps taken which would induce Bro. S. C. Adams, of Salem, to go out from time to time, as strength and opportunity would permit, and preach a few good strong discourses in various localities? If it can be done our plea would certainly gather strength and character from his labors. Also, during vacation, Pres. T. F. Campbell, and even some times during school months he might, by proper arrangement on the part of the brotherhood, be induced to take the field in the interest of our great plea.

And beside these strong men, there are others who might by a little wise planning do much good in their respective spheres. I might mention one or two, success Bro. Harris and Bro. Philip Mulkey; though these brethren are very good, yet I know of no one whom I would rather have to work with me in a meeting than unite Philip Mulkey.

So it does appear to my mind that if we can rightfully use the material which we have, that there would be at least a partial solution of the difficulty suggested.

Yours in Christ,

E. W. BARNES

P. S.—Bro. S. C. Adams came up to Scio by invitation and preached three excellent discourses on the 29th and 30th of last month.—E. W. B.

—The human race has, from the beginning, and wherever, in all ages and lands, it has wandered and abode, lifted up an unceasing prayer to God for immortal life. It has begged from annihilation and sought, by many a sacrifice and libation to placate the Giver of Life and win from him a blessed redemption from death. And with what unspeakable joy and love millions of men and women have dwelt upon the revealed promises that they should live again. Is it credible that a beneficent Creator would implant this consuming desire, and hear this prayer rising continually from the hearts of his dependent creatures, and yet give no heed?—The Interior.