

## AN APPEAL

TO MEN OF REASON AND COMMON SENSE.



1. Is it reasonable to suppose that God created man an immortal being, and yet never once in his holy Word informed us of the fact?

2. Is it reasonable to suppose that if man naturally possessed immortality, God's word would recommend us to seek for it, as it does in Rom. ii, 7?

3. Is it reasonable to suppose, that if men were naturally immortal, God's word would so plainly assure us that "God—ONLY hath immortality?" 1 Tim. vi, 16.

4. Is it not far more reasonable to believe that immortality is the GIFT of God through Jesus Christ our Lord? Rom. vi, 23.

5. Is it reasonable to suppose that words, when found in the Bible, *must* have a meaning attached to them, which no man in his senses would ever think of attaching to them in any other book? For instance, the words *Life* and *Death*, when found in the Bible, *must* (as theologians tell us,) mean *happiness* and *misery*; but, if found in any other book in the world, would simply mean, "Existence" and "Cessation of Existence."

6. Is it reasonable to suppose that, in all the vast multitude of passages in which Christ promised *Life, Eternal Life*, to his followers, he did not literally mean what he said? This he could not, if all men have immortal life by nature. In that case the wicked will live through eternity, as well as the righteous.

7. Is it reasonable to suppose, in all the vast multitude of passages in which *Death* is threatened as the punishment of the sinner, that *loss of happiness* is all that is meant? An unhappy man is as truly alive as the most happy being in existence; and if he be immortal by nature, will continue alive through all eternity. In no plain, common sense language can any immortal being be said to suffer *Death*.

8. Is it reasonable to suppose that infinite wisdom would invariably use language which was only calculated to mislead mankind? or which none but Doctors of Divinity could unravel? Would God speak in riddles to men, in the great matters which concern their salvation?

9. Is it not more reasonable, and more in accordance with the wisdom and love of God, to suppose that he would give his creatures such a revelation, as plain, common-sense people could easily understand? He has done so:—if men would but use their reason in reading the Bible, as they would do in reading any other book.

10. Is it reasonable to believe, that men go to heaven or hell immediately at death; and then, hundreds or thousands of years afterward are taken out to be judged, and to see which they deserve to be sent to? Should we deem it right to send a man to the State's prison for ten years, and then bring him out for trial, to see if he deserved such a punishment? And "shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

11. Is it reasonable that such prominence should be given in scripture to the doctrine of the resurrection from the dead, if that event only means a "re-union" of a lump of clay, with the conscious thinking and real man—the *soul*: and which is said by theologians, to be as capable of happiness or misery without the body as with it?

12. Is it reasonable to talk about a "death that never dies," when there is not a word in scripture to sanction such a contradictory phrase? Would it not be equally reasonable to speak of the reward of the righteous as a "life that never lives?" Is there not as much common sense in the one as in the other?

13. Is it reasonable to be so constantly, both in sermons and prayers, talking about "immortal souls," "never dying souls," "deathless spirits," and such like expressions, when there is not, from Genesis to Revelation, *one single passage* to warrant the use of such language?

14. Is it reasonable to say, that "eternal death," and "eternal torment, are synonymous expressions," (as theologians tell us,)—for how then can it be said in Rev. xxi, 4, "There shall be *no* more death?"

15. Is it reasonable to believe that a hell of fiery torment, and ceaseless misery is to exist forever, when God says, [Rev. xxi, 5,] "Behold I make *all* things new?"

16. Is it reasonable to believe in the eternal torment of the wicked, when more than two hundred passages of scripture plainly affirm that they shall "die," be "consumed," "devoured," "destroyed," "burnt up," "be as though they had not been," &c.

17. Is it reasonable to believe that the righteous, in their glorified state, can be indifferent to, and unaffected by, the endless sufferings of countless millions of their fellow beings; among whom would probably be found parents, children, husbands, wives, &c.? Is it possible that they will be destitute or deprived of qualities which are considered most lovely and Godlike in this life; viz., piety, sympathy, compassion, commiseration for others' woes, &c.? Will insensibility to the woes of the wretched ever become a virtue? Will that which is a vice in this life become a grace in the glorious future life? Is the standard of virtue thus variable, that what is vicious here, is to be gracious hereafter?

18. Is it reasonable to believe that a God of in-

finite rectitude will punish with eternal torment, the heathen who have never heard of Christ, and who therefore could not reject him? Is it possible that God can cast into one indiscriminate mass of fiery torment, the least wicked among the heathen, together with the most guilty in this Christian land? for such must be the case if their souls are immortal, and if their torment is to be eternal. There can be no degrees in that which is infinite. Is it not far more reasonable to believe the Apostle's words *literally*, "For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law?" Rom. ii, 12.

19. Is it reasonable to believe that God is such a vindictive being, that his justice cannot be satisfied with the *death* of the offender? but that he must be constantly pouring floods of fiery wrath upon the wretched being, through the ever-rolling cycles of eternity?

I might multiply questions of this kind, but I forbear.

Men of reason and common sense, give your serious attention to these points. Read your Bibles again. Read carefully—read prayerfully. See if these things be true or not. Dare to think for yourselves. If other men should attempt to dictate a political creed for you, would you not indignantly spurn their interference? Do the same in religious matters. Dare to be independent. Do not trust to commentaries. Do not build your faith on "bod-

ies of divinity." Do not surrender your right of private judgment to any class of men. Go at once to the fountain head of truth. "The words of the Lord are tried words." "The law of the Lord is perfect." This cannot be said of the writings or opinions of any man, or number of men, however wise or holy they may be. To err is human. God and his truth alone are infallible. Show yourselves *true* Protestants, and cast away the "traditions of men." You have the Bible. The wisest and holiest of the "fathers" had no more. Your ministers have nothing else to guide them—at least they ought not. "The Bible, and the Bible alone, is the book for Protestants." Go then to your Bibles, and see if the God-dishonoring doctrines to which I have directed your attention, are found there or not. Excuse me if I tell you, that, however full of these doctrines human books and human sermons may be, God's Bible does not contain them.

Rather believe that man is *mortal* and condemned to *die*, but Christ is "come that men may have *life*, and that they may have it more abundantly." John x, 10.

"The wages of sin is *death*, but the gift of God is *eternal life* through Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom. vi, 23.

"He that believeth on the Son hath *everlasting life*; and he that believeth not the Son shall *not*

*see life*; but the wrath of God abideth on him." John iii, 36.

"And I give unto them *eternal life*; and they shall never *perish*, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." John x, 28.

"He that hath the Son hath *life*; and he that hath not the Son of God hath *not life*." 1 John v, 12.

"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in their *graves* shall hear his voice and come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of *life*; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of *damnation*." John v, 28, 29.

"And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the *just* and *unjust*." Acts xxiv, 15.

"The Lord knoweth how—to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished." 1 Pet. ii, 9.

"And they were judged every man according to their work. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire—*this is the second death*." Rev. xx, 13, 14.

#### THOUGHTS FOR THINKERS.

1. Is the *soul* a part of God, or a part of man?
2. If it is a part of God, can it sin?
3. If it is a part of man, is it not *mortal*, and subject to death?

4. Is there an intimation in the Bible that God put (what is technically called) an *immortal soul* into the first man, at his creation?

5. As Adam was made of the "dust," is it not said that this man of dust "became a *living soul*," and not an "immortal soul?"

6. If the soul is an immortal or spiritual thing, must it not die a spiritual death? seeing that the Scriptures say, "The soul that sinneth it shall die."

7. As nothing can die except what is *mortal*, if the soul dies a spiritual death, must it not be spiritually mortal?

8. If the soul is a spiritual thing, and immortal, it must have spiritual immortality; how then can it die a spiritual death?

9. If literal death destroys a literal thing, must not spiritual death destroy a spiritual thing?

10. How could David say, "God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave," if the grave has no dominion over the soul?

11. If the soul is the conscious and responsible part, how is it that, by repentance, *it* escapes to paradise at death, and leaves the innocent body to suffer the penalty?

12. If the righteous go to glory at death, did not the serpent speak the truth? Gen. iii, 4.

13. If God spake the truth, does not *that* (which he calls the *soul*) return to dust?

14. But if *that* (which man calls the *soul*) does not surely die, did not the serpent speak the truth?

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