

CONFESSION OF FAITH.

CHAPTER 33.-Of the last Judgement.

II. The End of Gods appointing this Day, is, for the manifestation of the Glory, of his Mercy, in the eternal salvation of the Elect; and, of his Justice, in the damnation of the Reprobate, who are wicked, and disobedient. For, then, shall the Righteous go into everlasting life, and receive that fulness of Joy and Refreshing, which shall come from the presence of the Lord: but, the wicked, who know not God and obey not the Gospel of Jesus Christ, shall be cast into eternal Torments, and be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the Glory of his Power¹.

Question 1.—*Is the end of God's appointing this Day, for the manifestation of the glory, of his mercy, in the eternal salvation of the elect; and, of his justice, in the damnation of the reprobate, who are wicked, and disobedient?*

Answer.—Yes. Rom. 9:22, 23; 2:5, 6. The great end of God in this public unveiling of secrets and manifestation of character in connection with his final disposition of his creatures, is, of course, the manifestation of his own glorious excellencies as moral Governor and Redeemer, Prov. 16:4. The redeemed are forever “vessels of mercy,” prepared beforehand, in order that in them might be “made known the riches of his glory,” 1 Thess. 5:9. And the reprobate in like manner are exhibited as the “vessels of wrath,” to show his righteous wrath and “make his power known,” Rom. 9:22, 23. We have already discussed, that the chief end of God in the original creation was the manifestation of his own glorious perfections, Rev. 4:11. If this was his end in the original creation, it of course must be so in every subsequent step consequent upon it, Isa. 48:9-11.

Question 2.—*Shall the righteous go into everlasting life, and receive that fullness of joy and refreshing, which shall come from the presence of the Lord?*

Answer.—Yes. Matt. 25:31-40; Acts 3:19; Matt. 25:21. Immediately upon the close of the judgment, the righteous, being honorably acquitted are to be awarded admission to the presence of the Lord, with whom they are ever to continue in a state of conscious and exalted happiness, excellence, and honor, for an absolutely unending eternity, Rev. 7:17. Of the blessed estate of the saints, the Scriptures teach: 1.) Their blessedness flows from their perfect freedom from sin, and from their being with God and Christ and their sharing the glory of Christ as joint heirs with him, John 17:24; Rom. 8:17; 1 Thess. 4:17; Rev. 21:3. 2.) It shall be perfectly free from all evil of every kind, Rev. 21:4, and it shall involve every form of blessedness in an inconceivably great degree, 1 Cor. 2:9; and exalted in kind, Col. 1:12. 3.) It is to endure for an absolutely unending eternity. It is called “eternal life” and “everlasting life,” an “eternal weight of glory,” “eternal salvation,” an “everlasting kingdom,” an “eternal inheritance,” Matt. 19:16, 29; 25:46; Rom. 2:7; 2 Cor. 4:17; Heb. 5:9; 2 Pet. 1:11; 1 Pet. 1:4; Heb. 9:15.

Question 3.—*Shall the wicked who know not God, and obey not the Gospel of Jesus Christ, be cast into everlasting torments, and be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power?*

¹ Matt. 25:31-46; Rom. 2:5, 6; 9:22, 23; Matt. 25:21; Acts 3:19; 2 Thess. 1:7-10.

Answer.—Yes. Matt. 25:41-46. Thus do the Socinians err who define eternal death to be the extinguishing of the body and soul, and so maintain that the wicked will not suffer torment in hell, but that their whole punishment will be to be deprived of eternity, or annihilated, both body and soul turned into nothing. Likewise, the Origenists, and some Anabaptists err who think that not only the wicked, but the devils themselves, after many torments in hell, shall be received by God into favor, and be made blessed and happy. They are confuted for the following reasons: 1.) Because the apostle affirms, almost in so many words, that which we have asserted, 2 Thess. 1:7-10. 2.) Because life eternal and death eternal, are in Scripture opposed to one another in the same sense, Matt. 25:46. But life eternal in Scripture, is not taken for being simply eternal, but for being eternally happy, or to be in a blessed eternal state and condition, Ps. 133:3. Therefore, eternal death must be taken in Scripture, not for annihilation, or being turned into nothing, but for an eternal, wretched, and miserable state and condition, Jude 13. 3.) Because the Scripture says, the children of the kingdom shall be cast into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, Matt. 8:12, 13. 4.) Because Scripture affirms expressly, that the wicked are tormented in hell, Luke 16:24. Next, there are some degrees of torment there, but there are no degrees in *non esse*, that is, in not to be. 5.) Because Abraham says expressly, there can no man pass from the place of torment, to the place of bliss and happiness, Luke 16:26. 6.) Because the torments of the wicked are called a worm that dieth not, a fire that cannot be extinguished, Mark 9:44, 46, 48. 7.) Because the Scriptures say, that the smoke of their torment ascends up for ever and ever, Rev. 14:11; 19:3. 8.) Because the wicked will be carried into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels, Matt. 25:46. And the same wicked are to rise again to shame, and everlasting contempt, Dan. 12:2. And to suffer the vengeance of everlasting fire, Jude 7. And now only is the accepted time, and now is the day of salvation, 2 Cor. 6:2.