

IS GOD A PERSON?

By J.N Loughborough

Extract from "An Examination of the Scripture Testimony Concerning Man's Present Condition and His Future Reward or Punishment" Published 1855

Whatever may be the truth in this matter, it certainly cannot be wrong for us to examine what the Word says respecting it. Many there are that would refrain from the investigation of unpopular truths because the cry of heresy is raised against them. We shall not consider ourselves subjects of the appellation, neither are we prying into the secrets of the Almighty, as we pursue the investigation of this matter. The Bible certainly contains testimony upon this point, and we again repeat, "Things which are revealed belong to us." We inquire then, What saith the Scripture?

The very testimony we have been examining in regard to man's being formed of the dust in the image of God, proves conclusively that God has a form, although the sentiment is contrary to what we have been taught, while children, from the catechism:

"Question. What is God?

"Answer. An infinite and eternal spirit; one that always was and always will be.

"Q. Where is God?

"A. Everywhere."

But we inquire, Is not God in one place more than another? Oh no, say you: the Bible says he is a spirit, and if so he must be everywhere alike. Well, if when man dies his spirit goes to God, it must go everywhere. But the Bible certainly represents God as located in heaven. "For he hath looked down from the height of his sanctuary; from heaven did the Lord behold the

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earth." Ps. cii, 19. Then certainly heaven cannot be everywhere, for God is represented as looking down from it. "Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven." 2 Kings ii, 11. But, says one, does not the Bible represent God as everywhere present? Ps. cxxxix, 8, 9, 10. "If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there; if I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me."

We reply, the subject is introduced in verse 7, as follows: "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?" The Spirit is God's representative. His power is manifested wherever he listeth, through the agency of his Spirit. Christ, when giving the commission to the disciples, says, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature, and lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Now, no one would contend that Christ had been on the earth personally ever since the disciples commenced to fulfill this commission. But his Spirit has been on the earth; the Comforter that he promised to send. So in the same manner God manifests himself by his Spirit which is also the power through which he works. "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." Rom. viii, 11. Here is a plain distinction made between the Spirit, and God that raises the dead by that Spirit. If the living God is a Spirit in the strictest sense of the term, and at the

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same time is in possession of a Spirit, then we have at once the novel idea of the Spirit of a Spirit, something it will take at least a Spiritualist to explain.

There is at least one impassable difficulty in the way of those who believe God is immaterial, and heaven is not a literal, located place: they are obliged to admit that Jesus is there bodily, a literal person; the same Jesus that was crucified, dead, and buried, was raised from the dead, ascended up to heaven, and is now at the right hand of God. Jesus was possessed of flesh and bones after his resurrection. Luke xxiv, 39. "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I, myself; handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have." If Jesus is there in heaven with a literal body of flesh and bones, may not heaven after all be a literal place, a habitation for a literal God, a literal Saviour, literal angels, and resurrected immortal saints! Oh no, says one, "God is a Spirit." So Christ said to the woman of Samaria at the well. It does not necessarily follow because God is a Spirit, that he has no body. In John iii, 6, Christ says to Nicodemus, "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit." If that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, then on the same principle, that which has a spiritual nature is spirit. God is a spirit being, his nature is spirit, he is not of a mortal nature; but this does not exclude the idea of his having a body. David says, [Ps. cxiv, 4,] "Who maketh his angels spirits;" yet angels have bodies. Angels appeared to Both Abraham and Lot, and ate with them. We see the idea that angels are spirits, does not prove that they are not literal beings.

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It is inferred because the Bible says that God is a Spirit, that he is not a person. An inference should not be made the basis for an argument. Great Scripture truths are plainly stated, and it will not do for us to found a doctrine on inferences, contrary to positive statements in the word of God. If the Scripture states in positive terms that God is a person, it will not answer for us to draw an inference from the text which says "God is a Spirit," that he has no body.

We will now present a few texts which prove that God is a person. Ex. xxxiii, 18, 23. "And he (Moses) said, I beseech thee shew me thy glory." Verse 20. "And he said, Thou canst not see my face, for there shall no man see me and live." Verses 21-23. "And the Lord said, Behold there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: and it shall come to pass while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cleft of the rock; and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by; and I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts; but my face shall not be seen." If God is an immaterial Spirit, then Moses could not see him; for we are told a spirit cannot be seen by natural eyes. There would then be no propriety for God to say he would put his hand over Moses' face while he passed by, (seemingly to prevent him from seeing his face,) for he could not see him. Neither do we conceive how an immaterial hand could obstruct the rays of light from passing to Moses' eyes. But if the position be true that God is immaterial, and cannot be seen by the natural eye, the text above is all superfluous. What sense is there in

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saying God put his hand over Moses' face, to prevent him from seeing that which could not be seen.

Says one, I see we cannot harmonize the matter any other way, that that there was a literal body seen by Moses; but that was not God's own body, it was a body he took that he might show himself to Moses. Moses could form no just conceptions of God unless he assumed a form. So God took a body. This throws a worse coloring on the matter than the first position; for it charges God with deception; telling Moses he should see him, when in fact Moses according to this testimony did not see God, but another body. A person must be given to doubt almost beyond recovery, that would attempt thus to mystify, and do away with the force of this testimony.

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Ex. xxiv, 9. "Then went up Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel; and they saw the God of Israel: and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in its clearness." They were permitted to see his feet, but no man can see his face and live. No mortal eye can bear the dazzling brightness of the glory of the face of God. It far exceeds the light of the sun. For the prophet says, "The light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be seven fold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound." Isa. xxx, 26. Notwithstanding this seven-fold light that is then to shine, the prophet speaking of the scene says, "Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in

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mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously." Isa. xxiv, 23. The testimony of John is [Rev. xxi, 23.] "And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof."

Infidels claim that there is a contradiction in the testimony of Moses, because he said, he talked with God face to face. We reply, there was a cloud between them, but God told Moses, "No man shalt see me and live." The Testimony of the New Testament is in harmony with that of the Old upon this subject. "Follow peace with all men, and holiness without which no man shall see the Lord." Heb. xii, 14. Who with mortal eyes could behold a light that far outshines seven fold the brightness of the sun? Surely none but the holy can behold him, none but immortal eyes could bear that radiant glory. Although the Word says we cannot see God now and live, the promise is, that the pure in heart shall see him. Matt. v, 3. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Rev. xxii, 4. "And they shall see his face, and his name shall be in their foreheads."

Paul, [Col. i, 15.] speaking of Christ, says, "Who is the image of the invisible God, the first born of every creature." Here Christ is said to be "the image of the invisible God." We have already shown, that Christ has a body composed of substance, flesh and bones; and he is said to be, "the image of the invisible God." Well, says one, we admit his divine nature is in the image of God. If by his divine nature you mean the part that existed in glory with the Father before the world was, we

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reply, that which was in the beginning with God, (the Word,) was made flesh, not came into flesh, or as some state, clothed upon with a human nature, but made flesh. But says another, God is said to be invisible. Because he is invisible now, it does not prove that he never will be seen. The Word says, "The pure in heart shall see" him. Willing faith says, Amen.

Paul's testimony in Phil. ii, 5, 6, shows plainly what may be understood by the statement, that Christ is the image of God. "Let this mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus: who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God." How can Christ be said to be in the form of God, if God has no form! Rom. viii, 3. "God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh." Christ is in the form of God, and in the form of men. This at once reveals to us the form of God.

Daniel speaking of God, calls him the Ancient of days. Dan. vii, 9. "And the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool." This personage is said to have a head, and hair; this certainly could not be said of him if he was immaterial and had no form. But Paul's testimony in Heb. i, 3, ought to settle every candid mind in regard to the personality of God. Speaking of Christ, he says, "Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his (the Father's) person." Here then it is plainly stated God has a person. Christ is the express image of it. Then we can understand Christ where he says, "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father." John xiv, 19. He could not

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have meant, that he was his own father; for when he prayed he addressed his Father as another person who had sent him into the world. He styled himself the Son of God. Then he could not be the Father of which he was the son. When he says, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father," he must mean, that as he was the express image of the Father's person, those who saw him saw the likeness of the Father in him.

But we will now return to the subject of The creation of man. We have seen already that man's being made in the image of God, could not refer to a moral image, for it would involve the absurdity that the lifeless clay of which man was formed, had a character like God. We now see the Scriptures clearly teach, that God is a person with a body and form. Then Gen. i, 26, may be understood to teach the fact, that man was made in the form of God. Other scriptures agree with this testimony. See Gen. ix, 6. "whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man." This testimony cannot apply to a spirit, or immaterial part of man: that which is the image of God has blood. 1 Cor. xi, 7. "For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God." James [Chap. iii, 9] speaking of the tongue says, "Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude (likeness, resemblance-Webster) of God." The foregoing testimony settles the point, that the image of God does not refer to character but to form.

Gen. ii, 7. "And the Lord God formed man of

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the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." Grave Doctors of Divinity (as they are called) assert that what God breathed into man was a part of himself. This, say they, is what became a living soul. It must be immortal; for God cannot die, neither will he destroy a part of himself. But the text says, "man became a living soul." Man was made of dust; then the dust became a living soul after being inspired with the breath of life. If it is a fact, that because God breathed into man the breath of life, that breath is immortal, then beasts must have immortal souls. Moses, in giving, the account of the flood, [Gen. vii, 21, 22,] says, "And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowls, and of cattle, and of beasts and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man. All in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died."

If we must admit, because the breath of life came from God, it must be a part of himself, and hence immortal, we get ourselves into a grand difficulty. Sinners, you say, are to be punished with eternal misery, because God cannot destroy a part of himself; but your theory makes out that God is going to torment a part of himself to all eternity. If the above sentiment were true, we might perhaps find in it, a solution for the difficulty of the Predestinarian, who states, that God decreed from all eternity that some mens would be lost, and they cannot alter their fate, but they are to be tormented eternally for being sinners, something they could not avoid. But if God has placed a part of himself in man, and finally punishes that soul, (a part of himself,) to all

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eternity, it may be after all, that the one would be punished on whom the charge of their sin rests; namely, Himself.

But here is the truth plainly stated: "Man became a living soul." The same original term which is rendered living soul in this text, is in other portions of Scripture applied to beasts, and sometimes rendered living creature, and sometimes living soul. "Moses uses nephesh, chay, chayiah, and chayim to express animal life and creature; and these words are generally translated soul, life, living, lives, and creature. Gen. i, 24 reads, 'Let the earth bring forth the (nephesh chayiah) living creature after his kind,

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cattle, and creeping things, and beast of the earth after his kind.' In Gen. xi, 19, Moses states that these living souls are brought before Adam, and whatsoever he named every living soul, (nephesh chayiah,) that was the name of it." Adam Clarke, commenting upon verse 24, acknowledges that (nephesh chayiah) living soul, is "a general term to express all creatures endued with animal life." Bible vs. Tradition.

We notice this point thus definitely, from the fact that this is the first and primary signification of the term soul, and here it applies to the whole person. It is stated in Rev. xvi, 3, when the second vial is poured out, "And every living soul died in the sea." Here the same expression is used, doubtless applying to fish. We see then, if the term living soul when applied to man proves him to be immortal; it can prove no less when applied to beasts. But no one contends the application of the term to beasts proves them to be immortal, neither does it prove man to be immortal when applied to him.

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"God planted a garden eastward in Eden." That garden he beautified with flowers of every tint, every thing which was pleasant to the sight was there, spontaneously blooming. Every thing which was good for food the earth did bear. The trees, beautiful flowers, and tall grass waved in the soft pressure of the spicy breeze. The gentle stream murmured slowly along, as its silver surface glistened in the rays of the noon-day sun. The beautiful birds warbled forth their merry songs from every bower. There all was peace, love, joy, and harmony. No evil beasts were there, but the delight of all was to see their fellows happy. There God placed that happy pair. No sorrow e'er had filled their breasts, they knew no pain, and in childlike innocence they walk forth to view their first abode. Their cup of joy was full, and as they beheld the God who thus had wrought for them, they struck a note of praise in honor of his blessed name. Fair angels looked upon the work of God; he had finished it and pronounced it very good. "The morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy."

When Adam was thus placed in the garden, God said to him. "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." We have already stated that we would show that Adam was left to form his own character. By this we do not set aside the testimony of the word, that God made man upright. It must be apparent to the minds of all, with a few moments' consideration, that no character can be developed without a law. We should have no conception of wrong,

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unless we knew how matters ought to be, to be right. Then in the formation of character, there must be some test, some rule by which we are to walk. One great command, at least, God laid down for Adam to obey. If he refrained from eating the fruit of a certain tree, he should live; if he partook of it, and thus transgressed God's commandments, he should die. Here was a test of character: the point was to be settled by Adam whether he would obey, or disobey.

Adam was on probation. It seems to be the will of God, instead of unalterably fixing the destiny of all men, to leave them to choose for themselves, at the same time holding out inducements to obedience before them. We inquire, What was Adam on probation for? Certainly not for life; for he was a living soul: not for happiness; for bliss surrounded him on every side: not for possession of the garden; for God had given him that, as also dominion over all the earth. There is but one thing he could have been on probation for; and that is, to decide whether he should eternally enjoy that state of bliss. He was on probation for eternal life. If he was on probation for eternal life, then he could not have been immortal. If he had been immortal he could not have died. And on the other hand, had he been mortal, his case was already decided for death. We conclude he occupied a position between them both, and was left to

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attain to either. He was incorrupt, and had he refrained from partaking of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he never would have seen corruption.

Adam was not left in darkness as to what the consequence would be if he partook of the forbidden tree. The penalty consequent on the transgression

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of that command, God himself expresses in the following words: "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." But says the objector, God could not have meant to tell Adam that he should literally die in the day he partook of the forbidden fruit; for he did not die in that day: he lived 930 years, and then died. The Lord must have meant to tell him that he would die a spiritual death. By spiritual death, we suppose you mean "dead in trespasses and sins." A person dead in sins, must be one that is lost to all sense of the obligation he is under to obey God. We claim that this could not have been held out before Adam as a penalty: it was a natural consequence. If a man commits sin, and continues in those sins, he is spiritually dead. What should we think if the legislators of this Union, or any of its States, should pass a law stating that if a man committed murder, he should lose all sense of his obligation to keep that law, and that should be the penalty of his transgression.

Again, if the death threatened was spiritual, we find ourselves involved in a difficulty. Says Paul, [1 Cor, xv,] "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." If the death they died in Adam was a spiritual death, then being made alive in Christ from that death must be to be made holy. This also would be the first resurrection, as it brings men to life from the first death. This would make out that all men would finally be holy; for in Christ shall all be made alive. Rev. xx, 6. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such, the second death hath no power." Then they that were once made holy would remain everlastingly holy; but the Word says, "Take heed lest

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ye fall." But we inquire, did God say, "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die?" The marginal reading of the text says. "Heb., Dying thou shalt die." In the day he partook of that fruit he would be a subject of death, become corrupted, and a prey to disease.

The divine command had gone forth. The penalty of disobedience had been stated, and Adam was left to choose life, or death. The serpent it is said "was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made: and he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, we may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know, that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened; and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." The testimony of the serpent prevailed, the woman partook of the fruit, gave to her husband, and jointly they broke God's command. The serpent said, Ye shall not surely die. As the serpent was the most subtle beast, he was the agent used by Satan in the deception of that happy pair. Since man has yielded to Satan, he has an agent he can use better for the work of deception: he now uses man. This was the first great deceptive work performed by Satan. The card he then turned was, "Thou shalt not surely die." In that game he won the world. He has not yet forgotten it; and although men are familiar with the history of these scenes, yet still they

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permit themselves to be deceived, while Satan, in various ways, whispers into their ears, "Ye shall not surely die." We fear the sentiment taught at the present time, that all men have immortal souls, and therefore cannot die, (although its present advocates may honestly consider it to be truth,) came from the same source of deception.

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After man had partaken of the fruit of the forbidden tree, and thus broke God's commandment, the Lord proceeded to pass sentence on the several ones engaged in this transgression. He explained to man what his punishment was to be. Gen. iii, 19. "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return." There could certainly be no doubt in the mind of Adam, as to what God meant by saying, "dying thou shalt die." The Lord had explained it to him. He does not tell Adam that his immortal soul shall go to heaven or to torments, but simply he should die; cease to live; return to dust. After this curse was pronounced upon man, the Lord said, "Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the Garden of Eden." God also cursed the ground for man's sake, and sent him forth to till it, but said, Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth unto thee. (It is said by some, that God wills the eternal misery of the wicked, but here it is stated, God drove man from the garden, lest he should eat of the tree of life and live for ever.

Sorrow then filled the hearts of that hitherto

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happy pair. Their state of bliss was now changed for a life of toil and perplexity to end in death. Satan triumphed that he had molested the work of God and caused man to sin. The awful scene of misery, and wretchedness, that has followed as a consequent upon Adam's transgression cannot be described. Beauty has vanished, love is debased, sorrow, sin and death are in the world's cup; the last remains of Paradisean matter are swept away by the curse.

While God pronounces the penalty upon Adam, he leaves him room to hope. "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." In this, as all commentators claim, we have the promise of the Saviour, who was to be manifest "that he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil." "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Adam still had room for hope, and although he had thrust himself away from the tree of life by transgression, and must die, faith in Christ would bring him up again. He should not perish everlastingly, as would have been the case had not God provided a ransom for him. But we pass this matter of reconciliation through Christ for the present.

In the examination we have made of the creation of man, his fall, etc., we see no record of immortality or of any spirit being given to him that can possess consciousness separate from the body. We think that the testimony from Solomon, [Eccl, xii, 7,] may now be understood. "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit to God who gave it." We find no record, that God gave any spirit to

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man except the breath of life, which in Gen. vii, 22, in the margin, is called the "breath of the spirit of life." The same original term that is rendered spirit in Eccl. xii, 7 (ruah, breath, spirit, etc.,) is used in Gen. ii, 7. Then Ecclesiastes xii, 7, states merely the disorganization of man: dust returns to dust, and the breath to God who gave it. Says Job. xii 10, "In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind."

Says the objector, your testimony from Scripture seems to show that Adam was not created immortal, yet I believe we are immortal. We inquire, from what source do we derive our immortality? It must be either inherent, derived from Adam, or else it comes to us directly from God. We reply, we did not get it from Adam; for he did not have it himself. If he had immortality, and imparted it to us, his posterity, then the soul cannot be immaterial as claimed by the advocates of natural immortality. Immaterial is the opposite of material. Material is something; matter; has length, breadth and thickness; and one of its properties is said by Philosophers to be Divisibility. Immaterial, is the opposite, not material, not

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matter: then it does not possess those properties. Matter is capable of subdivisions; for divisibility is one of its properties. But immateriality being the opposite, is subject to no such divisions. Then if the soul of Adam was immaterial, it was not susceptible of subdivisions so as to give immortality to his posterity. Then if man has an immortal soul or spirit, it must come direct from the hand of the Creator at the birth of each individual. This position would be monstrous; for they tell us the soul is the life of the person, and

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unless this soul was imparted there would be no life. Thus we see that God is charged with giving souls to every being that lives, no matter how miserable their birth. And again, they tell us the soul is the mind: then some of these souls must be very limited in intellect when formed, as appears by the idiotic portion of the community.

One great reason urged that man is in possession of some principle of a higher nature than matter, is that man thinks; and with all candor we are told that matter cannot think, has not the power of self-motion, and would eternally remain inactive, were it not for the immortal power of volition which man possesses. We enquire. Do beasts possess an immortal will? They certainly have the power to will and move their bodies about. Philosophers have only given us the properties of unorganized matter; but every one must admit, that by combination of matter, results are produced, and properties made manifest, which did not exist in the original matter unorganized. Organized in a certain form, matter is made to produce music, and yet music is not a property of matter, but is the result of a peculiar organization of matter. But says one, "The music is not in the material instrument, but in the mind." But the mind does not produce the sound: sound is produced as the result of the organization of the materials of the instrument, the air being the medium through which it is conveyed to the nice organism of the ear, and there the mind takes cognizance of those sounds.

But says the objector, Mans reason, is capable of choosing and refusing. We reply. The same may be said of beasts; they choose. But, say you, this

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manifestation of knowledge in them is instinct. Is instinct a property of matter? Instinct as it is termed, if traced through the family of the brute creation, would be found to exist in a variety of forms, and so nearly allied in some, to the operations of the human mind, that some men would doubtless call it reason. But few, however, would contend that beasts possess immortal souls. Then instinct as it is termed, is the result of organization, and yet in some animals is pronounced reason. Then we inquire, if beasts are in possession of intellect without immortal souls, why may not man with an organization more refined, and a greater number of reasoning faculties, be in possession of reason, and intellect of a higher tone, and yet not be immortal? We do not wish to be charged with the position, that we claim mind is material; for we do not. We believe, however, that thought is an effect produced by material organization. For this we will assign our reasons briefly. 1st. The mind is developed in proportion to the volume of brain, and temperament of the body. The brain of an ordinary man is about one twentieth part the size of the body, while that of the horse is only one two-hundredth part.

If the mind was immortal, and not the result of the action of the body, why should earnest study cause weariness of body? If the contrary were the case, that the mind exists independent of the body, and that the body was as a clog to the powers of that spirit, as has been claimed, then we should expect the nearer death we came, the brighter the intellect would be; but we find it the reverse. A sound mind in a sound body expresses the truth of this matter.

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There is one fact that cannot be explained in harmony with the theory, that the mind is not dependent upon matter for its existence. When the skull of man becomes fractured, and depressed upon the brain, the sufferer is immediately unconscious, and yet the breath of life is in him. Many curious circumstances might be related, illustrative of this point, of individuals who remained unconscious for days, and after being restored to their senses again, were not conscious that any time had elapsed. We refer the reader to Mental Philosophy for testimonies upon this subject. What folly to talk of the mind of man being immortal, and independent in its existence, if disease of the body can affect it. What a sentiment to teach, that a man is conscious after death, when the facts are, injury of the brain makes a man unconscious while living.

But we return to the Bible. Our reasoning would be but vain, except it were in harmony with the Word of inspiration. We have already seen that the Scriptures do not tell us that man is in possession of immortality in his present state of existence, but they exhort him to seek for it. Doubtless this sentiment is contrary to the early teaching of most of our readers. We have been taught, "The body is mortal, it will soon die; the soul is immortal, it can never die." The Bible, however, contradicts this sentiment. Eze. xviii, 4, 20. "Behold all souls are mine, as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine, the soul that sinneth it shall die." Here theologians have found themselves in a difficulty, and to extricate themselves from it, have stated that the death of the soul, was the death that never dies. What death is that? We should

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consider it a contradiction of terms, and that there was no death about it. What would you think if some one should begin to talk to you about a person, and tell you they lived a life that never lived? You would certainly think the person was not yet born. So with the expression, death that never dies," it carries with it the idea of eternal life. We now come to the investigation of