



Reprints for
The Armchair Theologian
By The Armchair Theological Society
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THE COALHEAVER'S CONFESSION

I BELIEVE, that every man who is enlightened to see the fellowship of the gospel mystery, enabled to receive it in the love of it, who is blessed with enlargement of heart, access to God, and freedom with him in prayer, is delivered from the yoke and bondage of Moses's law, in every sense of the words: he is free born, a son of the free woman and made free by the Son of God; is a free citizen of Mount Zion: has a granted right to all the privileges of it; and is an heir of God's eternal kingdom. God the Father appointed his Son to proclaim liberty to him: the Son has made him free: the Spirit of the Lord is in him, and there is liberty. The truth has made him free, and he is free indeed; and free he must remain, unless he abuse his liberty, or suffer blind guides to entangle him again with the yoke of bondage.

I believe, that every one that looketh into this perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, is a sanctified hearer of the gospel, and an evangelical doer of the work of faith, being blessed in his deed. And, whosoever sends this free man to the binding law of Moses, as his only rule of life, sends him to the only place to which he can send him, to have him cursed in his deed: for, "as many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse."

I believe, that whatsoever is the saint's only rule of life, that the saint is under that rule; subject to that rule, he must be obedient to that rule; walk by that rule; work by that rule; and live by that rule. And, if the law of Moses be that rule, the saint is under the law; subject to the law: his obedience is the obedience of the law; he walks in the letter of the law; his works are the works of the law; and he that does these things in the law, shall live in them. And, if this be true, the ministers of the letter are right: Moses's disciples, and all the ministers of circumcision who opposed the gospel, were the only orthodox men and, consequently, all the apostle's charges against them were groundless and unjust.

I believe that the gospel furnishes the believer with every thing he wants; and with his only and all-sufficient rule of life also; or else, he could not, with propriety, be said to be under grace, subject to the gospel, obedient to the faith, a walker in newness of life, a worker of righteousness by faith, and one who lives by the faith of the Son of God.

I believe, that a true servant of the Lord, is called a minister of the Spirit, a minister of Christ, a preacher of the gospel, and an ambassador of peace; a steward of grace, and an evangelist; that every one who enforces the necessity and sufficiency of the Spirit, that makes Christ Jesus the Lord all in all, as Paul did, preaches the gospel in all its branches, and makes full proof of it; that enforces peace between God and conscience, by faith in a Saviour's blood; holds forth the word of life, as a good steward of the manifold grace of God; and who leads people unto Christ Jesus, enforces union with him, liberty in him by the Spirit, a close walk with him, heavenly mindedness, and joy and peace in believing, are the persons who have a right to the above titles, and none else.

I believe, that the reason of so many persons making shipwreck of their confession of faith, and apostatizing from their profession of it, is, because they had no other bond to hold them to it but the bondage of the law; nor any other rule to walk by but the commandments. Had the bond of everlasting love got hold of them, and Paul's gospel rule of eternal life been given them, I believe it would have been otherwise.

I believe, that love is the strongest cord of the law of the Spirit of life; and, that natural love is the strongest tie of the law of nature. The former keeps Christ and the church together; the latter keeps kings and subjects, fathers and families together. Where the former is wanting, apostasy is certain: where the latter is wanting, the kingdom and the house will soon be divided. I believe, these words, "To have, and to hold, from this day forward, for better for worse, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish till death us do part;" is as binding a law as letters can make; and is a rule to be observed by every married couple as long as they live; nor can the woman be loosed from that law, till her husband be dead; then, but not till then, is she free.

I believe, that no couple fulfill this covenant engagement, or live up to this rule, but those who, in heart, sincerely love one another: for, if love works no ill to a neighbor, it can work none to a wife or husband, who are the nearest, and ought to be the dearest, of all neighbors.

I believe, the only reason of so many divorces in the world, unfaithfulness, inconstancy, and treacherous elopements among married people, is, because they have no other yoke than the letter of their covenant: no binding ties to keep them within bounds, but that; no rule to live or walk by, but the law of marriage; which is too weak, through the lust of the flesh, to make some men constant; and too weak, through the same, to keep some wives either chaste or frugal.

I believe, that where there are the strong ties of mutual affection, my lady will never abandon her lord, nor yield to the intrigues or artifice of the worst of thieves; 'tis for the want of this, that his grace's eye is not satisfied with his duchess, and for the same reason my lady is as "rotteness in her lord's bones," Prov. 12:4.

I believe, that those who make the law of Moses their only rule of life, must stand or fall, live or die, by that law, when they appear before him to whom vengeance belongeth; and those who die violators of the law of marriage, shall have their share of that cup; for God is the avenger of all such.

I believe, that a congregation gathered by legal preaching, will soon be scattered by the same; for, if the kingdom of God stands not in word, which gives no life, it can never stand in the letter, which ministers death.

I believe, that a preacher of morality [as it is falsely called] to a lifeless people, is, in the strictest sense of the words, the dead burying the dead: or, as the burial service saith, it is committing body and soul both to the ground; 'tis adding ashes to ashes, and dust to dust; nor can any assurance or certain hope of a blessed resurrection rise from thence.

I believe, that the preacher who abandons the gospel will soon he abandoned by the elect of God; and those of his own cast who stick to him, will do but little to support him: the preacher begins in the Spirit, and ends in the flesh: the hearers begin in the letter, and end in the world.

I believe, there is no real morality to be found in any of the children of men, but in those who are quickened by the Holy Ghost, who is the Spirit of holiness of faith, of power, of love, and of a sound mind; for, if all the law and the prophets hang upon these two points "love to God and our neighbor," there can be none of this morality in a carnal mind, which is enmity against God and his law; unless it can be proved that purity springs from filth, holiness from sin, love from enmity, activity from death, or obedience from rebellion. Paul calls human righteousness dung and dross.

I believe, the reason why Paul loved the law of God after the inner man, was not owing to any act of kindness or favor received from the law, but because he was renewed in the spirit of his mind by the Holy Ghost, who put God's law in his heart and wrote it in his mind: which made his mind heavenly, and filled him with life and peace.

I believe, that those who yoke the believer with Moses's law as his only rule of life, neither handle the law lawfully, nor the gospel evangelically; they are neither faithful to Moses, nor faithful to Christ; neither to saints nor to sinners. - Not faithful to Moses, because they do not shew his accusations; not to Christ, because they do not make him all in all; not to the believer, because they send him from Mount Zion, where all his real friends are; nor to the bond children, because they do not shew them their state; but by applying Zion's privileges to them, make them stage-players in the city of God, till God discovers what they are; and then the hypocrites in Zion are afraid, and cry, Who among us shall dwell with devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?

I believe, that the liberty of the gospel is as great an opposite to the bondage of the law, as life is to death, light to darkness, love to hatred, mercy to wrath, or salvation to damnation.

I believe, that if the gospel of Christ be not a sufficient rule of life for men to believe in, be obedient to, and live and walk by, that men would never be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of God, and from the glory of his power, for want of a knowledge of him, and obedience to the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I believe, that when God said, "This is my beloved Son, hear ye him," it implied, that Christ is our God, our head, our law-fulfiller, king, and ruler; and that all the words of this king and ruler to his subjects are not killing letters; but that the words which he speaks are spirit and they are life; and that the works of the law are the works of the flesh; and that, if the flesh profiteth nothing, the works of it profit less: that which is born of the flesh is flesh, which cannot inherit eternal life; but that which is born of the spirit is spirit, and is the earnest of our future inheritance.

I believe, the term used, "The law is the only rule of life," is the same in the mouths of some men as the word "influenza" is in the mouths of some gentlemen of the faculty; it implies everything, but fixes nothing. A persecutor is influenced by Satan, a covetous man by Mammon, an unclean man by Belial, an idolater by Moloch; the word "influenza" implies all these; yea, it reaches to everything which influences the bodies or souls of men, whether in heaven, earth, or hell, for they are all under some influence. The saints are under the law of the spirit of life and love in this world, and so they are in heaven, for eternal life and eternal love can never fail; and sinners are under the law of sin and death in this world, and they are under the guilt of sin and the second death in hell; and he that can fix these two laws upon one subject, is the most likely man to fix the disorder, called the influenza, upon some particular complaint.

I believe, that mingling the law with the gospel afforded the first twig for the whore of Babylon to build her nest on; since which she has made room for the whole superstructure of justification by works, works of supererogation, a superfluity of merits for others. Fleshly penance, human mediators, and carnal works, are all in all with them; Christ is only mimicked by antichrist, and his gospel serves only as a catch-penny, or as a snare to entangle and murder the saints of God, who dare to oppose the craft by which they get their wealth.

I believe, that enforcing the "law as the believer's only rule of life," is the only footing that arminianism stands upon. Human righteousness can never be established upon the gospel of Christ, for "therein is the righteousness of God revealed," and his righteousness only. The doctrine of free-will can never stand upon the mystery of God's sovereign good-will to his elect; the doctrine of final apostasy can never be established on the doctrine of everlasting life and love; nor can the system of fleshly perfection find any footing on a "sea of glass that makes manifest the councils of the heart."

I believe, that the covenant of promise belongs to the heirs of promise; and that the ministration of the Spirit is sent with power to none but to the heirs of eternal life; and that the gospel reveals the righteousness of God to all those that are predestinated to be called, justified, and glorified. Therefore, to preach a pure gospel, that reveals God's righteousness, and no other, a gospel that sets forth the Saviour as the believer's all in all, and to enforce and maintain subjection to the gospel of Christ, and an experience of the life and power of it, obedience to it, a life, walk, and conversation in it, to insist on the fruits of the Spirit, the works of righteousness, the works of faith, and labors of love, is the only way to be useful to God's elect, and the only way to glorify Christ. This doctrine sets aside at once all arminianism, and all arminians or bond children, and fixes them on their own covenant with the rest of the world, and under the commands and threatening of that law on which they build, and to which they look for righteousness and perfection.

I believe, that all national religion, all courts of inquisition, all the dignity and authority of spiritual lords over God's heritage, all trains of ceremonies and human forms of godliness, have no foundation in the unconditional promise of eternal life, nor in the Spirit's powerful influence on the souls of God's elect: all these things must stand on something like "the doctrine of the law being the only rule of life." Hence, we hear of a church, and of an holy religion, by law established, in distinction from another, which is said "to be built not by might; nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."

I believe, the doctrine of the law being the believer's only rule of life, has been of use to several sorts of men, though it has afforded neither life nor help to God's elect. The whole code of tithe laws must be fixed upon some law by which all tithes, revenues, offerings, fees, &c., are extracted, or rather exacted. There is no authority to get these things from carnal men by the gospel; but, by law they can get them, if not by fair means, they can by foul; for, like Eli's sons, they can take them by force.

I believe, the gospel never allows any true minister to take the charge of a whole parish; nor yet to take carnal things of carnal men, unless freely offered - an ambassador of peace is not to go from house to house: where he carries peace to a son of peace, there he is to abide, eating and drinking such things as are set before him; if he sows spiritual things, he is to reap carnal things.

When preachers bring men to the name of the Lord our God, the Holy One of Israel, agreeably to the prophecy, the suppliants are to come, bringing their gold and silver with them, Isaiah, lx. 9, as was fulfilled in the apostle's days, when they had converted souls to Christ by their ministry, the wealth of their converts was laid at their feet.

I believe, the doctrine of the law, as a rule of life, has been of use to many ministers, fitted, polished, sent out, and ordained by men; such being sensual, having not the Spirit, they have been obliged to enforce the law as the only rule of life, in order to keep people together; for, if a church be not in the preacher's heart to live and die with them, and if the preacher be not made manifest by God's Spirit in the conscience of the church, they will be rent and splitting; therefore, it is needful that uninspired men enforce Moses's law to believers, or else dwell perpetually on the commands of Christ, or on the laws of his house; and when once they can blind a simple people, benumb their consciences, stifle their convictions, brace them with bigotry, arm them with malice against all others, fix a few gospel notions in their head, and fill them with a carnal rage (under the name of zeal) in behalf of the law as the only rule of life, telling them it is fulfilling all righteousness, the work is done, and the people are united, not by the girdle of truth, or bond of love, but by the yoke of priestcraft.

I believe, that by this yoke of priestcraft legions are shackled and bound to the preacher's pews, his table, his ministry, and his community; and by these means the subscriptions of the people are secured also, without the bond of eternal love, the bond of peace, or the unity of the faith.

I believe, that no preacher has any authority, or power, to confine me to his ministry, meeting, table, or community, any longer than he can shew himself approved unto God, a pastor after God's own heart, who feeds me with knowledge and understanding, and who goes before me both in judgment and experience; or can say, as Paul did, "Be ye followers of me."

I believe, that the yoke of priestcraft is as galling as the yoke of Moses; and keeps men under as gross bondage to the fear of man, which brings a snare, as Moses's law does to the fear of vengeance, which brings the fears and snares of death.

I believe, a poor alarmed sinner easily catches this kind of doctrine, being, as the wise man says, one of those simple ones who believe every word; but if ever the Spirit of God comes upon such, these yokes are like Sampson's cords, they fly like tow; and as soon as such a bird is escaped out of the snare of the fowler, the messengers and members of such churches will pursue him, perplex him, and hunt him, as bad as ever Saul hunted David, or Moses's law hunted the awakened sinner when under the arrests of divine justice.

I believe nothing to be obedience to the faith, but that which is done in faith; nor any thing to be a fruit of the Spirit, but that which the Spirit leads a man to, and helps him in the performance of; nor any thing to be a work or fruit of righteousness, but that which is done by persons in a justified state, and under the influence of the faith of God's elect, by which the elect are justified.

I believe, that every man who appears in a pulpit among the saints of God, in the character of a servant of Christ, a minister of the Spirit, or a steward of the grace of God, while in an unconverted state, is one of the greatest and worst of all impostors, little inferior to Antichrist, Simon Magus, or Balaam.

I believe, that he is the greatest enthusiast in this world, who, in a public pulpit, lays claim to the Spirit and grace of God, and counterfeits his divine influence to beguile people into the belief of it, while he is altogether destitute of both; for he deceives sinners, he deceives himself, and tries to deceive even the elect of God also.

I believe, that a man who allows no claim to be made on Christ or his gospel, but on the footing of what he calls a good, meek, or quiet temper, would exclude Jeremiah, Jonah, and Elias, if not Moses, Paul, and Job, and all the elect of God.

I believe that man to be of the most quiet temper, where the strong man armed keeps possession of the palace and his goods in peace - for they are at ease in Zion; but those who are at war with the world, the flesh, and the devil, or, like Jonah, three days and three nights in the deep, are such adversaries to Satan, that he will not let them be at peace in the flesh - such must have tribulation in the world, and seek peace only in the Saviour

I believe, that every man who boasts of the excellency of his temper, or of any other branch of fleshly perfection, is a stranger to Christ, and destitute of all true holiness. When Job saw the Lord, he cried out, "I abhor myself in dust and ashes!" When Isaiah saw him, he said, "Woe is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips!" When Daniel saw him, he said, "all his comeliness was turned to corruption, and he retained no strength." And if any man come to me, says Christ, and hate not his father and his mother, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

I believe, that the man who loves his sovereign in his heart, and sincerely prays for him in private, where no eye but God's sees him, is as loyal a subject in God's account, as he who rises early and never blesses him but with a loud voice; or any other who continues his circular motion under the sovereign influence of the *Regis Donum*.

I believe, that all persons who put out their money to build or fit up chapels for the gospel, in hope or expectation of making eight, ten, fifteen, or twenty per cent of their money, are the worst of usurers, and are trading with a commodity that will one day sink them in eternal insolvency: for, if a usurer is excluded from the citizens of Zion, Psalm 15, what must his state be who waters the root of all evil with unlawful interest, by making merchandise of the bounties of heaven?

I believe, there never were but two ways to heaven and glory; the one is by works, the other by faith. The first is, "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." The second is, "We that believe, do enter into rest." These are the only two ways that ever God opened; the man therefore that attempts a middle way, walks in "a way not cast up," Jer. 18:15, or wanders in a wilderness where there is no way.

I believe, telling country tales and old wives' fables in a pulpit, is not feeding people with knowledge and understanding, nor bringing things from God's treasures, new and old, but has a tendency to make people more like Athenians than Christians, seeing they are trained up to hear and tell some new thing.

I believe, that all spouting clubs, alias disputing societies, kept by graceless men for the sake of sixpence per head, can never be vindicated by the account we have of Paul's disputing in the school or one Tyrannus; it is casting pearls before swine; it is calling for the judgment of this world upon those mysteries which God has hid from the wise and prudent: no good man dares thus to tempt God; and a fool of no understanding is forbidden to take God's covenant in his mouth: it is making sport, clapping hands, and causing clamorous shouts, where faith and reverence should act, which, it is to be feared, will one day end in weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth.

I believe, that it is one thing for a man to begin in the Spirit, and another thing for the Spirit to begin in the man.

I believe, that every man who begins in the Spirit, or with the gospel, will certainly end in the flesh, and under the law; man makes nothing perfect, and the law makes nothing perfect: the law will ever veil the carnal man, and the carnal man will ever veil the gospel: the gospel is a lamp that burneth, and they must be children of the light that bear it. There were but three hundred in Gideon's days, out of thirty thousand, that were allowed to

bear the lamps and pitchers, and cry, "The sword of the Lord and Gideon;" and these were the men that would not bow their knees for a draft of water, much less to Baal or Mammon.

I believe, that wherever the Spirit of God begins a work of grace, he carries it on. What God doth, it is done for ever, all his work is perfect; the Spirit is a well of living water in the believer, that springs up into everlasting life; the Comforter abides for ever, he shall never depart from the chosen seed, world without end.

I believe, that real morality, according to Paul's doctrine, is charity, the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned; and though to have pity on the poor and relieve their distresses, are the best performances that the children of nature are capable of, yet a man may give all his goods to feed the poor, and his body to be burnt, and be destitute of charity, consequently destitute of real morality.

I believe, that Paul could boast of human performances as much, if not more than any man living; he was an Hebrew of the Hebrews, one of the strictest sect of the pharisees; touching the law, blameless; concerning zeal, persecuted the church, and these things he counted gain; but when grace reached his heart, he counted these things as loss, yea, dung and dross, and palms them upon his ignorance and unbelief; but neither ignorance nor unbelief is the root of real morality.

I believe, that it is one thing for the holy commandment to be delivered unto a man, 2 Peter 2:21, and another thing for God to put the holy commandment in his mind, and write it on his heart: the former stands by his own faithfulness, to what is delivered to him; the latter stands on the faithfulness of God to Christ and his seed, being within the bond of the everlasting covenant: the former must keep the holy commandment delivered unto him; the latter is "kept by the mighty power of God through faith unto salvation."

I believe, that Herod heard the preaching of John gladly, and did many things; but those make a better end than Herod who hear the gospel with sadness, and are convinced that they can do nothing; seeing the God of truth declares, without him we can do nothing, but through him Paul could do all things.

I believe, that the man who preaches up the redemption of all the world, is a stranger to the application of redemption. If he were to preach particular redemption, or the redemption of Zion only, he would exclude himself; but universal redemption takes in all the human race, consequently the preacher among the rest; but it is but a tottering foundation after all, because we read of some being in hell already, and not one there but what gives the doctrine of universal redemption the lie.

I believe, that our present forgers of the restoration of devils, are a kind of mediators that require very extraordinary qualifications; the Jewish mediators, such as Moses, the high priests, the judges, prophets, &c., were Jews; they were of the Jewish religion, and stood not between God and the world, but between God and Israel only. God appointed them to the office and qualified them by his Spirit to "stand in the gap."

I believe, that Christ took on him the seed of Abraham; the children of promise being flesh and blood, Jesus himself took part of the same; he was made sin for us, and made perfect through sufferings, and became a most blessed and suitable mediator between God and his elect Israel, not between God and the world, for his mediatorial kingdom is not of this world; he prayed not for the world; he has not revealed his mysteries to the world; he redeemed his sheep (not the world); nor does he intercede for the world.

I believe, that all the mediators whom the papists have made, were of their own faith and profession, and that none of them were ever empowered by the Pope to stand between God and heretics; their intercession or mediation is confined to the whore of Babylon only.

I believe, therefore, that the forger and defender of the restoration of devils, must be qualified for his mediatorial office by being partaker of the nature of devils; he must be of the profession of devils; he must have fellowship not only with the unfruitful works of darkness, but with the workers also; he must have fellowship with devils, 1 Cor. 10:20, if he becomes a mediator and a minister of a "congregation that is in the depths of hell,"

Prov. 9:18; without the above qualifications he is not fit for his office; for he cannot be touched with a feeling of the devil's infirmities; nor can he have universal charity enough to sympathize and condole with them; all the earthly mediators that God appointed, were compassed with infirmities as well as the people.

I believe, it will be a hard task to find one text in the Bible which allows a man to take upon himself that office, and equally as hard to apply one text for the restoration of devils; seeing the Almighty says, "Unto you, O men! I call, and my voice is to the sons of men;" they must therefore say, with Saul the king, I forced myself into this office.

I believe, that these advocates for devils do not allow Satan that share of serpentine wisdom which the Scriptures apply to him; for if Christ is to restore all things, both devils and damned souls, to the favor of God, the devil must be a mere fool to tempt so many saints to blaspheme the Saviour; and a bigger fool still, to wish to destroy him from the pinnacle of the temple; for if Satan could have destroyed the Great Restorer, what would become of his restoration? This doctrine, contrary to the doctrine of Christ, represents Satan as divided against himself; and if so, either his kingdom or his restoration must fall: Satan must be divided against himself, or else be ignorant of this mystery of his restoration; and if the devil be ignorant of it, 'tis a mystery to me where these advocates for the devil got it.

I believe, that man must be a master of arts, who can fix any time, either in the purpose of heaven, or in his own brain, when the devil's everlasting chains under darkness are to be broken; when the punishment with everlasting destruction from the presence of God is to have a period; when those who shall awake to everlasting shame and contempt are to be glorified; when the eternal law is to be repealed; when the jots and tittles of it are to fail, and the Saviour's words pass away; when the irrevocable decree of reprobation is to be displaced; when the eternal damnation that Christ speaks of is to cease; the sentence which is passed be recalled; the gulph fixed be removed; the smoke which ascends for ever and ever blow over; and when those to whom Christ says, "Where I am ye cannot come," are to come where he is; and when "this device and knowledge that is fetched from the grave" and hell is to take place.

I believe, that he had need be a master of languages, and a master of arts too, who dreams of times and periods after the destruction of the world, seeing all beyond is vast eternity.

I believe, that the forger and defender of this doctrine of the devil's restoration, and the power which authorizes and influences this sort of intercessors, is the father of lies himself, who keeps possession of these his advocates and his goods in peace; but should grace reach their hearts, and the hour of temptation follow that, after they have been winnowed in Satan's sieve, as Peter was, "buffeted by the devil," as Paul was, or have their "goods, family, body, and soul smitten by him," as Job had, they would soon quit, if they did not curse, their office; for they would find work enough to make their own calling and election sure; and, consequently, would leave the devil to plead his own cause, and say, with Paul, "We are not ignorant of Satan's devices;" and counsel others to have no fellowship with devils.

I believe, that the Pope, who is the founder and upholder of purgatory, received (agreeably to Scripture) his seat, power, authority, and doctrine, from the devil himself; and I believe, those that are trading with the doctrine of devils' restoration, received their lies from the same father.

I believe, that the apostles' doctrine is daily fulfilling, which saith, "In the latter days many shall depart from the faith." And I believe, that our modern hypocrites are awfully fallen from the honest confession of their ancestors: The ancient hypocrites were afraid, and said, Who among us shall dwell with devouring fire? who shall dwell with everlasting burning? But out stage-players intimate, that they were in great fear where no fear was; for there is no such thing as everlasting burning.

I believe, that the confession of the ancient hypocrites in Zion contained the words of truth and sound doctrine; that there really are such things as devouring fire and everlasting burnings; where the wicked shall go, as the Saviour saith, "Go, ye cursed, into everlasting fire," Matt. 25:41, that is, into hell; into the fire that never shall be quenched; where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched, Mark. 9:43, 44.

I believe, that those who ascertain the death of this never dying worm, and the going out of this unquenchable fire, have not properly considered either the fire or the fuel. "Tophet is ordained of old; yea, for the king it is prepared; he hath made it deep and large; the pile thereof is fire and much wood; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it," Isa. 30:33. When all the withered branches of fallen Adam are cast into this Tophet, all the vessels of wood and of earth, which Paul calls vessels to dishonor, together with every corrupt tree, and every fruitless fig tree, made to be taken and destroyed, and the breath of Almighty God "kindling in these thickets of briars and thorns," we may well say, with the prophet, this funeral pile consisteth of fire and much wood; and that man had need be a master of languages who resolves the Saviour's question about this subject, "If they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" Luke 23:31.

I believe, that if the words "everlasting destruction, tormented for ever and ever, eternal damnation, &c." have no other meaning than a limited time, that "eternal life, everlasting love, everlasting salvation, and shining in the glory of God's kingdom for ever and ever," must have a limited time also; and the everlasting God, the eternal God, who lives for ever and ever, may cease to exist at some certain period too. The words which aver the eternal existence of God, fix the eternal salvation of the elect, and the everlasting doom of the damned; therefore, If this goal delivery for devils could be proved, there is nothing certain; for the very kingdom of heaven might be moved. - A ground of hope in the depths of hell would make the pillars of heaven tremble.

I believe, that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God; and that suffering under the curse of the law in hell, can by no means be called obedience to the precepts of the law, any more than condemned sinners "cursing their king and their God," can be said to be fulfilling all righteousness.

I believe, that no men are so proper to carry on the public business of spouting, and disputing about the glorious mysteries of God in the assemblies of the wicked, as those who have had their enmity stirred up, their rage inflamed, their consciences seared, and who have received a savour of death onto death, by sitting under the gospel. These men move in their proper element; "for they were of old ordained to this condemnation;" but for men that have any reverence of God, conscience towards him, knowledge of the truth, or love to it, to tempt God, and grieve his Spirit, by attending upon the scorner's chair, and frequenting the assemblies of hypocritical mockers, act quite out of character, and will make a deal of hard work for conscience another day: God tells us to let the potsherd strive with the potsherd of the earth; these pitchers that have been broken at the fountain, and are to be sunk in the pit, can never be of any use to God's elect. Men whom Christ in a way of judgment has blinded, from whom God has hid the mysteries of his kingdom, can be no better judges of the doctrines of the gospel than a drove of Lapland witches.

I believe, that the wise man had some meaning, when he said, "The lips of a fool swallow up himself;" for some men, by disputing against "God's making any man to be damned," are ripening themselves for damnation, by disputing against it.

Thus ends the Coal-Heaver's Confession, written, signed, and published by

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