

if they do have a physical freedom to violate God's law, and if they can do so without much remorse of conscience,) because the conscience is likewise depraved) still they can never rightfully expect to annul the sentence of death, nor escape final punishment unless mercy interposes.—The day of retribution is sure to come. Whenever a son of Adam escapes physical death, and lives forever on this earth without pain or sorrow, he then may claim that he can do as he pleases.

Just after the flood the whole population were of one language, and seemed to be of one mind—namely, to build a high tower, in order to prevent their dispersion throughout the earth. This was imagining a vain thing, because the command of God was that they were to replenish the earth. The purpose, it would seem was, that the entire earth should be peopled and subdued. This vain imagination of the people was to prevent this. Therefore they began to *manufacture bricks, and to build.*—Why did they not use stone? It was wrong to build at all however. They had great strength, for they were all of one language and perhaps of one mind. God confounds their language, and they leave off to build. This check of God effectually dispersed them and stopped the building.—There was such confusion that none could give a command, and none could understand one. Such confusion whoever beheld! The very step they took to prevent their dispersion was to build a high tower. Men often seek to frustrate the purpose of God, but he makes the wrath of man to praise him, and restrains the remainder of wrath, remembering mercy. Joseph's brethren sold him for envy and meant it for evil, but God meant it for good. Men are wicked in their devices, but when God gives them repentance they glorify him; for all his works are clean and holy in their eyes then, and their own works are vile. Behold with what wicked hands the murderers of Christ put him to death, but see how blessed and gracious and holy God appears to them when he grants them repentance on the day of Pentecost; although God had determined before hand that Christ should die for the sins of others, and that he who knew no sin should be made sin for us.

Here we see that men are divided into nations, families and tongues; see the chapter preceding this one—Gen. 10: 5, 20, 32. God's judgments are a great deep, and furnish one of the profoundest themes for the trembling meditation of a christian, and also for his joyful, thankful contemplation. His judgments are righteous when they save only Lot and his from Sodom, and when he confounds the language of proud man.

Babel is eminently figurative of Babylon. It was founded in the land of Shinar and rested on its own base. Shinar is the ancient land of Babylon, a kingdom founded by Nimrod, a grandson of Ham, who gazed with pleasure on his father's shame and nakedness in his drunkenness, while his righteous brothers, Shem and Japheth, sorrowed over their father's nakedness and covered him.—

A vile man loves to see another's nakedness, or mean conduct, and glories in wickedness, while a godly man hates to see or even hear such things once mentioned. Nimrod, a son of accursed Ham, becomes a mighty hunter, or conqueror, and founds a kingdom in the land of Shinar, and this is Babylon. It is here that the people begin to build this ambitious tower that shall reach to heaven and make them a name. This is characteristic of false religion.

These builders of false systems of religion all have one mind; that is, that they can build a tower that can reach to heaven. All men by nature think they can do some good thing by which they can inherit eternal life, and they are disposed to build up their hopes of salvation thus. The builders, too, make their own material. They manufacture their converts of earth, like bricks, instead of choosing and using the living stones of divine creation. They stumble also at the stumbling stone and rock of offence, even Jesus the chief corner stone.

They cement their house with a poor composition or mortar—part works and part grace—a conditional system of grace and works which will not hold together. They also are anxious for great numbers, and a high tower to make themselves a name.—They are ambitious to be great and highly esteemed of men.

But Babel is written on the walls. Behold what confusion is manifested in their teaching! Although they have one mind, yet their language is the language of Canaan, the spiritual. There was a corrupt Canaan, full of different tribes of people speaking perverse tongues, but the true Canaan had a simple, truthful language given them.

What we understand by a confusion of tongues here is, that the speech is corrupt, or not according to the word of the Lord. Some speak one thing and some another. Some are for money, some for Sunday schools, some for reformation, some for self-righteousness, and some for human learning, &c., &c, in all of which there is confusion double—confusion in that they differ among themselves, and in that they are all opposing the Lord.

There has never been a more bitter enemy to Israel than Babylon. When they can they capture Israel and oppress him. Nearly, or quite all the persecutions the church of Christ has ever suffered have been from false religion. Mystery, Babylon the Great, is the mother of harlots and of abominations of the earth. They all spring out of the vain imaginations of men that they can climb up to heaven on their works, or in some other way than by Christ. This is the fountain of strife and bitterness that breeds evils so numerous in the earth.

What false system has not originated in and from this sea of pollution—this dead sea that breeds and multiplies all manner of fowls and unclean birds? Here Arminianism received its definite shape and system. Here works of man were taught to be meritorious. Here sins were said to be venial. Here it was taught that man had the right to change the Bi-

ble and supplant its true ordinances, by substituting some of human invention. For instance infant sprinkling took its rise here. Baptism was admitted to be the apostolic bible ordinance. But said they, sprinkling or pouring is much more convenient and decent, and will be much more acceptable to the people, and the church has the right to substitute it, and they did it. But error shot rather over the mark then, for it is so plain that sprinkling or pouring a little water is not a burial that any one unbiassed can see this, even if he is not a believer. Then we know that one should be dead before he is fit to be buried, or should be a believer before he is baptized; and should be buried as soon as he is dead, and baptized as soon as he believes.

It was here that the modern plan of missions originated. In all countries they went and captured the minds of men to their creed. When, in the Bible teaching, the Holy Spirit separates them unto the work of preaching the gospel to the heathen.

It was here that human learning received its solemn sanctions, and the wisdom of the world, honors, traditions and superstitions were enshrined and dedicated to religion; thus bringing into its folds the most heterogeneous multitude of contradictions, so that confusion was branded on the entire system, and the spiritual worshipper looked in vain among its massive piles of rubbish for the true church or spiritual truth. Religion is to be brought to the fields and mountains, to simpler manners and a pure language. The errors of man, his departure from truth, his violations of divine law, his fondness for new things, his resorts to inventions of men, have introduced unnumbered means and measures that cause confusion, and characterize them as mighty hunters and builders. But all is confusion, or crossing the word of the Lord. In vain do we look for salvation from these hills. No such altars can send an acceptable sacrifice to heaven. These altars are stained with the blood of saints.

However the glorious gospel of peace on earth and glory to God makes crooked things straight, and brings peace out of confusion. It returns a pure language to Israel and gives a new tongue and gives all a new and pure speech and the same speech. It gives one mind and heart to all. It gives the same language and tongue to all. I have not a particle of doubt that so far as God teaches men they perfectly agree.—Christians differ only on such things as the Lord has not taught them.—Where God teaches there is great peace and fellowship, because he teaches all the same way, and gives great peace; but how can there be great peace when one believes one thing, and another another, and both differ from the truth; or how could there be true peace even if all agree, while all are wrong?

God's people are of one heart, mind and tongue, and all are taught that salvation is of the Lord, and all ascribe it to the Lord. It is the same righteousness that saves them all, and they are joint-heirs with Christ.

One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, and they are called in one hope of their calling. There is one Husband, one Bride, one Church. Whether white or black, rich or poor, bond or free, old or young; whether wise or foolish, ignorant or learned; whether Jew or Gentile, Asiatic or American, barbarian or civilized; all fleshly, national, or worldly distinctions are forever obliterated, and they are one in Christ Jesus. There shall not even be male and female. The beginning of the gospel is to partially effect this glorious union and unity here in them. Hence true christians should and do fellowship each other here, and speak one and the same things in Christ Jesus now. Hence they preach and believe one doctrine, and that the doctrine of God our Savior; and practice the good works which God has commanded, for there are no other good works.

But in heaven there will be the blessed consummation of this spiritual unity—where all shall be like Christ in the eternal peace of unmixed righteousness and life. The mystery of iniquity will then have been finished, and each will go to his own. An eternal, all-wise and righteous separation shall be put between the sheep and the goats.

Truth, as a straight line, never turns, never compromises—but error is always for compromise. It puts on the appearance of great charity, and will admit about all you claim, if you will tolerate its claims. But they are fatal. Error can never lose by a compromise, but always gains something. Truth can never gain by a compromise, because it is already right.

There are some subscribers to the LANDMARK behind, a year or more, in their payment. Will they please let me hear from them in some way? I am needing the money. Do they want their papers continued? I am disposed to give indulgence—when I can. I know times are hard. I hope all will send on a remittance that can and feel so disposed. Let me hear from you all.

It is better to feel more than one can tell, than to tell more than one has felt. Though it is a great and useful gift to be able to express one's feelings, and expound hard sayings, and resolve doubtful questions. Still the work of the Lord is unspeakable and full of glory. Hence those who have been taught of the Lord desire the gift of utterance, to tell on the housetops what has been told to them in secret.

He that prays to the Lord is not owned of men, but God hears him, and the saints are in fellowship with him. In his calamity their prayer shall be for him.

As one becomes rich his tendency is to become avaricious. Hence, if riches increase, set not your heart on them.

He that prays to men, or to be seen of men, is not heard by the Lord. He has his reward, as much as he asked for, but how little?