

"WHICH IS THE TRUE GOSPEL?"

"I Am Not Ashamed of the Gospel of Christ" (Rom. 1:16), Was the Subject of a Lecture by I. S. Hoskins, of New York City.

At the Frostburg Opera House, Sunday evening, a very large and intelligent audience listened to a sermon on the above theme by I. S. Hoskins, of New York, under the auspices of the International Bible Students' Association. The ability and eloquence exhibited by the speaker made it easy for him to command the most absorbing interest on the part of his hearers. His logic and familiarity with the Scriptures made very obvious the fact that he was indeed master of the subject under discussion. He spoke in part as follows:

Everybody knows that the word Gospel signifies "Good Tidings." And everybody ought to know that as Christian people we have for centuries misused the word, applying it to the bad tidings of great misery to all people, except the mere handful of the elect. Catholic and Protestant orthodoxy have set forth for centuries two general views of the Gospel of Christ. The Catholic Gospel (good tidings) is that all the heathen, all Catholic and Protestants, except a mere handful, go to a purgatory of awful suffering, terrible anguish, lasting for decades, centuries and thousands of years, roasting, boiling, agonizing, and thus purging away their sins and dross that they may ultimately attain to heavenly bliss for the remainder of eternity. If that is good tidings, it can be considered such only in contrast with something more horrible, if that be imaginable.

Our Protestant Gospel, of which we are so proud that we want to thrust it upon Jews, Catholics and heathens everywhere, we should thoroughly understand, enjoy and appreciate before we waste good time and money giving it to others. Here it is: Four centuries ago our forefathers were not Protestants, but Catholics, and believed in Purgatory, etc., as above. Then what was known as the Reformation set in. Amongst the things that were repudiated during this Reformation was the doctrine of Purgatory; the Reformers declared that it never had been anything more than imagination. The question then arose: What is to become of the unsaved multitudes whom they previously supposed were in Purgatory? They could not demand that God should put them in heaven, for only the saintly few are fit for such a place. Then, with blank consternation, they determined that they must crowd the entire mass into a hell of eternal torture and shut the gate upon them forever, and write upon the gate, "Who enters here abandons hope."

Good Tidings of Great Joy.
Surely St. Paul never preached any of these Gospels, nor did any of the Apostles, nor does the Bible support such theories, except by the turning and twisting of language, mis-translations of the original and misinterpretations of some parables. The plain statements of the Scriptures are all directly to the opposite. The Bible teaches that "the wages of sin is death," not Purgatory nor eternal torment; "The soul that sinneth, it shall die."

Adam, the perfect, was placed on trial for life eternal or death eternal. He sinned, and the sentence against him was, "Cursed is the earth for thy sake; thorns and thistles shall it bring forth unto thee." "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread until thou return unto the ground from whence thou wast taken." (Gen. 3:27-17). St. Paul declares the same: "By one man's disobedience sin entered into the world, and thus death passed upon all men, because all are sinners." Rom. 5:13.

Ah, now we have the truth! The penalty for sin is death, and the "good tidings" is that God has provided for our recovery from sin and death. The same was announced by the angels on the night of Jesus' birth when they said: "Behold we bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people, for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior (life-giver), which is Christ the Lord." The good tidings for the race in general is that the Redeemer, in God's due time, will become King of kings and Lord of lords—the Messiah of Glory, God's glorious representative. For a thousand years the regenerating work for Adam's race will progress. (Matt. 9:29; Acts 3:19-23). God's chosen people, Israel, will be the earthly agents of the heavenly and invisible King of Glory. By the close of His reign the whole earth will have been transformed into the paradise of God. "He will make the place of His feet glorious," and mankind will all be perfect again in God's image. There will be no more sin, no more sickness, no more dying, because all the things of sin and death will have passed away; and He who sits upon the throne will have renewed all things. (Rev. 21:5) All who after coming to a full knowledge of the truth of God's love and gracious provision still love sin and hate righteousness, will be destroyed in the second death; from which there will be no redemption, no resurrection, no recovery.

The Church Called.

The Scriptures clearly teach that God has delayed the world's blessing, the resurrection, for nearly two thousand years in order to permit the selection of the church, which is to be joint-heir with Christ in the inheritance of the Kingdom. All Bible students are familiar with the Scriptures which de-

clare that Christ is Head over all things to the Church which is His body. Again, the Church is styled the "Bride, the Lamb's Wife." Ever since Pentecost the Heavenly Father has been drawing believers to Jesus' side. The promise to these is not the resurrection by restitution promised to the world during the Messianic reign. On the contrary, these have a heavenly calling. After their consecration they are begotten of the Holy Spirit, and then instructed in the school of Christ and submitted to trials and disciplines in various ways, for the purpose of chiseling and polishing their characters as new creatures. These are but a little flock altogether.

There are no contradictions in the Bible. The contradictions are all in the mind. If we want the truth, the Bible truth, we must needs study that Grand Old Book in its own light. We must "take off grandfather's specs." Our present-day Bible helps, Bible Concordances, Studies in the Scriptures, give us a great advantage and correspondingly greater responsibility. I consider Pastor Russell's pamphlet, "Food for Thinking Christians," one of the best present-day Bible helps. I understand that a copy of it can be had free by addressing him at Brooklyn Tabernacle, New York City.

H. C. Rockwell, of New York.

The noted athlete will lecture in the Frostburg Opera House, Sunday, Feb. 22, 7:30 p. m., on the interesting subject, "Earth's Greatest Reformation Soon to be Inaugurated." All are invited. Seats free. No collection.—Advt.

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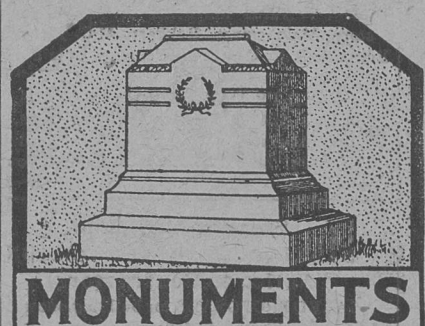
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