





who worship other beings than the God of heaven. The apostle knew full well that such worship was not acceptable in the sight of God. He also knew as well that if they essayed to worship the true and living God, but did not comply with the requisitions of heaven as he had borne testimony, it would be of no avail. Bear in mind what the apostle said of himself while persecuting the saints: I did it, said he, in all good conscience; he did it in the sincerity of his heart, from a firm conviction that it was right. But his sincerity did not justify his acts in the sight of God, nor in the least palliate his crime.

We shall here notice that Paul, previous to his conversion to the christian faith, was no idolatrous worshiper; he was of the sect called Pharisees, believed in God, made long prayers, and as he said, lived in all good conscience to that day. But the Lord showed him the error of his way, and that with all his zeal, and all his prayers, he was fighting against God. I am Jesus (says the voice) whom thou persecutest; it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.

We might here notice the heathens and their worship, but we deem it more instructing to confine our remarks to incidents recorded in the scriptures; we therefore, notice the case of Cornelius as recorded in the tenth chapter of the acts of the apostles. Now this "Cornelius was a devout man, and (the sacred penman says,) feared God with all his house; he gave much alms to the people and prayed to God alway." Let us mark the expressions, "he was a devout man, feared God with all his house, gave much alms to the people and prayed to God alway." Surely he must have been a good man, his prayers, his alms and devotion must have rendered him acceptable to God, for what could he do more? Let us hear the sequel. He saw in a vision an angel, who commanded him to send men to Joppa for Simon Peter, who was lodged in the house of one Simon, a tanner, whose house was by the sea side. This same Peter told him what he ought to do: Had Cornelius ought to do any thing different or more than he had done? He had prayed sincerely and devoutly; he had feared God with all his house, had doubtless been liberal in alms to the poor, and more

than all these, the Lord himself sent an angel to tell him what he must do. This legate of the skies directed him to send for Peter, who when he came, preached unto him Jesus, and baptized him. Why, we ask, did it become necessary to be baptized? he had prayed devoutly and sincerely, given alms to the poor, feared God with all his house? and the Lord had sent a heavenly messenger to visit him; could any thing more be necessary? If not, the angel came in vain, Peter came in vain, preached in vain, Cornelius believed in vain and was baptized in vain. But not so, we would not be thus presumptuous. Hence, with the greatest propriety might the apostle urge the words of our text, there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, because *these* were constituent parts of that scheme of things which God had devised in the counsels of eternity for the salvation of man.— We have noticed these men because of their sincerity and zeal, and because the facts recorded concerning them are with us beyond cavil or controversy.

From the history of these men we learn, first, that sincerity, zeal, prayers and alms, would not ingratiate a man into favor with the King of heaven, while he lived in the omission of the duties God had pointed out for him to do. This was no trifling business, the salvation of the soul was concerned; and more than all, the character of God was concerned. If any other plan were fit, or sufficient, then it follows, that the gospel plan was not the best, or at least, no better than some other, which at once impeaches the wisdom of Omnipotence, and destroys all confidence in his word. Secondly, we learn, that there were only certain ones authorized to administer the ordinances which God ordained in his church, and that when those ordinances were administered by those he had chosen and set aside for that purpose, and in the way he had pointed out, certain effects followed. These effects served to increase the faith of the apostles and inspire them with greater confidence in their divine Master, because they saw the power of God demonstrated, and knew of a truth that the word of their Master, while he tabernacled with them in the flesh, was fully verified. He had sent them his spirit, the comforter, which lead them into all truth, and we have no doubt they spake and wrote



from its influences, for the scriptures say, that holy men spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost; and that all scripture given by inspiration of God is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction and for instruction in righteousness, that men of God may be thoroughly furnished unto every good work. As much as if the scripture had said, God is God, he is infinite, he has devised the best and only possible plan for man to obtain admission into the celestial kingdom of his maker. Therefore, the plan must be implicitly followed to the exclusion of any, and all others, for the reason that there was but *one Lord, one faith, and one baptism*, that were acceptable with him.

We also learn, thirdly, that there is no other gospel, no other God, no other Savior than the ones Paul preached.—What then shall we say to those who teach differently from the apostles, making some things essential and others which were once enforced with equal authority upon the churches, non-essential? Will they contend that it is the same gospel, or that God himself has changed? Certainly both cannot be true. Can they contend that they have that spirit which leads into all truth, when they differ so widely from each other? How do the various modes of baptism, the different sentiments and the different practices, now extant, comport with the words of our text, *one Lord, one faith, and one baptism*? Surely they are a fearful comment upon the commands of God! We therefore come irresistibly to the conclusion, that the sectarian world *may* all be wrong, and that it is absolutely *certain* they cannot all be right. We are sensible the scriptures and the light we have received, lead to unpopular conclusions, but God forbid that we should seek to please men, or court the applause of the world; we had rather tell the truth, and be preachers of that gospel, which the apostle preached, which was approbated by the author of our existence. No other will save men, no other will do them good, and no other will have the same effects. Say not to us that it is the same gospel when God is the same, for most assuredly the same cause would produce the same effects. Tell us not of your piety, your alms, your sincerity, your zeal or your prayers. Neither of those illustrious

pious individuals we have mentioned, could be saved without a strict compliance with the requisitions of the gospel. Therefore, as there is but *one Lord, one faith and one baptism*, may we all learn wisdom, embrace the truth, obey God, and ultimately be saved in his celestial kingdom. Amen. Ed.

For the Messenger.

“Surely the Lord God will do nothing but he revealeth his secrets unto his servants the prophets.”

AMOS, 3: 7.

The author of these words is one whose sayings have been handed down to us upon the pages of sacred history, as a prophet of the Most High: his name is enrolled with those inspired penmen who spake and wrote as they were moved upon by the Holy Ghost. And although his style is not marked with that flowing eloquence, that characterizes the writings of some of his cotemporaries, yet they are clear, specific and sublime. He was found among the herdmen of Tekoah in the days of Uzziah king of Judah, about seven hundred and eighty-seven years before Christ; in this humble occupation he did not possess the advantages of an Isaiah, who was brought up in the school of the prophets, and learned in all the wisdom of the world, and had at his command whatever language he chose to select; and when wrapped in prophetic vision seemed to comprehend the present, past and the future, with that profound sublimity, that is characteristic of Him, who touched his lips with hallowed fire. But however, when we carefully examine the writings of the holy prophets, and compare them with each other, a perfect harmony will be found to exist; they were all animated by the same spirit, using their utmost exertions not only to reform and christianize the world in their generations, but to benefit those that should follow.

From the unbounded field of prophecy and revelation lying before me, I have thought that it might not be altogether unprofitable to enter into an inquiry upon the subject contained in the words of the prophet before quoted; and see whether God has varied from the rule by him laid down, and if the fact can be ascertained that he has, we shall of necessity be compelled to strike Amos from the list of God's prophets,