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## Poetry.

### HEAVEN.

How sweetly strange will be the day  
When we shall no more kneel and pray  
For daily bread; but wondering, say,  
"We hunger now no more!"

When we shall hear the cooling rill,  
And feel the fountain's freshness fill  
The vital, balmy air; and still  
Thirst not forevermore!

When we shall fly on errands vast,  
And pure o'er secret wonders past,  
While Heaven's revolving ages last,  
Yet we no older grow!

When we shall plan for endless years,  
And joy in God, and know our fears  
Lie in the sole tomb that appears,  
The tomb of all our woe!

There, beckoning to come shining throne,  
Our suffering darlings, crown'd our own,  
Shall hold us in a bliss unknown,  
The patient, tried and true!

And if of eying love's command,  
Among those ransomed ones shall stand  
Some soul uplifted by our hand,  
What praises will be due!

And oh! to see our Saviour smile;  
We being certain all the while  
The sin that did our souls defile  
And made us cry "Unclean,"

Is blotted out; as from the sky,  
When the great sun goes shining by,  
Are the dark clouds that threatening lie,  
As if they had not been!

So that He whom our souls adore,  
Can look us through, and o'er and o'er,  
Nor find one stain's forevermore,  
And we can look on Him.

Nor shrink, nor strive to hide, nor sigh;  
But find it Heaven's joy to lie  
Full in the light of His pure eye,  
Made pure like Him, by Him!

### GOD'S ANVIL.

BY BISHOP DOANE.

Pain's furnace heat within me quivers,  
God's breath upon the flame doth blow,  
And all my heart in anguish quivers,  
And trembles at the fiery glow.  
And yet I whisper, "As God will!"  
And in His hottest fire—hold still.

He comes and lays my heart, all heated,  
On the hard anvil, minded so  
Into his own fair shape to beat it  
With His great hammer, blow on blow!  
And yet I whisper, "As God will!"  
And at His heaviest blows—hold still.

He takes my softened heart and beats it;  
The sparks fly off at every blow;  
He turns it o'er and o'er, and heats it,  
And lets it cool, and makes it glow;  
And yet I whisper, "As God will!"  
And in His mighty hand—hold still.

Why should I murmur for the sorrow  
Thus longer lived would be;  
Its end may come, and will, to-morrow,  
When God has done His work in me;  
So I say trusting, "As God will!"  
And trusting to the end—hold still.

He kindles for my profit purely,  
Afflictions glowing, fiery brand,  
And all His heaviest blows are surely  
Inflicted by a master hand.  
So I say, praying, "As God will!"  
And hope in Him, and suffer still.

## Religious.

### THE PURPOSE OF GOD IN THE SALVATION OF SINNERS.

SUMMARY OF A LECTURE DELIVERED BY REV. J. DAVIS, AT THE MINISTERS' INSTITUTE, AT YARMOUTH.

The lecturer began with a definition, as follows:—By the purpose of God in the salvation of sinners he meant his eternal, personal, and gracious choice in Christ Jesus, of certain individuals of the fallen race of man, to the infallible attainment of holiness here, and of endless glory hereafter. He proceeded to quote the words of our Lord,—"I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight." In these words, it was observed, our Lord evidently gloried in God's own chosen way for doing his own chosen work. Following the footsteps of our Lord, the

lecturer proposed to shew that there was nothing to be ashamed of in the great God's saving purpose; but that, on the contrary, there was therein everything in which his servants might well boast and glory. In pursuing the aim thus indicated, the lecturer adverted

I. To the great Gospel scheme. It is God's great purpose to save sinners, he said that gives that scheme all its efficacy. He went on to cite here Ps. cx. 3, Acts xiii. 48, 1 Thes. i. 4, 5, Eph. ii. 4-9. From which passages the lecturer inferred that the Gospel purpose of God in regard to the salvation of those whom he has personally chosen to everlasting life—that apart from that purpose, the Gospel would have proved a failure.

But here comes the objection, "Do you not thus destroy the free agency of man?" The answer is threefold.

1. Let us take care, while watchful over the rights of man, that we do not invade the rights of God. God is the great author of that great spiritual machine, the human mind. And may he not regulate his own machine, and cure its irregularities? Instead of being jealous of his interference here, were it not fitting that we should thankfully accept it? as in the spirit of Isa. lxiv. 8.

2. What do men mean by their clamor about their free agency? Do they claim the liberty to bow to God in the Gospel, or not to bow, just as they please? Be it so. Now mark the consequence. There is the case of Agrippa. When Paul pleads before him he is "almost persuaded to become a Christian," almost, but not "altogether." He is left, so far as God is concerned, in the undisputed possession of his free agency. He has his own way, and we see what comes of it—what *always* comes of it when men are left to do just as they choose in regard to their spiritual interests.

3. But does the renewing grace of God really destroy man's free agency? Did it do so in the case of Paul? If so, what does he mean by his language, Rom. vii. 22, 2 Cor. v. 14? No! a change of heart does not sweep away a man's free agency. It only brings him, with that free agency, into a new spiritual condition! He never was free till now. It is grace, and grace only, that bursts his chains, and makes him "the Lord's freedman."

The lecturer proceeded to consider his great theme

II. In its aspect upon the character of God.

It affirms the rights of God. We turn to Calvary. While Christ is there opening the way by which sinners return to God, he is also maintaining the rights of Deity, as Paul explains the matter in Rom. iii. 23-25. Again we withdraw into the depths of eternity. See 2 Tim. i. 10, Rev. xiii. 8. Thus the record of the eternal purpose of our God to save is written in blood—in the blood of the Lamb. Otherwise it could never have been written at all. So, while God saves sinners, he gives no licence to sin. He dispenses salvation from his throne, because his Son, by the sacrifice of the cross, maintains the honours of that throne. And thus are the Scriptures fulfilled. Ps. lxxxv. 10. Rom. v. 21. Rev. vii. 10.

Then there is the mercy of God. That mercy shines forth with peculiar lustre in connection with his purpose to save. 1. In the fact that God saves at all. 2. In the nature of the salvation which he bestows. 3. In the multitude of the saved. Here the lecturer presented facts and reasoning which went to shew that already heaven is more populous than hell; and that, at the great day, when the results of the interposition of Christ come to be counted up, the loss will be but as a little flock of kids at the left hand of the Judge; while the armies of the redeemed will be such as neither men nor angels can reckon. And all this, not by accident, but design. Here is the grand purpose spoken of—2 Tim. i. 9. And so we find ourselves embarked upon a

"Sea of life and love unknown,  
Without a bottom or a shore."

The result is, that this purpose of

salvation places mercy in the ascendant in the Divine character. And the conclusion at which the lecturer arrived here was this, fortified, as he judged, by the teachings of God's own Word,—that in the end, and on the whole, the goodness and mercy of God shall be seen to hold the highest place in his government, which has been God's purpose from the beginning; and such shall be the final issue of that purpose. What a glorious purpose therefore it is!

No! it is not that partial, unjust, severe, and repulsive thing which opponents represent it to be, but the very reverse. It does not save *all* men. But if, as is maintained, there existed no such discriminating purpose as we have described, would all men be saved? Certainly not, according to any evangelical scheme with which the lecturer was acquainted. And if any should still ask, why should any man need salvation?—why did God permit that moral evil to enter the universe, for which the purpose of salvation is his great remedy? Here was a question which the lecturer durst not entertain. He could only meet it in the words of inspiration.—"Nay, but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" He that reproveth God, let him answer it.

Is it still argued, the lecturer farther asked, that all this involves a decree of unconditional reprobation? "If God purpose to save some," it may be said, "and does not purpose to save others, then the unsaved are reprobated—destroyed by the eternal decree of heaven." To this it was replied as follows:—1. God's eternal purpose to save men does not make them sinners, but finds them such—utterly undone, unless infinite mercy intervene. 2. The Divine purpose to save, works out the deliverance of all who ever attain to salvation. It is by its working, and that alone, that any obtain life. Then, lastly, as to those who perish, they perish, not by any direct decree of God, but as the consequence of their own chosen rebellion against God—if reprobated, reprobated by their own act,—as it is written: "The wages of sin is death;" while "the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." See also Jer. vi. 28-30. Thus God's "purpose and grace . . . given . . . in Christ Jesus before the world began," injures none, curses none, reprobates none, brings perdition upon none; while it brings salvation to countless myriads, and fills all heaven with the praises of rich, and free, and sovereign mercy.

The lecturer proceeded, in the prosecution of his argument, to speak of the saving purpose of God.

III. In its bearing upon the invitations of the Gospel, and the means of grace.

1. It does not repeal the invitations of the Gospel. Some of these were cited, as Isa. iv. 1, Matt. xi. 28, Rev. xxii. 17. It was affirmed that the saving purpose of God does not repeal one of these invitations, nor in any wise restrict them in their freedom. Two facts were here alleged. The one, that these invitations were found side by side in the same volume, and sometimes in the same chapters and sentences with the announcements of that purpose. Thus is it, Matt. xi. 25-30. So also, John vi. 37-40. The other fact, that no poor sinner ever came to God through Christ and was sent unblest away, because no provision of mercy had been made for him. It was thus abundantly manifest that there was nothing in the saving purpose of Jehovah to interfere with the freedom of Gospel invitations. Nay, it was further maintained,—

2. That that purpose rendered those invitations efficacious. But for that purpose, it was reiterated, those invitations would have fallen unheeded upon the ear of men. This point was illustrated and argued. And it was then stated, that this saving purpose of Jehovah employed the invitations of the Gospel for the attainment of its own ends. It was thus evinced that there was no insincerity in the invitations of

the Gospel. On the contrary, this very purpose was the grand evidence of their sincerity. Apart from it, the world would have been the worse for the Gospel, and not the better. But here this very purpose steps in, and proves that Jehovah means what he says in his invitations, while he sweetly persuades men to accept them, and "compels them to come in, that his house may be filled."

3. The lecturer then referred to the means of grace. "Where, it may be asked, 'if we accept your doctrine, is your place for the use of means?' Exactly the same, was the reply, as for the use of means in Paul's voyage from Caesarea to Melita. See Acts xxvii. 30-32. This point was illustrated and applied. God's promises and purposes involve and suppose the use of means. It was so in the case of Paul and his fellow-passengers. In regard to them, purpose or no purpose, no means, no deliverance. It is so here purpose or no purpose, no means, no salvation. Hence the exhortation, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." It is not, "Leave all to God, and he will do all;" but, "work, because God works." Neglect the means included in the bosom of God's purpose of salvation, and that purpose itself will not save you. It is only in the use of the means that we can attain to the realization of the purpose. For thus runs the decree,—2 Thes. ii. 13, 14.

The lecturer then came to consider. IV. The influence of the saving purpose of heaven upon the final position of God, on the one hand and of man on the other.

It makes God every thing, he said, and man nothing. It attributes to man all the blame and shame of the evil that is found in him. It ascribes to God all the praise and all the glory of all the good that ever comes to be in man. Here is the spirit of the whole Bible, as exhibited in such passages as these: Job xl. 4, xlii. 5, 6; Jer. xvii. 14; 1 Cor. i. 30, 31.

Here, therefore, the lecturer contended, Arminian theology is at fault. Richard Watson, indeed, the great Wesleyan theologian, constantly and emphatically maintains that, in the great business of salvation, God must begin with man before man will begin with God. And yet, it was suggested, what does Wesleyan theology teach? 1. That God gives a man enough of his good spirit to stir him up to care about his soul, yet not enough to lead him without fail to come to Christ. 2. That God then waits to see whether the man will come to Christ or not. 3. That God farther make a man's election to life dependent upon his coming to Christ, as led to do so by his own self-determining power. Then, 4. That God makes a man's final attainment to life dependent upon the self-determination with which he cleaves to Christ to the end. Now what was all this, it was asked, but putting the creature before the Creator, and making the bestowment of the grace of God to follow in the footsteps of the choice of man? Yet, as to the choice of man in these matters, that has evermore leaned *contra*ry to Christ and salvation. Man, self-determined, evermore governed by the prevailing state of his heart, has evermore been determined against God. Aye! and brethren in Christ who hold the views against which the lecturer here contended, are, it was said, practically with their Calvinistic brethren at this very point—against them in argument, but with them in heart and on their knees. And thus there remained this consolation, that we shall all of us, in a better world, and better taught than we can be here, glory in putting the crown of our salvation upon the head of our Jesus, and evermore magnifying him, and him only, for all that we have become, and for all that we may yet be made.

The lecturer added some hints, practical in themselves, and yet not without their argumentative bearing upon his general theme. He observed,—

1. That no man need here feel as if he were driven back from Christ. Certainly, he said, men are not saved as Calvinists, or as Arminians; but simply as sinners receiving Christ into their hearts, and obeying him in our lives. The great Bible doctrine is that we are saved by faith in Christ, and not in our personal election. He held, therefore, that in dealing with sinners about the great concerns of salvation, our first and absorbing aim should be to bring them to Christ, unanxious, in subordination to this capital interest, about the correctness of their views in regard to the matters wherewith he had then been occupied.

Still the lecturer felt that he had a right to add,—

2. That after all, there really was everything in the views he had presented to encourage poor sinners in approaching to the Saviour. He had cared for them from eternity. He had now drawn them by his good spirit, and would he yet reject them? Surely not. The lecturer cited Rom. viii. 38, 39, 1 Pet. i. 3-5, as finely illustrative here, and pleaded for the right of believers to aspire to the heights to which Paul and Peter attained, and to eat of the spiritual food on which their souls fed and feasted.

Lastly, he said; here is "strong meat" provided for great emergencies, and in view of great enterprises.

Are we, for instance, like those ancient believing Hebrews, severely tried? Let us appropriate the exhortation addressed to them—Heb. vi. 16-20.

Or are we, as in days like these, summoned to expect great things from God, and attempt great things for God? What a glorious thought it is that our God does not work at random. Jesus Christ himself was often cheered by this recollection during his sojourn, his toil, and his sorrows here below. Hence his language, John x. 15, 16. So with us in our humble sphere. When we are aroused to activity and diligence, when we take high measures of our duty, and large views of the "purpose and grace" of God "given us in Christ Jesus before the world began," what strength and support may we not derive from these views! They will animate our hopes, nerve our courage, give light to our eye, and firmness to our step, and vigor to our aim. Nothing will seem impossible to us. "Against hope believing in hope," many a conquest shall we achieve; many more shall we anticipate. We shall drink into the spirit of Christ. We shall sympathize with him here; we shall rise and triumph with him hereafter. "He must increase. He must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet." Hell must be baffled. Heaven must be victorious. The Saviour's heart must be filled. And so there once more comes home to us Paul's animated exhortation,— "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

### MINGLING WITH STRANGERS.

The effect of mingling with new people, who have new ideas and new methods of thoughts, is very salutary. Always to see the same people, do the same things, feel the same way, produces a stagnant condition of the mind and heart that is very distressing to behold. There are thousands of invalids who might be greatly benefited by getting away from home, if only for a short-time, to mingle with strangers, and be touched with the magnetism of the great world as it courses in its accustomed rounds. And there are mental and moral invalids who need the same change, to get their minds and hearts enlarged, and let in a little more of the great light of life. Outside influences are very valuable to those who at home have been well trained by healthful influences in early youth, so that they can avoid the snares and pitfalls into which those who go blindly often fall.