

The generations of men from the beginning have refused to pay homage to their God, and to render unto him that which belongs to him. If men serve God, it is to their advantage; but they suppose that they sacrifice a great deal for God and do him a great service, and are enriching him and impoverishing themselves. Render unto God that which is God's. I care not whether it be gold, silver, or copper. When men extract the precious metals from the earth, they breathe the air, drink the water, and eat the food that belongs to God.

I could give the reasons why the servants of God, from the beginning, have not been able to establish his kingdom on the earth, but I have not time to do so today. In these latter days, the kingdoms of this world will become "the kingdoms of our God and his Christ," and those who have gold and silver and wealth of other descriptions, and refuse to devote it to the Lord, are blind and naked and destitute of that wisdom which comes from above. The breath that is in their nostrils is not really their own. All people live upon the bounty of the Almighty, yet they say that the precious metals are theirs, and they will devote this wealth to their own service, revel in luxury, and do as they please. Those who possess the wealth of this world, possess it by the permission of the Almighty, and then they go needlessly on in the way to destruction. How long? Until their race is run.

All must have the privilege of proving to God and angels what they will do with the talent and ability God has given them, whether they will waste their blessings in pandering to unholy appetites or use them in the way God has designed they should. This is one great reason why men are permitted to do as they do. It is an orthodox doctrine that God has decreed whatsoever comes to pass.

He has decreed many things to come to pass, but not all things. He has not decreed that one man shall blaspheme his name, and that another shall often be found on his knees praying to him; this is left to the free volition of the creature. All the inhabitants of the earth have had the privilege of proving themselves before God in their lifetime whether they delighted in that which was right or that which was wrong, and according to that, those who have been without law will be judged without law. What better, in the sight of Heaven, are those who place their affections upon earthly wealth, than the children of Israel who worshipped a calf?

Those who wish to join us in this great work, must do as we have done, to obtain that which we have obtained. It is not our business to question the validity of any of the laws and ordinances of God. It is no matter to us how simple the ordinance he requires us to submit to, in order to attain a certain end. He has said, "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." If he has instituted baptism in water for the remission of sins, it is not our business to question his right to do this, by quarrelling with the mode of this ordinance. If he had told us to dig a hole in the ground and bury ourselves for a certain length of time, it is his right to do so, and our advantage to obey. Whenever the Gospel has been preached in any age of the world, the ordinance of baptism has been in force. It had the same validity in the days of Adam, Enoch, and Noah as in the days of Jesus Christ and his Apostles, or as it has now.

An angel of the Lord visited Adam, when Adam was offering up sacrifice. The angel asked him why he was offering up sacrifice. Adam replied, "I know not, but this I do know, the Lord has commanded me, therefore I offer up sacrifice." It may be said