

they had been allowed to perpetuate that kind of existence, of course God would have had very little to do with the operations of the earth and the inhabitants thereof, it would therefore have been unjust to the spirits created by our Father in the eternal worlds to force them to come and inhabit the degenerated bodies which they must have received from such characters as the generation drowned in the flood; and hence God took away their agency by destroying them from the face of the earth, because they were prostituting their powers to an improper use and not only injuring themselves by defying the law of God, but also inflicting an evil upon unborn generations by perverting their own existence and by their powers of procreation entailing misery upon millions of spirits that had a just right to look for protection from their Father. The Almighty therefore took this awful method to redress this aggravated wrong and he had a right to do it. Why, our stockraisers act upon that principle a good deal. I was talking to one of them a little while ago who had a large flock of sheep, and he told me that he had got some better stock, and was going to kill off the poor ones in order that he might raise only good stock and a better breed than he then had. I suppose that God had as much right to do this as sheep raisers and cattle raisers have, and thus by cutting off that wicked generation from the earth he deprived them of the privilege of propagating their own species. And what then? Oh, they were all damned. No, they were not quite, yes they were in part and partly not. God understands all these things and manages matters according to the counsel of his will, and hence he provided a way whereby the people who were then

drowned, who would not listen to God's law and who had departed entirely from the precepts of Jehovah, might hereafter have a chance of obeying the laws of life and salvation. Well, were they not all tee-totally doomed to go and be roasted in flames forever and ever. Not quite; for we read that Jesus, when he was put to death in the flesh, was quickened in the spirit, by which he went and preached to the spirits in prison that sometime were disobedient in the days of Noah, when once the long-suffering of God waited upon them in those days. Hence we see that instead of being eternally damned, Jesus went to preach the Gospel of life and salvation to those whom God, in the days of Noah, swept off by the flood, in order that he might introduce another state of things, and try to raise up a people who would listen to his laws and obey his precepts.

The Scriptures say that Jesus went and preached to the spirits in prison, the same as he had preached to others on the earth. What did he preach? Do the Scriptures say what he came to preach? Yes, they say "he came to preach the Gospel to the poor, to bind up the brokenhearted, to set at liberty those who were bound, and to open the prison doors to the captive." That is what he came to do, and he did it.

We are not connected with a something that will exist only for a few years, some of the peculiar ideas and dogmas of men, some nice theory of their forming; the principles that we believe in reach back into eternity, they originated with the Gods in the eternal worlds, and they reach forward to the eternities that are to come. We feel that we are operating with God in connection with those who were, with those who are, and with those who are to come.