

in the 4th chapter of the same epistle: "For this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit." We also find a question asked of our Savior, as recorded in the account of His crucifixion in the book of Saint Luke. One of the thieves who was crucified alongside of our Savior, said to Him: "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." Jesus could not consistently do this; for He had told Nicodemus previous to that, that except a man be born of the water and of the Spirit he could not enter into His Kingdom; and this thief, acknowledging that he was worthy of death, was, consequently, an unrepentant, unbaptized sinner. Jesus, however, turned to him and said: "Today thou shalt be with me in paradise." The Christian world have made the mistake of imagining, believing and teaching that Jesus and the thief on the cross went back to the bosom of our Father and God in heaven. But we find, after the resurrection of our Savior, when He stood by the open door of the sepulchre, Mary came, and recognizing Him, put out her hands to touch Him. But Jesus said: "Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father in heaven: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God." During the three days that the body of Jesus lay in the tomb, then, where was the spirit that formerly inhabited the body? According to the testimony of Peter, as recorded in the 3rd Chapter of the first epistle of Peter, it was preaching to the spirits in prison; and Isaiah tells us that it was for this that Jesus was to come; it was to loose the

bonds of the prisoners; it was to open the prison door. Men who had lived in days gone by, who had failed to obey the commandments of God, who had passed into the spirit world, according to the accepted idea of a few years ago—Christian ideas change about these things, you know—these people were eternally lost. There was no possible chance for their redemption; but having closed their eyes in death as sinners in the sight of God, they were under condemnation to all eternity. A strange parody indeed upon the idea of God's love and mercy for His children! God is love, we are told, and yet in the short space of one man's life, that man's sins and errors—nay, more than that, he might have lived honorably and honestly; he might have sought to do as best he knew how; he might have been a good citizen, a good father, a good husband; he might have filled all these duties acceptably, yet if he is outside the pale of the Church and death overtakes him in that condition, he was eternally lost according to the Christian idea of a few years ago. Leading thinkers of today, in the Christian world are changing their views very materially in relation to this matter, as within the past few years I heard the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher declare, that, if his God reigned in the next world, every man and woman who did not learn the truth here, should have the privilege there. Then we find also Dr. Thomas, of Chicago, a leading light in the religious world, and very many who are distinguished in the religious world, are today changing their ideas and theories in relation to this matter. One of the peculiar features connected with the Gospel in days gone by is often presented to my mind in this wise: Jesus taught