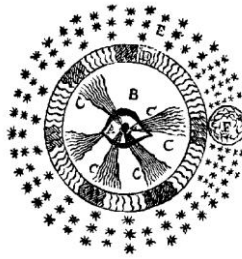


Spirit's Day Studies

The Writings of Jane Lead,
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The Occupation of Souls awaiting the Last Judgment

Excerpts from Jacob Boehme's
177 Theosophic Questions, and 40 Questions of the Soul

Q170. What are the doings and life of souls till the Last Judgment Day?

1. *Jacob Boehme's Forty Questions of the Soul*, the 22nd answer, is totally a solution of this question. Something also concerning it is in Question 166 of the present questions, which if accurately inspected, might lead the inquirer to the summit of his desires. But this question restraining to the time present, as to the doings of separate souls in that state, without the outward body simply considered, without either retrospect to their passed state or prospect to their futurities (although the Hebrew admit no present tense), yet thus abstractedly divested of past and to come as far as is possible: Something may be told only by way of representation in some low similitudes; for otherwise the dull reason can hardly penetrate such a secret; or the enlightened mind either.

2. (1) The reapers cut down wheat not fully ripe, and tares green, the keeping of both for some time may prepare them, one for good use, the other to be scattered by the fan; but the solar spirit in the unripe wheat, and martial spirit in the tares sleep not, but proceed to conquer the adverse properties, and mature the mass or territory whereof they are regents. (2) There are two trees felled: the one for timber for curious uses, the other a knotty unsound one for fuel; the laying of them both a while, makes the one as well the other, more fit for their several contrary uses. (3) If this life be a seed-time and Heaven the harvest, there passes some time, which is a patient waiting time. (4) If this life be the transgressing time, the night of violence and committing facts, and the Lake of Fire be the execution, there uses to pass some occurrences requiring deliberation between the fact and judgment, as between the fact and execution or recompense for the fact. (5) If this life be a time of sacrifice, and the glorious kingdom the returns of God to those petitions, which is the time of the restitution of all things: the sacrificers must allow some time of waiting at, or under the altar for the returns of those sacrifices.

3. But from all these it follows not, but the state of the perfect may be exceedingly good and greatly blessed, though when they shall put on their new garments it shall be best of all; for that is the time of the restitution of all things, nor does it follow but in that very state there will be degrees of happiness, according to the degrees of their passing into the fifth form (where is the opening of the divine power-world) as there are of stars in glory. Neither also does it follow, that the state of the accursed

is capable of mitigation; for their estate is not so bad, but that it is capable of being more wretched, yet not of being more tolerable, and yet is so dark as admits not the least glance of light, as even in this life they grow actually more and more vile: So in that state, though it be the worst, they ever knew, yet still posts it on without stop, recoil or respite, ever hurrying them on towards the tempest of eternal fierceness.

4. Here is the antipodes to the black fiction of atheists and Sadducees, who would make themselves believe that the whole inward man is mortal and annihilable, such who not only judge themselves unworthy of Eternal Life, but incapable of eternal existence, while they grant it to this mass of crumbling earth and mortal water. They are so extremely degenerated from the divine image man was ennobled with, that, as their outward life extends not to that length, activity and occult excellencies of many brutes, as beasts, little animals and some birds, so the infatuated atheists would that their souls and spirits might also run the same fate, and be as transient as the vilest of insects. Here is also diametrical opposition to others, who say the whole inward man is fellow prisoner with the bestial flesh till the general resurrection. But the answers of the two immediately preceding questions show what of the blessed sleeps, and what of the wicked is arrested by the king of terrors. And for farther answer, see *Jacob Boehme's 40 Questions of the Soul*, #22. [See below.]

5. The doings of souls till the Last Judgment may stand here in the very words of the *Book of Extracts*, viz. They all (the holy souls) abound with great inward joy, and wait to put on their bright, fair, new body out of the old, their joy and hope is different as laborers expectations are; who at the end of the week receive every one according to their degrees of labor and diligence. Those who have put on Christ's body here, are as one, who having overcome his enemies in fight, represents the victory before his King, who receives him with great joy and honor. The expectation of the wicked soul is as an imprisoned, condemned malefactor, still listening when anything stirs, and the executioner comes; all their past wickedness stands before them in such different aggravations as they had here.

Q:22. What does every soul departed? Does it rejoice till the Last Judgment-day?

[40Q 22:1] THIS question contains the exceeding joyful gate of glory, leading to the knowledge of the victorious garland of the soul.

[40Q 22:2] When a darling son travels afar off into a strange country, for art and honor, he often thinks of home, and of the time when he shall enjoy his parents and friends. He rejoices at the thought of that day, and expects it with inward joy and longing: also he plies himself hard in his business, that he may get arts and skill, wherewith he may rejoice his parents, kindred, and friends.

[40Q 22:3] Think of this similitude, and take it into consideration. It is just so with the soul; the souls without body have a great inward joy, and wait for the Last Day with great inward desire, when they shall again receive its fair and holy body with its wonders.

[40Q 22:4] Also their ornament is in their will, where they behold their works after the manner of the eternal abyssal magic, which they shall then first receive at the Last Day, in the figure, with the new body out of the old.

[40Q 22:5] Also we know and highly perceive, yet in the spirit only, according to its knowledge, that the blessed souls do rejoice in the labor which they took here, and exceedingly recreate themselves in their wonders, which they see magically: for they that have led many to righteousness, they have their reward in the Magia, in the will, before their eyes.

[40Q 22:6] They that have suffered much persecution for the truth's sake, they see their bright triumphant garland, which at the Last Day they shall set upon the new body.

[40Q 22:7] They that have done much good, they see that plainly shining in the will.

[40Q 22:8] They who have been scorned, contemned, persecuted, and slain for Christ's doctrine, honor, and truth's sake, they see the triumphant victory, like one that has overcome his enemy in a fight, and then represents the victory to his prince or king; for which he has exceeding great glory, when his king receives him with great joy, and keeps him with him for his faithful assistant.

[40Q 22:9] We have no pen that can write what exceeding joy is in them; only this we know, that those for the most part have put on the divine body in this world, and so have greater perfection than the other: they expect the Last Day with great joy and glory, when their works shall be presented to them, and set before their eyes in heavenly figures; and the wicked shall see, then, against whom they have kicked.

[40Q 22:10] Every soul rejoices before the face of God, in great hope of that which it shall receive again, for it knows its reward; but without the body it cannot receive it: for it has wrought its works in the body, and therefore its works follow it in the new body, and come to it again.

[40Q 22:11] For although the exceeding precious holy souls have put on Christ's body in this world, so that they stand in Heaven, viz. in the image of God; yet all their works were wrought in the old body, which was God's glass: and in the resurrection they shall be represented in the true heavenly figure in that body.

[40Q 22:12] For the first image which Adam was before the fall, is regenerated in Christ; and shall again, with its wonders, be put upon the soul; and although it had the divine body before, yet the wonders stand in the first image.

[40Q 22:13] But the *turba*, with the outward kingdom of the outward source, is gone, for it was a glass, and is now become a wonder; it lives without spirit as a wonder, and shall be put upon the soul in great glory, which it shall have from the light of God; at which the holy souls do exceedingly rejoice, and expect it with great longing.

[40Q 22:14] You must know that every blessed soul trims its lamp, so that it willingly meets its Bridegroom at the Last Day: it always renews its will, and thinks how it shall rejoice with all holy men and angels, in its new body in the wonders. There is a continual springing up of joy in them, when they think of that which is to come, each as its virtues are.

[40Q 22:15] And as their works have been different upon Earth, so also is their hope: for a day-laborer, who has wrought much, rejoices at his wages; so also here. There is a friendly essence among them, and in them.

[40Q 22:16] All the scorn and disgrace which was put upon them that were innocent, is a great triumphant glory to them, in that they have suffered in innocence, and put on in hope the patience which they, moreover, still have [on]; death cannot take it away, nor put it off, but the soul takes that with it which it has conceived.

[40Q 22:17] Its many hearty prayers, wishes, and good deeds in love to its neighbor, are its food which it eats, and joyfully enjoys, till its new body shall eat Paradisical fruit.

[40Q 22:18] But they who have put on the divine body here, they eat at God's table without ceasing; yet the Paradisical fruit belongs to the body of the wonders, which shall arise out of the grave, and which was created in Paradise; for it was made out of the beginning, and it brings the end with the wonders into the beginning again.

[40Q 22:19] But wonder not, nor think that we understand it so, though we seem to speak of two bodies of the holiest saints; for they are not two, but one: But consider that God's essentiality fills all, and that is the divine body, which is put upon the holy souls, even in this life.

[40Q 22:20] For they cast their will into God's will, and so they receive the divine body which fills all things: their will dwells in the divine body, and eats of God's word, of God's fruit, of God's virtue, in the divine body; and Christ is in God; God is become Christ.

[40Q 22:21] And so they wear Christ's body in God, and yet wait for their first Adamical holy body, with the wonders, which shall be put upon them with Paradisical property.

[40Q 22:22] For God's purpose must stand; He created the first body for Paradise; it should have continued there eternally, and it must go there again: and the soul must remain upon the cross of the Ternary, in the mouth of God, from which it came: and yet the whole person continues with body and soul in one another; but God fills all in all.

[40Q 22:23] O! that we had but a human pen, and were able to write it in the spirit of your soul, according to our knowledge: O! how many would then return out of Sodom and Gomorrah, out of Babel, out of the covetous, proud valley of misery; which is but anguish and pain, full of fear, vexation and horror!

[40Q 22:24] And here we shall let you know, that you may deeply consider it, what is the lamentable and miserable condition of the damned souls, and what they have to expect, and but briefly, seeing the following Question [#23] does it at large.

[40Q 22:25] Their expectation is like that of an imprisoned malefactor, who continually listens (when anything stirs) when the executioner should come and execute judgment, and give him his reward: just so do they.

[40Q 22:26] They have a false conscience, which gnaws them; their sins are set continually before them: they also see their works magically; they see all their unrighteousness and vanities, their unmeasurable pride and haughtiness; they see the oppression of the poor; their scorning and suppression of them.

[40Q 22:27] Their false confidence flies from them, their hypocrisy was only a deceitful glass; it reached not the Heart of God; it stands visibly before them in the magic, viz. in their will; but when they search therein, they stir up the *turba* of the fire, which will always consume the glass, and then they are in fear and horror.

[40Q 22:28] For they see and know that all must be tried at the Last Day, by the eternal fire of God's anger; and they feel very well that their works will stay in the fire.

[40Q 22:29] The devils also exceedingly tremble when they consider their fall, which rests in God's judgment what he will do; of which the Holy Scripture tells us plainly enough, especially the Judge Christ Himself.

[40Q 22:30] Thus know, that the totally miserable condition of the damned is, that when they should trim their lamps to meet the Bridegroom at His coming, they tremble, and smother all their works, which the *turba* nevertheless sets before their eyes.

[40Q 22:31] But now those souls that are damned in a high degree are very presumptuously bold, they reject God, and curse Him, and are His worst enemies.

[40Q 22:32] They hold their cause to be just, they oppose God with daring impudence, and think, Is there fire? So are we fire: Is there source? Then we will climb up above God, and Heaven, in the source of the fire; what care we for humility, we will have the strength and might of the fire, we will be above God, and do wonders by our power.

[40Q 22:33] We have the root, God has but the glance: let us be lords, God shall be servant; our mother is His life, we will overthrow His strong tower at once.

[40Q 22:34] They have the mind of soldiers that scale forts and walls, and think the city is theirs, though indeed they lose their lives and never get it.

[40Q 22:35] You must understand that Hell is against Heaven, and the inhabitants thereof against the inhabitants of Heaven; and this in God is also a great wonder; all makes for his glory.

Q:23. Do the souls of the wicked, without difference (for so long a time before the Day of Judgment), find any mitigation, or refreshment?

[40Q 23:1] A THING which goes into an eternal entrance is also in the eternal end: Who can put anything into his hand that is afar off, and not present where it is to be done? He must give it only into his hand that is near to receive it; and that thing, which with its will is gone forth out of itself, can receive nothing within itself, because it desires nothing within itself.

[40Q 23:2] Thus it is with the wicked in this world; he is gone with his will out of himself into covetousness, pride and voluptuousness: into blasphemy, gluttony and drunkenness, whoredom and wantonness. His will is continually bent to despise the poor, and in scorn and disgrace to plague the righteous, and to tread him down by authority.

[40Q 23:3] He has corrupted judgment with lies and bribes, and continually swallowed down unrighteousness, as a cow drinks water. All that has come from him has been bitter anger, which he esteemed to be his might and power; his will has been mere willfulness: he has done what he listed; he has danced after the devil's pipe, and has wholly entered into covetousness; he has accounted his money and goods his treasure, and his will has continually entered into it.

[40Q 23:4] He has never retired into himself and sought after love—much less humility; he has looked upon the needy as his footstool, he has oppressed them without measure; he has counted it his art and wit, when he has been able to circumvent the simple, and deprive him of his labor.

[40Q 23:5] He has supposed that he found out the finest policy, who could contrive his business so sure that he might do what he wished; then he thought himself very cunning, that he had great wisdom.

[40Q 23:6] All this, yea, and much more, he has conceived in his will, and therewith the image of the spirit of the soul has been filled, and all this stands in his figure; and whenever the body dies, then the *turba* comprises all this in the spirit.

[40Q 23:7] And then if the spirit would now enter into itself, the *turba* goes with it and seeks the ground, viz. the root of the soul, and so the fire is but kindled by it.

[40Q 23:8] And you must know, that the souls of the wicked have no mitigation, their best ease and joy is when they climb up in the will, in their works which they did here, and continually desire to do them more still; it grieves them that they did not afflict the honest more than they did; their will is just as it was here.

[40Q 23:9] They are spirits of pride, like the devil; also of covetousness, and so they swallow down their abominations which they committed here. Their joy is only to think how they will contemn God, and be their own lords; this is their recreation and refreshment, and no other.

[40Q 23:10] For how should they receive any other refreshment? They dare not for shame lift up their eyes to God, nor dare they fly to the saints, whom they have here scorned; they are ashamed to do that, for their falsehood continually smites them on the face, and their malice and falsehood rise up from eternity to eternity.

[40Q 23:11] When but the least thought of the Last Day comes into their minds, then fear and horror stir in them; they had rather let that thought alone, and recreate themselves in haughtiness.

[40Q 23:12] And this is also a wonder, and the greatest wonder of all, that an Angel should become such a furious devil; and so the power of God's anger comes to be manifested: for God has manifested Himself according to both eyes, in love and anger; and it is left free to man, he may go into which of them he will. God throws none into wrath; the soul casts itself into it.

[40Q 23:13] But you must know that the wrath has set its throat wide open, and draws mightily, and desires to devour all; for it is the covetousness and the pride insulting over humility.

[40Q 23:14] And so also love and humility have opened their mouth, and draw with all their powers, and would draw man into love, into Heaven.

[40Q 23:15] Now into which of these the soul enters, in that it remains and grows, whether in love or in anger; in that tree it stands, and there is no deliverance in eternity from there. Here in this life the soul stands in a balance in the angle, and may (though it has been evil) be born again in love. But when the balance breaks, then it is gone; it is afterwards in its own country, in its principle.

[40Q 23:16] Who shall break that which is eternal, where no breaker can be found? For it is its own maker: Whence then shall another *turba* come, when a thing is in the eternity where no limit is?

[40Q 23:17] But that you may yet see that God wills not evil, and makes His will known unto you; He sends you prophets and teachers, and gives them his spirit, that they may give you warning. Now if you refuse to obey, then you stay still willingly in the anger, which is your wages and kingdom.

[40Q 23:18] God afflicts you to break you off from your own will, from your voluptuous, proud, and dissolute life: But if you go on, you shall hereafter surely taste the hellish dregs.

[40Q 23:19] We teach you the cross, and the Devil teaches you pleasure. Now you may take which you will: and that you shall have, be it love or wrath.

[40Q 23:20] We labor for you, but you contemn us; what should we do more for you? We are even your very slaves; if you will not accept us, be it at your peril, and get you gone with that which is your own, and we will take that which is ours, and so we are parted forever.

[40Q 23:21] We will still work in our day-labor, and do what is commanded us. At the harvest we shall appear before one another, and then you will know us, and do that to yourselves there which you have here done to us. We will not hide this from you, but speak what we see.

Q166. What is the true New Regeneration in the Spirit of Christ? Is it done in this time, or after this time?

1. Here is a question consisting of two parts. (1) *What the true new regeneration is?* (2) *What time is it wrought in?* Both of them are secrets; the first done by the almighty power of the Holy Ghost, the latter perfected and consummated by the same power, concurring with the gracious providence of infinite wisdom. The first is so great an inward divine work, that none but such in whom it is wrought can speak more of it but as parrots, so that the experimental work only enables rightly to see, taste, feel and know it: and the Spirit working it can only rightly open the mouth, and guide the hand to tell and describe it. This being spoken in the plainest, simplest way, can yet be received and profitable to such only, who by the same spirit are not only enlightened, but made alive by the new regeneration.

2. (1) Therefore in answer to the first part of the question, we are to know that God made of one blood all nations of the earth, and all men in one principle, viz. the *Third*, consisting of the first four properties for its root. But the *Second* was man's Paradisical garland, his Heaven, his crown and divine image. This, our root and common father the First *Adam*, suppressed, extinguished and caused to die, and disappear: Thus man became like the cursed Earth: whereof some plots bear thorns and briars, others fetid weeds, others poisonous plants, others less noxious products, according to the prevalency of every of which the plot is named. So some men are hurried by the impetuous storms and fury of the four anguishes of the *First Principle*, and so are devilish; others are swallowed up of the voluptuous lusts of the elementary spirit, and therefore rightly called sensual; others steered and regulated by the maxims of the sidereal world, and these can be no more or better than earthy.

3. Now out of all these the divine power ingenerating faith, not only acting in the understanding, but swaying the scepter of the will; also self-denial, both as from abhorrence of the defiling self, and also from self-interest, property, and self-pleasing, which is as the flower of grass; then comes a hunger after the unseen manna, which is the root producing the meek resignation of self-pleasing desires, patient submission to the cross, which as it were insensibly enkindles in the soul, the sweet, dear, silent retirement, rest and peace, the passing into the fifth form, and this walked in gradually regenerates and tinctures the dark perverted soul, with the noble new universal power and might: And these are as different according to the procedure of men, as years distinguish the growth and stature of children: but done so silently by the Holy Spirit in man's spirit, as the blossom issues and after it the fruit.

4. The true new regeneration in the Spirit of Christ is always new; and continually and successively renewed, if indeed it be true, not as the natural birth of children into this world, who are so born but once, but rather as the growing of the embryo in the womb to a formed, animated, perfect child: nor as an arrow flying through by the force of its first push, but as a ship sailing through successive perils, and always returning to its latitude from various aberrations, and passing through raging surges, as over so many deaths; Or as young people recover out of, escaping from and through many sicknesses and relapses. For the Lord Himself teaches, saying to His disciples, who none doubts were before that converted, *Except you be converted, and become as this little child, you cannot enter into the Kingdom of God:* Which then they were not; for their quest was who should be the greatest; thus though metal upon metal be false heraldry, conversion upon conversion is true Christianity.

5. Nor is this less plain and evidently real in itself to the Children of the Day (though Nicodemus the night visitor misunderstood it), than that the outward Sun's diurnal appearances on the Earth's revolutions, make so many new days; and every advance of the new-born soul towards perfection is such another thing than was the former, as this harvest is than the last was; for the soul can no more continue to grow by the first stirrings of the Heavenly World in it, than the body be nourished and supported by the food it received the last month, or the plants by the rain they imbibed the last year, or the manna gathered one day be food the following day when grown verminous, thus God said, *Behold I make all things new.*

6. Such therefore who pinfold their apprehensions of the New Regeneration by the gage and glass of the natural birth of children, may as equally infer the mortification or dying to the corrupt man to be one only act: contrary to the Apostle, *I die daily.* Whereas we both die daily, and are daily regenerated, as night and day, winter and summer are successively perpetuated. Among the Roman ecclesiastics, their novices are under an absolute arbitrary subjection to the tyranny of their unaccountable superiors, but the higher the soul advances to the superior parts of true regeneration, the more simply and resignedly obedient is he, till he actively, passively and completely become as a little child.

7. (2) And now to the second part of the question: *Is it done in this time, or after this time?* It is answered in the immediately preceding discourse on the first part of this question: That the regeneration is not wrought by one act as neither is mortification done at once, but gradually by little and little effected, as a summer has its spring, a day its dawning, a vintage its sprouting out.

8. Objection 1: *Is it objected that Omnipotence may perfect the regeneration at once by one single act?* Answer: Without the censure of confining infinity it is queried on what ground is this presumption built? God shows us His way by all His gracious discoveries. For instance, that of the creation of the out-world leads us as by the hand, to the view of the progress of the new creation, in which not to touch particulars which were repeating what is elsewhere done and digressive, it may not be denied but the light called for at the beginning might have been multiplied into the enkindling of the whole deep, that all had been as a Sun, and so the alone figure of the heavenly world, but how then had this out-birth figured both worlds or both principles, wherein the seven properties should impress themselves in their distinct powers? Therefore was that light collected, and the place of the Sun ennobled with the preeminence of the empire of the out-world; as the representer of the holy infinite *Second Principle* the Son of God. And the darkness which before covered the deep, was conserved by condensation of the terrestrial globe whereon we creep, and the crassitude of the other stars, to figure the infinite eternal *First Principle*, whereinto according to the dark impression thereof man fell, and out of which he is gradually recovered, as by way of similitude, the Sun's luster attenuates the gross air by his continual variation by steady, orderly and regular approaches toward either tropic.

9. Objection 2: *But God newly regenerates the Spirit of Christ in man at dissolution of the outward life at one instant, and by the same dissolution is it effected and completed.* Answer: What Omnipotence may do is not for vile dust to comprehend; for it is written: *I know you can do all things.* And the thief on the cross was a monument of unsearchable grace, yet by the words of that thief there seems not only preparedness, but a good degree of conviction of guilt, penitence, sense and anguish under it, enlightening to know the Lord Jesus: faith to direct and fortify his petition, and a seeing the unseen kingdom. Yet so late a repentance though thus manifested is the one only singular precedent on record.

10. But it may be inquired: *What the dissolution of the outward life of its own nature contributes hereunto?* It must be acknowledged that it banishes forever the outward objects of our misemployed

affections, and yet it follows not that it takes away the desire, gust or lust after them. For the breaking of the outward life, or elementary and sidereal man (or the obligations and ligaments of our souls and spirits), is but as taking away the screen, and opening to us the two inward worlds, which is as the unraking of fire, and enraging the souls native forms of the unregenerate—which the astral and elementary man had been, before the separation a mitigation of the anguishes of: so far is man's dissolution from contributing to a foundation or beginning of the divine birth. As it may be conceived by noting, that though a proper soil and apt season may shoot a mustard seed, sown unto a tall, large stature: yet the richest soil, concurring elements, liberal season, benign astral influences with the solar rays uniting, transmute not tares into wheat, thistles into fig trees, nor thorns into vines.

11. But where the soul like flax only smokes with the holy fire; and the soul's fire is irradiated with (true, though weak) divine light, rightly directing the eye of the mind: causing the will and affections to press forward, mourning, sowing in tears, smiting on the breast in anguish, heaviness and good earnestness; the dissolution of such a sincere beginning pilgrim may be but as plucking up a thorn hedge to make the way more accessible, disburdening an over-laden ship the better to secure the whole, the alighting from a froward, unbroken or tired horse, which will neither carry the rider, nor can be carried by him. So unsuitable a companion does the soul (begun to be regenerate) find his body with the distrustful cares, distracting fears, worldly sorrow, and hateful pollutions thereof. And so adverse are the maxims of the sensual man to those of the new, that they are on terms of hostility; so that if we live after the flesh we shall die, but if by the spirit we mortify the deeds of the body we shall live. The body's vileness is pointed at by that statute in *Moses*, that the holy anointing oil was not to be poured on man's flesh, though not only both the altars, the table, laver, all the vessels and candlesticks, but also the very Tabernacle was to be anointed therewith.

12. How much are we less provident than the brutes, who know and use their season, the stork, the ant, etc., and under flattering hopes of doing all at last, neglect all forever; but when harvest is come, begin to sow, regardless of what is written: *Today if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.* But besotted, lost man will promise himself: *That it is enough at death that the priest can absolve me.* Others, to say, *I believe Christ has done all for me;* or because they acknowledge that all are sinners, indulge themselves to be always sinners, neglecting the great end of their creation, and of divine patience, till the Creator is calling them for reckoning of His entrusted talents, as if they would then work out their salvation when themselves are passive and unable to action, and the night come when no man can work.

13. Objection 3: But we are told, and that by some who detest the Roman purgatory, that something may be done to complete the perfection of separate souls after their separation from the mortal body; who produce several texts out of the Old Testament, and out of the New, also out of the Apocryphal antiquity to point at it, or rather expressly to confirm it, as out of the Old: Deu. 26:14; Isa. 61:1; Zec. 9:11,12. Out of the New: Mat. 12:32; 2Tim. 1:18; 1Pet. 3:19. 1Pet. 4:6. Out of the ancient writings called Apocrypha: 2Esdras 7:37; Ecclesiasticus 7:33; 2Mac. 44:45. Let us therefore postpone the first step to the new birth, till our bodily lets be removed, when without the obstructions of the rebel passions ending with cutting of the temporal thread we be adapted thereunto. The objection supposes not that one who at separation of the soul from the outward body, after rejecting the Gospel, being in fixed enmity against God, and the kingdom of resignation, is remediable; nor suggests that he who sows himself a tare, thorn or thistle, shall rise a wheat corn, vine or fig tree; how therefore may it seem incumbent on me to oppose myself to the force of the texts produced?

14. But rather as the Lord Christ in answer to the question of the Disciples *Will you at this time restore the kingdom? It is not for you to know the times and seasons which the Father keeps in His own*

power, but prophecies and charges on them on that occasion their immediate concern and business. How much less is it for men to know what the operations of Father, Son and Holy Ghost will be in perfecting separate souls when out of the circle of time and seasons? For so strong a fort has *Satan* built in men's resolute self-wills, so unpierceable are their rocky hearts, that like *Leviathan*, they laugh at the shaking of the spear; and as the servants of atheistic *Benhadad*, diligently catch every word seeming to favor their flattery of impunity, that they may treasure up wrath by impenitence more and more against the day of wrath.

15. To these am I sent with happy tidings, that howsoever the abyss of mercy has winked at the faults of the days of ignorance, yet now commands He that all men everywhere repent; also with heavy tidings, that if in this their day they neglect so great salvation, how shall they escape? This question none in Heaven, Earth or Hell answers. Again, if they that sinned against the Law of *Moses* died without mercy (and it might seem the bottom of misery to die a merciless death), of how much sorer punishment shall they be thought worthy who have trampled underfoot the Son of God, and (blasphemously) counted the blood of the Covenant an unholy thing, and done despite to the Spirit of Grace? Of how much sorer punishment is that question, but which either is unanswerable, or which eternity can only unfold?

16. A murdered body is the sorrow and pity of the country; a self-murderer their shame and indignation, but the unknown number of wounded souls, and self-murdered souls, are not regarded; though it shall be more tolerable for *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah* than for such Gospel-apostates and haters of Christ. The malicious enemy of mankind (who wounds himself that he may murder souls, so greatly he hates man) draws into the anguishes of his central forms whole harvests of reprobates (in whom he has no true right or propriety) by his offering baits and cheats for food and realities, while (woe to the world) the most glorious, gracious and adorable only Son of the only high God, whose we are by absolute propriety, and whose love to mankind was so immense and unsearchable, as that He made Himself vile, and a sacrifice, to whom He offers real, highest and eternal blessedness; yet has only the gleanings of the harvest or vintage, while the world lies in wickedness, and their posterities approve of their saying, calling the proud happy, and perpetuating the black art of self-murder; like fish hasten greedily to catch the same bait wherewith others had been hooked: or birds speed to be taken in an evil net; so throng men to be ruined, reject the only hope, precipitate into irreparable desperation. Others seeming less obstinate are as fatal foes to themselves, telling and flattering of tomorrow, while such futurities of safety expose them as fools to perish today, while Wisdom said: *Today if you will hear his voice harden not your hearts*, and that: *This is the accepted time; this is the day of salvation*. The time of the coming of *John* the Baptist was in the year of Jubilee, yet then said he: *The axe is laid to the root of the tree*.

17. Our gracious God infinitely out-does, and out-bids all, to make us His, and restore His image in us; for in man's creation He did much more than for any or all the visible creatures of the out-birth or *Third Principle*: in His redemption for restoring the divine image, He did infinitely more for him than any or all the invisible creatures of the *First Principle*, the apostate Angels, for whom is given no sacrifice nor mediator: Also in man's consummation, perfection, sealing and glorification and preparation thereunto, is much more done for him than for the holy glorious Angels (the sons and inhabitants (as morning stars) of the bright Heaven, the holy *Second Principle*; for the spirits of just men made perfect, the general assembly of the Church of the Firstborn are fellow-citizens with the Angelical worlds, and so share of the infinite goodness of God as they, and also have this more that they have had in the Lord their Head, the bowels of infinite pardoning mercy drawn out for them, which is peculiarly extended them and treasured up only in the *Emmanuel* for them.

18. This most dear, boundless goodness calls for the highest and deepest contemplation. It is so profound, so large, so adorable, so admirable that neither can the earthen vessel bear it, the sidereal man find anything whereunto his bounty may be likened, the immortal soul be properly said to know it; for it is what passes knowledge. But the soul is known by it as it is more or less enlightened therewith, and man's intellectual spirit is so far from thoroughly penetrating it, that it only shines and flows by influence and reflection of it, for itself is as a drop of the Abyss enlightened by a beam of the eternal Sun, it burns and flames in the self-evidencing splendor of that incomparable inexhaustible treasure and excellent majesty. This poor vile hand lies prostrate at the footstool of this grace the elementary, and astral man, the eternal soul and spirit is herein swallowed up once and forever.

19. How reasonable, necessary and natural was what our Apostle said, *I beseech you brethren by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy acceptable unto God.* This is the riches of His goodness, forbearance and long suffering to lead man to repentance. There is a promise that men shall fear the Lord and His goodness. Man's contempt for the bowels of infinite mercy shows him less rational than the brutes, than the insects (who all show the desire of self-defense), while he refuses to be shielded from the greatest of horror, by the free goodness of his God, purchased by His own blood, with sorrows aggravated to inexpressible mysteriousness. Yet is man offered all at the cheap price of acceptance, and importunately besought to open his hand, mouth and heart to receive pardon (from day to day, perhaps for many years) still in vain; while he rises early, compasses sea and land with his life in his hand, sweats, freezes, bleeds, frets, wounds his conscience, and sells himself. What therefore can be the account of such rejecters of the invitation to the Marriage Supper? Seeing to ingratitude is added stubbornness, to that despitefulness, and consequently desperate madness; being one, who having more done for him than for the holy Angels, and yet thus does more against the glorious grace of God in Christ by exalted wickedness, than the very devils.

20a. Behold this, and blush, O heavens, O Sun and stars, gather blackness, let the earth be moved; let the stones of the streets and walls be witnesses, let the brutes and animals stand amazed. Melt, O rocks of adamant, relent and sigh, O mountains of ice, let marble and pumice-stones weep, come near, discover your inward forms, you savage bears, cruel tigers, vultures and unnatural vipers. The heavens, Sun and stars were never witness of the like tragic stupidity, for had they seen the Angels that fell become devils, yet had they not known them refuse mercy freely, continually and importunately tendered; the most brutish animals reject not, but greedily snatch what they want; the adamant and marble rocks are all easily dissolvable by their proper separators and dissolvents; the mountains of ice are as unwilling captives; bears, tigers and vultures are not only kind and friendly to themselves, but compassionate to their young; the viper, though he destroys his genetrix, yet seems to do it of necessity to preserve its own existence.

20b. Where therefore can be found so obdurate a thing as the impenitent heart of man? So great a monster? So ferine a brute? Such a prodigy of ingratitude? So implacable a creature as the hardened obstinate sinner? No such ingratitude and cruelty can the astral world demonstrate in the contrary wills of the martial, mercurial, and other cross constellations, nor in the elementary offspring of them, nor all whose differences result to harmony in the earth or deserts, air or seas; no, not in Hell, the dark Abyss or devils, no sinners against so great mercies and means for recovery, no sinners against a redeemer, against the bleeding love and bowels of a Savior there, but man; the devils are those for whom nothing of mercy is prepared. Oh therefore that men were wise, that they knew this, and would hear that their souls might live, and not sink into everlasting indignation, wrath, tribulation and anguish, who can dwell with devouring fire under the wrath of the Lamb?