

plan, according to the eternal wisdom of God as it existed in his bosom before the world was, or "before the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." These spirits, that he was the father of, had their rights and privileges and immunities; and as he had created man upon the earth or prepared a tabernacle, or a body, if you please, for these spirits to inhabit, it became his interest, as the Father of the human family, to look after their welfare. They had been led aside by the influence of Satan and had corrupted themselves and departed from correct principles, and violated the law of God, and became degraded and sunken in iniquity and infamy. Now, suppose we take ourselves back into the presence of our Father, and looking down upon these degraded wretches that inhabited the earth at that time, would we not turn to our Father as a just God and say, "Father, do you see the corruption, the degradation, the infamy and the evil that exists and permeates the world of mankind?" "Yes, yes, of course I see it." "Is it just that our spirits should be condemned to go and inhabit the bodies of these men, or of their seed, that are so fallen, so degraded and so corrupt, and whose actions and operations are so at variance with thee and thy laws? Is it just and equitable that we should go and be mixed up with these infamies and be led astray like them into the paths of vice and suffer for things that we have not done and could not help ourselves in: is it just?" "Why, no it is not, and I will cut them off; and as they possess the power of propagating their species upon the earth, I will stop that power by a flood and raise up another people, that justice may be done you, my sons

and daughters, and that the judge of all the earth may do right." When we look at things in that point of view, it places them in another position from what they would appear otherwise, and justifies the ways of God with man.

Now, when this event took place, people were cast into the pit, into the prisons, as it had before been said that they should be. Well, what about that? Trace things forward to the time that Jesus appears upon the earth, and we see something then pertaining to these very individuals, in the acts of the Almighty, as they transpired at that time. When Jesus accomplished his work, when he had fulfilled the mission that he had to do here upon the earth, and when he was put to death in the flesh and quickened by the Spirit, he went and preached to the spirits in prison "that sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah;" and although they had suffered the wrath of Almighty God, he who had come to proclaim deliverance to the captive, to open the prison doors to those that were bound, to release them and to proclaim the acceptable time of the Lord, he went to them as their Savior, in common with others, and preached the Gospel unto them. Hence we find the acts of God justified in relation to these matters, and while he had power to destroy, while he had power to send them to prison, he also had power to conceive a plan for their deliverance therefrom, when the time should come that they should be delivered after they had suffered sufficiently for the crimes, evils and iniquities that they had committed upon the earth. There are many singular things associated with these matters that men do not really comprehend.