

**LETTERS TO REV. E. F.
HATFIELD IN REVIEW OF
TWO LECTURES AGAINST
UNIVERSALISM**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9781760579258

Letters to Rev. E. F. Hatfield in Review of Two Lectures Against Universalism by B. B. Hallock

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B. B. HALLOCK

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LETTERS

TO

REV. E. F. HATFIELD,

IN REVIEW OF TWO

LECTURES AGAINST UNIVERSALISM,

DELIVERED BY HIM IN THE SEVENTH PRESBYTERIAN

CHURCH, BROOME STREET, ON SUNDAY EVEN-

INGS, JANUARY 5TH AND 12TH.

BY B. B. HALLOCK.

"What is Truth?"—"Search the Scriptures."

NEW-YORK:

UNIVERSALIST UNION PRESS, 130 FULTON STREET.

1840.

PREFATORY REMARKS.

It is thought to be an act of justice to the writer of the following letters, to apprise the reader, that they have not had their origin in the "hot bed" of acrimonious zeal, or from a martial disposition to carry "the war into the enemy's camp" without provocation. Early in the past winter, a "Society for the Investigation and Establishment of Gospel Truth" was formed in this city; controverted texts of Scripture were discussed at their meetings, and the Rev. E. F. Hatfield, the individual here addressed, was probably induced from this fact, to give out notice from his pulpit that he would preach against the doctrine of Universalism. This is the conclusion from the fact, that when he did deliver his two lectures on this subject, he warned his hearers against "attending *these meetings*, and to beware of listening to the deceiver."

It is possible, however, that Mr. Hatfield's intention to lay open the "delusion" of Universalists, and expose their "cob-web hopes," may be traced to his abomination of the sentiment. For he affirms that "Universalist preachers and writers, (with one honorable exception,) are ignorant, depraved and corrupt; that Universalism is far worse than open infidelity, inasmuch as it puts on the garb of religious sanctity, the better to secure its deluded victims. That a *wolf* can prey upon more sheep, if he attacks the flock in *sheep's clothing*."

Premising these facts, and acknowledging Mr. Hatfield's standing in the christian community, it was deemed advisable to give him some attention. The friendly reader will perceive, that in the following humble attempt, no "new thing" is brought to light to bear evidence to the doctrines of our common faith. The arduous duties of the writer in

another field of labor, will, it is hoped, be an apology for any want of strength or depth of argument that may be discovered in these epistles; and if the reader, in the course of the perusal, shall think that the "charity which thinketh no evil" is sometimes lost sight of, he is assured, that the writer has endeavored (whatever may be appearances) to be guided by the injunction, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you," &c. If he has "rebuked sharply," he has endeavored to be influenced by the spirit of his faith, which, teaching that God is kind "to the evil and the unthankful," includes in its embrace both friend and foe, and commits them to the all-wise disposal of Him who "hath concluded all in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon all."

That a greater variety of topics has not been canvassed, such as the Atonement, Original Sin, &c. may be found owing to the fact of their not having been treated of in Mr. Hatfield's lectures.

Such as these letters are, they are submitted to the candid perusal of friends and opposers. Should the latter be led to inquire impartially, *what Universalism is*, and the former be encouraged to "add to their faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge," &c. an ample reward will be received for the labors of the

AUTHOR.

New-York, March, 1840.

LETTERS
TO
REV. E. F. HATFIELD.

LETTER I.

Dear Sir—I have not the pleasure of a personal acquaintance with you, nor have I had all the facilities that I could wish, to obtain the whole matter contained in your late Lectures against Universalism. Considering the station which you occupy, and the reputation that you sustain as a scholar, I could wish that some abler pen than my own should be wielded to administer the justice which you deserve at the hands of the denomination to which I belong. With such notes, however, as I took of your lectures, I will proceed to notice your arguments and assertions, giving them, in *substance*, if not in the very *words* in which they were uttered by yourself.

Your text, Matt. xxv. 46, is an old one, and one which has been commented upon, and explained, again and again, in the periodicals, sermons and books of Universalists, ever since the days of Dr. Chauncey, whose authority you quote to show the "evil tendency of *modern* Universalism." If you have even sparingly read these publications and expositions, (which every sincere inquirer after truth ought to do,

in order to judge correctly of both sides,) you have seen that they contain arguments, and an array of facts and collateral texts, which fix the period of Christ's coming, mentioned in the 24th and 25th chapters of Matthew's gospel to *that* generation. See ver. 34 of chap. xxiv. : " Verily, I say unto you, this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled." And Matt. xvi. 27, 28 : " For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works. Verily, I say unto you, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom." See also Mark viii. 38, and ix. 1.

Now we shall see how you have met these sacred truths. Passing by what you said by way of introduction, which was uttered, if I do not greatly misjudge, to forestall the opinion of your auditors and enlist their feelings in your behalf, I proceed to notice one of your points.

"The text records a fact—' These shall go away into everlasting punishment.' Are these words of *doubtful* signification? Can there be any misapprehension as to their import? Who are *these*, and *when* were they to be driven away into everlasting punishment? There are some among us who tell us that the transactions related in these two chapters refer to the *Romans*, and the term everlasting *does not mean* never-ending duration. How great is the progress of error with those who have once listened to the devil. You might as well deny the whole Bible at once, as to put such a construction upon so plain a text."

Your first head, then, is, " *The time when these are*

to suffer everlasting punishment." The time, you say, is specified in the 31st verse—"When the Son of man shall come in his glory and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory," &c. This time, or period, you tell us, "must yet be future," and you proceed to your proofs.

1st. "The same body which was crucified and raised from the dead ascended into heaven; we must admit this or deny the whole christian scheme." You then quote Acts i. 10, 11: "And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven, as he went up, behold two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." This you quote without comment, and go on to quote *seven* other passages of a similar character, as you think, to prove—what?—Why, to prove that the coming of Christ did *not* take place at the destruction of the Jewish temple and city, and the subversion of their state and polity, and he must therefore come in person, *bodily*, at the day of judgment, (in your sense of the term,) and the dissolution of this visible, material world! I believe your argument is fairly and fully stated.

You have told us that the time of this coming is specified in verse 31, which has just been quoted.—And as you contend for a *personal*, literal appearing of our Lord, in the *same* body that was pierced on Calvary and laid in Joseph's sepulchre, will you not also contend that he is to sit "in his glory" upon a literal, *real throne*, and that this literal throne will be fixed in the literal "clouds of heaven"? This you

must admit; and I call your attention to a few difficulties involved in such a conclusion.

1st. It presents an unsafe and false mode of scriptural interpretation. In Isaiah xxx. 27, we read—“Behold the name of the Lord cometh from far, burning with his anger, and the burden thereof is heavy; his lips are full of indignation, and his tongue as a devouring fire,” &c. Hosea vi. 3: “Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord, &c. and he *shall come* unto us as the rain,” &c. In these, and kindred passages that might be presented, you must suppose that the Almighty was *literally* to come; yet this denies what is affirmed, 1 Tim. vi. 16, “that no man hath seen God *nor can see*,” &c. I understand, by the coming of Christ in “the clouds of heaven,” not the presence of his real body, but the display of his power in the judgments that came on the unbelieving Jews. As Kenrick very justly observes, “The great power and glory of Christ were as conspicuously displayed at the destruction of Jerusalem, and the other circumstances which accompanied that event, as if they had *seen* him coming upon the clouds of heaven to punish his enemies.” All your quotations are not to the purpose, for they fail to prove what you designed they should, viz., that the coming of Christ, mentioned in Matthew, is yet future.

2d. Another difficulty is this—“There is a natural body, and a *spiritual* body.” 1 Cor. xv. 44. If Christ ascended to heaven, the *spiritual* body, is he to come at the final judgment, as Mr. Hatfield contends, “with the same body that was crucified”? And when Christ prays, John xvii. 5, “Glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee