

**A COURSE OF LECTURES IN DEFENCE
OF THE FINAL RESTORATION:
DELIVERED IN THE BULFINCH STREET
CHURCH, BOSTON, IN THE WINTER OF
EIGHTEEN HUNDRED AND THIRTY TWO**

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A Course of Lectures in Defence of the Final Restoration: Delivered in the Bulfinch Street Church, Boston, in the Winter of Eighteen Hundred and Thirty Two by Paul Dean

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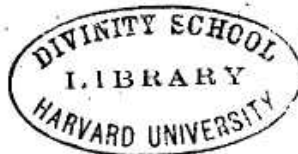
COURSE OF LECTURES
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DELIVERED IN THE BULFINCH STREET CHURCH,
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BY PAUL DEAN.

I am set for the defence of the Gospel.—PAUL.

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PREFACE.

THE subject presented to the mind in these lectures, is one of the deepest interest to the reader. Whether we shall be personally happy, is a question of the highest concern to every rational being; and whether the world will be made virtuous and happy is one of the highest general interest to all mankind. In the same ratio as we feel concerned in the event, shall we feel interested in the means by which that event is to be effected; and therefore the revelation of the gospel, being the only method by which either the knowledge or happiness of heaven can be acquired, will ever command our most devout consideration.

Even that view of religion which promises the salvation of a part of the world only, is infinitely to be preferred to infidelity, which sweeps the whole world to one common grave of oblivion. But that view of the gospel plan advocated in this course, embracing, as it does, the universal restoration, and that, without setting aside the necessity of experimental and practical godliness, or weakening the motives to a good life, must always commend itself to the approbation and the best wishes of every truly benevolent and philanthropic heart. And if, as we sincerely believe, it has the united support of revelation, who would not wish to understand and believe, as well as to support it?

Although we thus speak, and speak it to the honor of human nature, yet we apprehend and fear that the self-

ish and narrow minded will feel but little interest in it ; that the worldly minded will despise its good tidings, and neglect its reasonable injunctions ; and that the wicked and abandoned will prefer something else, and that for the same reason that such persons in the days of our Saviour chose darkness rather than light, "because their deeds were evil."

No hope of gain, or desire of polemic fame, has induced the publication of these lectures. The principal object of their being given to the public, especially without that thorough revision, which a firmer state of health and more leisure on the part of the author, would have afforded, is the gratification of many friends who heard them, and desired the opportunity of reading them. Also a wish to afford the community, and particularly the religious public, a more general and condensed account of the sentiments of the Restorationists, and of their reasons for the adoption and support of them.

Leaving to others, better qualified for it, the task of gratifying the literary taste of an enlightened public, it has been my aim to offer the sincere and plain inquirer after religious truth, a sure and safe guide to its attainment. And to place religion in such a light as that while it has the full support of the Bible, and the perfect approbation of its Divine Author ; it may also command the respect and veneration of all good men, and receive the hearty assent of every reasonable and unbiassed mind. If in ever so small a degree these objects shall be realised—if the skeptical shall be established in the love of truth, and made more friendly to religion, then will my humble effort be rewarded.

Of the correctness of the sentiments advanced, and of the validity and conclusiveness of the reasoning adduced in their support, the reader will judge for himself, after a candid, faithful and impartial examination. The writer can only say, they are such as he most sacredly believes to be according to scripture, justice and sound reason. And such as he is fully persuaded, will, when received and reduced to practice, promote the peace and happiness of society, by affording the best grounds of faith in the gospel, the best motives to the practice of virtue, and the strongest incentives to universal good will among men.

It has been the aim to treat all denominations and parties with respect and kindness; while at the same time great plainness has been observed in regard to their sentiments, so far as they have been alluded to. The modern scheme, which limits rewards and punishments with all motives of virtue and religion to the present life, has been alluded to incidentally, and opinions of its character and tendency expressed with honest frankness, and from a conscientious sense of duty; but without attempting its general investigation; such investigation not coming within the scope of our prescribed limits and design. The same remark is true of several other topics and opinions, which have received more or less notice.

In a similar way, the subject of temporal death has been treated as wholly a physical matter, not affecting in the least the moral relation between the soul and its Maker—not changing the nature of his moral government over it, or its own moral power to comply with his requirements; and not therefore placing it beyond the means of grace, such as are suited to its condition, it being still

under the gracious government of Christ. This is thought to be the most scriptural, rational, and consolatory view of death. Yet there is as wide a difference between the future emendatory punishment of the wicked as we view it, and the Papal doctrine of purgatory, as there is between the punishments of this life and purgatory.

An intermediate state of moral conscious existence for the soul between death and the resurrection, has also been considered, as sustained by the word of God, and by the economy every where observable in the works of Jehovah, which would ill justify the useless sleep of Abraham and others, from their early death to the resurrection. This state is also required by the divine impartiality in the bestowment of the means of grace, which are certainly not equally bestowed on men in the present life; instance the heathen, idiots, infants, to say nothing of others; and hence if the means of grace are ever equalized, they must be equalized in an intermediate state. Further, there are many promises of God which are not accomplished in this life, and if there be no conscious state between death and heaven, they never can be.

These subjects are here alluded to merely to throw light on some passages in the lectures; but as this view of death and the conscious state of the dead are calculated to obviate many difficulties in theology, they will, no doubt, soon receive an ample discussion, and be shown to be scriptural, honorable to God, and beneficial to men.

With these few remarks, the following course of lectures is, with humble diffidence, submitted to a liberal public; and that they who read may be blessed of heaven, is the fervent prayer of

THE AUTHOR.

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