

O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh - x•xœ x•xœx”x™ x”x”x•x—xª xœx›xœ x’x©x” (El Elohey haruchoth lechol basar). This address sufficiently proves that these holy men believed that man is a being compounded of flesh and spirit, and that these principles are perfectly distinct. Either the materiality of the human soul is a human fable, or, if it be a true doctrine, these men did not pray under the influence of the Divine Spirit. In Numbers 27:16 there is a similar form of expression: Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh. And in Job 12:10: In whose hand is the soul (x xœx© (nephesh)) of all living; and the spirit (x”x•x— (ruach)) of all flesh of man. Are not these decisive proofs that the Old Testament teaches that there is an immortal spirit in man? â€œBut does not x”x•x— (ruach) signify wind or breath?â€™ Sometimes it does, but certainly not here; for how absurd would it be to say, O God, the God of the breaths of all flesh!

If the Lord make a new thing - $x^{\circ}x^{\circ}x^{\circ} \ x^{\circ}x^{\circ}x^{\circ TM}x^{\circ}x^{\circ}$ $x^{\circ TM}x^{\circ}x^{\circ}x^{\circ} \ x^{\circ TM}x^{\circ}x^{\circ}x^{\circ}$ (veim beriah yibra Yehovah), and if Jehovah should create a creation, i. e., do such a thing as was never done before.

And they go down quick into the pit - שְׁחַלָּהם” (sheolah), a proof, among many others, that שְׁחֹלָה (sheol), signifies here a chasm or pit of the earth, and not the place called hell; for it would be absurd to suppose that their houses had gone to hell; and it would be wicked to imagine that their little innocent children had gone thither, though God was pleased to destroy their lives with those of their iniquitous fathers.

They, and all that appertained to them - Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, and all that appertained to their respective families, went down into the pit caused by this supernatural earthquake; while the fire from the Lord consumed the 250 men that bare censers. Thus there were two distinct punishments, the pit and the fire, for the two divisions of these rebels.

The censers - are hallowed - ✠✠✠ (kadeshu), are consecrated, i. e., to the service of God though in this instance improperly employed.

On the morrow all the congregation - murmured - It is very likely that the people persuaded themselves that Moses and Aaron had used some cunning in this business, and that the earthquake and fire were artificial; else, had they discerned the hand of God in this punishment, could they have dared the anger of the Lord in the very face of justice?

The plague is begun - God now punished them by a secret blast, so as to put the matter beyond all dispute; his hand, and his alone, was seen, not only in the plague, but in the manner in which the mortality was arrested. It was necessary that this should be done in this way, that the whole congregation might see that those men who had perished were not the people of the Lord; and that God, not Moses and Aaron, had destroyed them.

He stood between the dead and the living; and the plague, etc. - What the plague was we know not, but it seems to have begun at one part of the camp, and to have proceeded regularly onward; and Aaron went to the quarter where it was then prevailing, and stood with his atonement where it was now making its ravages, and the plague was stayed; but not before 14,700 had fallen victims to it, Numbers 16:49.

If Aaron the high priest, with his censer and incense, could disarm the wrath of an insulted, angry Deity, so that a guilty people, who deserved nothing but destruction, should be spared; how much more effectual may we expect the great atonement to be which was made by the Lord Jesus Christ, of whom Aaron was only the type! The sacrifices of living animals pointed out the death of Christ on the cross; the incense, his intercession. Through his death salvation is purchased for the world; by his intercession the offending children of men are spared. Hence St. Paul, Romans 5:10, says: If, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved Through His Life, i. e., by the prevalence of his continual intercession. 2 Corinthians 5:18, 2 Corinthians 5:19: "And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation." By the awful transactions recorded in this chapter, we may see how jealous God is of the sole right of appointing the way and means of salvation. Had any priesthood, and any kind of service, no matter how solemn and sincere, been equally available in the sight of Divine justice and mercy, God would not have resented in so awful a manner the attempts of Korah and his company in their new service.

The way of God's own appointment, the agony and death of Christ, is the only way in which souls can be saved. His is the priesthood, and his is the only available sacrifice. All other modes and schemes of salvation are the inventions of men or devils, and will in the end prove ruinous to all those who trust in them. Reader, forget not the Lord who bought thee.