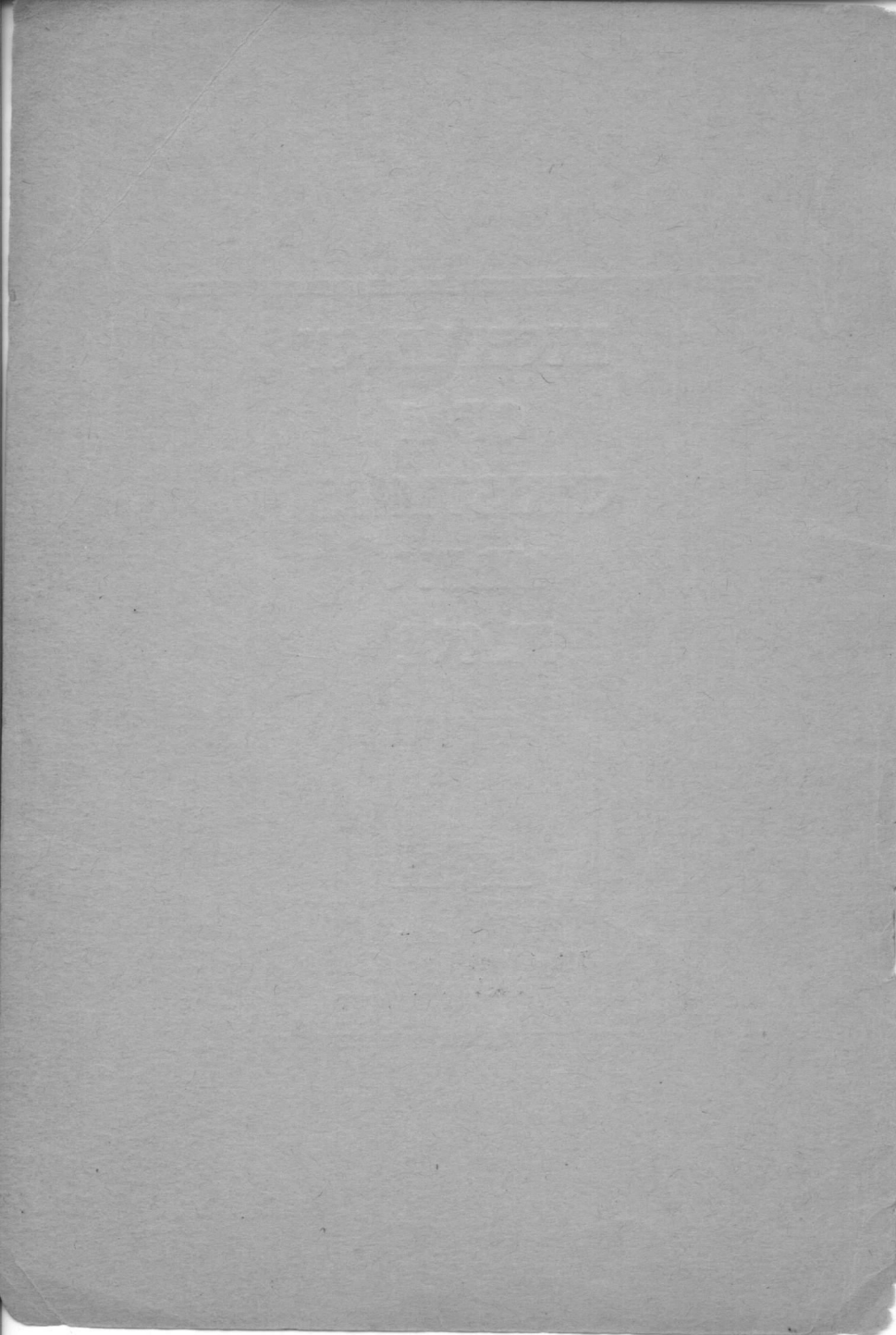


**EXCELLENCY  
OF A  
CHRISTIAN'S  
HIDING  
PLACE**



—by—  
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EXCELLENCE OF CHRISTIANITY

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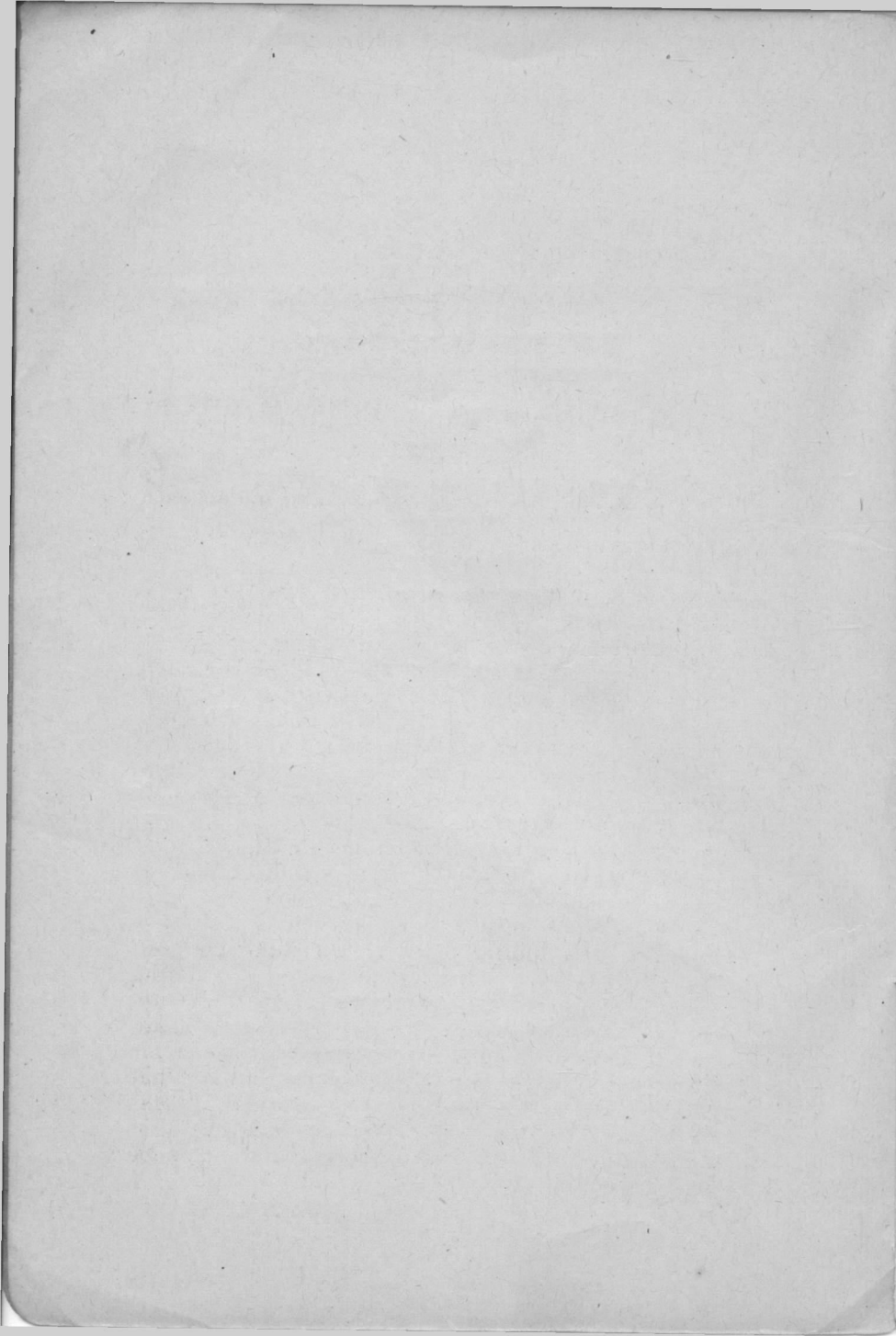
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EXCELLENCY OF A CHRISTIAN'S HIDING  
PLACE.

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"The eternal God is the refuge, and underneath  
are the everlasting arms."—Duet. 33:27.

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MOSES, just on the eve of his departure from  
this life, calls the tribes of Israel around him  
and pronounces a blessing upon them in almost  
the same language as their father, Jacob. He winds  
up this double charge with reference to the won-  
derful character of God. The language here em-  
ployed is direct, yet full of meaning, and describes  
clearly and forcibly the excellence of God as the  
Refuge in which all men should hide. A refuge as  
we understand it, is a place in which one can  
find shelter against an adversary in the time of  
great trial or affliction. It is a hiding place a-  
gainst the enemy.

This same prophet beholds Christ in the  
likeness of a hiding place in the 32nd chapter,  
2nd. verse—"And a man shall be as a hiding  
place from the wind, and a covert from the temp-  
est; as rivers of waters in a dry place, as a shad-  
ow of great rock in a weary land." In taking his  
departure, Moses wanted to assure Israel what  
was his opinion of that God before whom he was  
to so shortly appear and to say to future genera-  
tions that his faith was unshaken and his hope  
undaunted.

The text breathes the spirit of full confidence. And, let us remember that the waters of the mystic Jordan were gathering around the sage, the dews were gathering upon his brow, and the mist, separating him from the land of Beulah, was rapidly dispersing. It was only in the next chapter as we may see that obeying the summons of Almighty God, he goes upon Mount Nebo to take his last look upon the promised land before his soul, unfettered, mounts upward to be with God. And yet, in the face of these unmistakable signs of the approaching end; in the face of the dissolution of his body; in the face of complete works—he utters for the comfort of saints this great text: “The eternal God is Thy refuge; and underneath are the everlasting arms.”

This text, my brethren, has a world message for believers everywhere. It sets forth the fact that has been verified through all ages; a truth that is as real today, as when uttered by Moses and realized by Enoch:—**God is a Refuge.**

Man, since his beginning upon the earth, however vile and profligate and wicked, has shown some disposition to prepare for the ordeals of the great future. There has been placed in his bosom, according to Divine arrangements, a spirit to look forward, and however well satisfied he may seem to be, he nevertheless shows some disposition to anticipate a home elsewhere when the voyage of life is ended. When Abraham was called to go out of Chaldea, he went forward not knowing whither he was going, but he believed he was going to a city which had foundation whose builder and maker was God. Everything may bear the stamp of safety and the impress of security, yet man has an ambition to find, above all, some refuge into which his soul may go, when he has broken the chains of death. The religion of the saints of all ages has been nothing but a reiteration and an emphasis of this great truth that



they believed in a great hereafter and that God was its author and builder. The language of the false prophet Balaam is but the language of emphatic Christianity. "I shall see him, but not now, I shall behold him, but not nigh." And Paul indulges in the hope of the security of God when he cries out: "I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that he is able to keep that I have committed to his charge against that day."

"The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." As a hiding place for the soul, God is eternal. We take the horoscope of man and trace our way back for nearly 6000 years to creation's morn, and we find the traces of divinity standing out in bold relief. When Moses could go no farther back than that very remote and undefinable period, he lifted the curtain in the first chapter of Genesis and said: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Up to that time, so far as we know a blackened chaotic atmosphere brooded over the face of the entire universe, but beyond that we must go in search of the origin of that being whom we call God. Take hee wings of science, go back into the period when there was nothing but a nebulous, fiery mass; when no human creature was found to exist; go back into the period prior to the creation of angels, back where nothing but confusion enveloped and surrounded divine intelligence—yea—go back and back, till you come to the boundary line of human reason, human science and man is forced to throw up his hands in his inquiry and like a helpless child cry out in his research and bewilderment and say—"I am lost." You must still go back with ages upon ages to find the beginning in the Christian's hiding place. David wraps it up in one little sentence and says: "From everlasting to everlasting Thou art God."

Nothing but God endowed with his self-created deity could be a fitting hiding place for the

soul. "The eternal God is Thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." If the soul is satisfied concerning the Deity in or investigation through the unnumbered ages of the past, what can be said of him with regard to coming years? The Bible tells us that He will stand out in great prominence in the last day as the judge of all the earth. He will come in the clouds with ten thousands of His angels to execute judgement upon the earth. At the great epoch in the world's history when all matter shall perish; when the very ground upon which we stand shall burn as an oven; when nature in the wrath of the awful judgement shall be utterly annihilated; when there shall be left neither "root nor branch"—God shall stand out with the dignity of the World's Judge before whom every creature shall bow. There will be no question of His presence since Heaven and earth shall flee away from before his face.

Years, centuries and ages may sweep by before the great and terrible day of the Lord. To define his existence we must go farther still. Afterwards there shall be a new heaven and a new earth. Countless ages must sweep by; eternity like an endless chain must unfold and unfold and unfold itself without reaching to the date of him who sits upon the throne of David. The prophet takes up his telescope and looks still farther down the vista of coming ages, and declares that he sees no end. "Of his kingdom there shall be no end." His name shall be called "Wonderful Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father."

It will not be enough to stop there; we must go farther and farther out; we must reach still greater bounds; we must feel our way far beyond human calculation or human computation of distance or measure. If there can be no end to his length of days;



if unnumbered ages can pile up upon ages without reckoning or calculation; if through millions and millions of centuries, he shall still by his wonderful power shield, protect and feel the soul without diminishing one whit, surely brethren, he is what our text describes and more, if language can make him such. "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms"

He is peculiarly the refuge of saints. Man in seeking to escape the contaminations of the devil, satisfies himself with nothing less than the anchorage in God. Home may be pleasant; but it does not satisfy; the church holds out hope, but it cannot give that for which the soul longs and for which it pleads. David says in the Psalms:—"When I awake with thy likeness, I shall be satisfied." In its search for light, it looks upward, and nothing but assurances from the Prince of Peace can fill the aching void. After the struggle in the very agony of death, with a broken heart and contrite spirit, hope given from on high is born in the soul, and peace that passes all understanding comes to the new creation. As an earnest of the great quickening, and of the change wrought by the spirit of grace, man is given assurance of a changed life and the abiding home to which he is moving. God appears a burning, living reality, into whose bosom he may take shelter and under whose love he may find a hiding place. "The eternal God is thy Refuge."

Thrown out upon the isolated isle of Patmos, John was without home, shelter or friends. The mad sea sent its angry waves upon the shore, and they constantly howled of its strength and anger. From among the caverns of the mountain fastnesses, ferocious and blood-thirsty beasts crept; the lowering clouds told of the approaching storms, and there imprisoned without a human soul to whom he could pour out his grief was John, the faithful servant of God. When every ray of hope

had been cut off and the darkness of the shadow of death began to gather around him; it was then Jehovah broke through the clouds scattering the rifts with the wave of omnific hands and said "I am He that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive forevermore." As a refuge he had already shielded John from the destructive rage of the enemies, but now he comes with the sound of the voice of many waters not only to cheer his fainting heart, but to send a message to the seven churches.

The eternal God is the refuge and underneath the everlasting arms." The last clause in the text makes him a Deliverer also. "Underneath are the everlasting arms." The one beautiful thought of the goodness of God is, that He is not only the Refuge to which all the sons of men may go and find shelter; not only the home of the soul after the fitful and trying battles of life are fought; not only the enduring Rock of Ages that will stand when rolling years shall cease to move; but he is the anxious, watchful father, who always waits to deliver. The United States Government has placed at convenient distances along the rocky shores of our coast, patrolmen with strict orders and full instructions to patrol the coast look out for the wrecked seamen tempest tossed, and cast ashore to perish. And right nobly has this service been carried forward since it was first instituted. But there are hundreds and thousands who go down annually right in our midst with none to save and deliver. Everywhere man's foot has ever pressed the soil, or moved upon the face of the briny deep; down in the bowels of the earth, in the blackest mines, on the wings of the swiftest balloons, the Prince of Peace is there ready to deliver. Of himself he says: "I am the root and off-spring of David, the bright and morning Star." "Underneath are the everlasting arms." Man cannot be sunk so deep in the mire

of sin, but that God who is mightier, who is stronger, is below him with the strength of his own arm. With the strength of his arm, he lifts not only individuals, but nations out of the power of the enemy. Israel suffers the Egyptian bondage for 400 years; Moses and Aaron were ridiculed for seeking their deliverance, their tasks were doubled, and yet, when the time came, with a strong arm, he leads them forth.

The arm of God does not stand for temporary deliverance, but it reaches on as the years go by. "The same today, yesterday, and forever." Your best friend may fail you; your money may give out; your health may break down; but he who is anchored in the Rock of Ages, he who finds the man as a hiding place from the tempest, has found the friend that sticketh closer than a brother. "The eternal God is the Refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms."

### MAN'S NEED OF A REFUGE

(a)—Asylum for the soul against temporal warfare.

Satan, like a mad roaring adversary is set for the destruction of the human soul. He was hurled forth from heaven because of base ingratitude, and a spirit of insubordination. Luke says he beheld him light lightning fall from heaven and Milton says he fell nine times the space from heaven to earth. Since his fall he has been treacherously plotting against every human soul, trying to delude, trying to tempt, trying to sink into hell. Oh, miserabe will be the long black night the lost spirit must spend in hell in company with the devil. But man needs a refuge against the enemy of the soul. When shall he find it? If he turns to letters, they will fail; if he turns to the strength of his own arms, he will find them too weak and too short. Where, oh where shall the anxious, weary soul find that asylum that the world can-

not give? Let him turn his eyes this moment to bloody Calvary and listen to the groans of the dying Christ. And hark! listen what was that that rang out above a groan? What was that which breaks the silence of the anxious worlds? What was that which challenged the attention of a lost world? It was the utterance of the dying Christ, who speaks to struggling humanity from pole to pole and from land to land saying: "Let him that is athirst take of the waters of life." In that blessed proclamation, the power of the devil was destroyed and the refuge was opened to the thirsty anxious souls everywhere. This morning, you are here, who have found this blessed hiding place.

#### MAN NEEDS A HIDING PLACE AT DEATH

Life insurance companies and societies provide for temporary relief, relief that is contingent upon things transitory; things material; but the soul will need something grander and more excellent when it starts on the spirit's journey. Time will break down in eternity, the mud walls of the flesh will yield to the ravages of the grim monster, the old tabernacle in which it has found habitation since life began, will slowly but surely yield up its tenant, and man—mysterious, wonderful, complex man, man with the marvelous constituents of immortality, will fly out somewhere. It is then, my beloved hearers that the text will reveal its greatest significance. "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms."

In his dying moments, Moody lost sight of his family, his association, himself and said: "Earth is receding, heaven is opening and God is calling me." He needed not so much the comforting words of loving friends, as he did the bosom of his Saviour. "Jesus, Lover of my soul, let me to thy bosom fly; While the nearer waters roll;

while the tempest still is high." And what was true of Moody, is also true of you. Every earthly thing to which you lay claim, may pass from your control; every ounce of strength may depart; the very tapers in your bed-chamber may burn feeble and low, and yet instead of sinking in despair, because you have come to the brink of the river, or sink down in the dread at the prospect of the awful ordeals, you can stand on Jordan's stormy banks and cast a wishful eye. The need of the refuge will become more apparent in the morning of the burning of the worlds. In the Revelation we are told that the sounding of Gabriel's trumpet, the millions of the sleeping dead will awaken to stand in the presence of the Judge, and the final sentence which will consign them to heaven or hell forever. John says "And I saw the dead, small and great stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life, and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books according to their works. And the sea gave up their dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them." So according to this picture, the greatest gathering the world has ever known will be the gathering in the morning of resurrection; when the bursting graves will yield up their dead; when saints of all ages in harmony shall meet at the bar of eternal justice; when mother, father, sister, brother shall all come back again, clothed with bodies immortal, waiting to hear their sentence. It is then, my beloved friends, the text will bristle with meaning—"The eternal God is the refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms."

Let us consider in conclusion:—

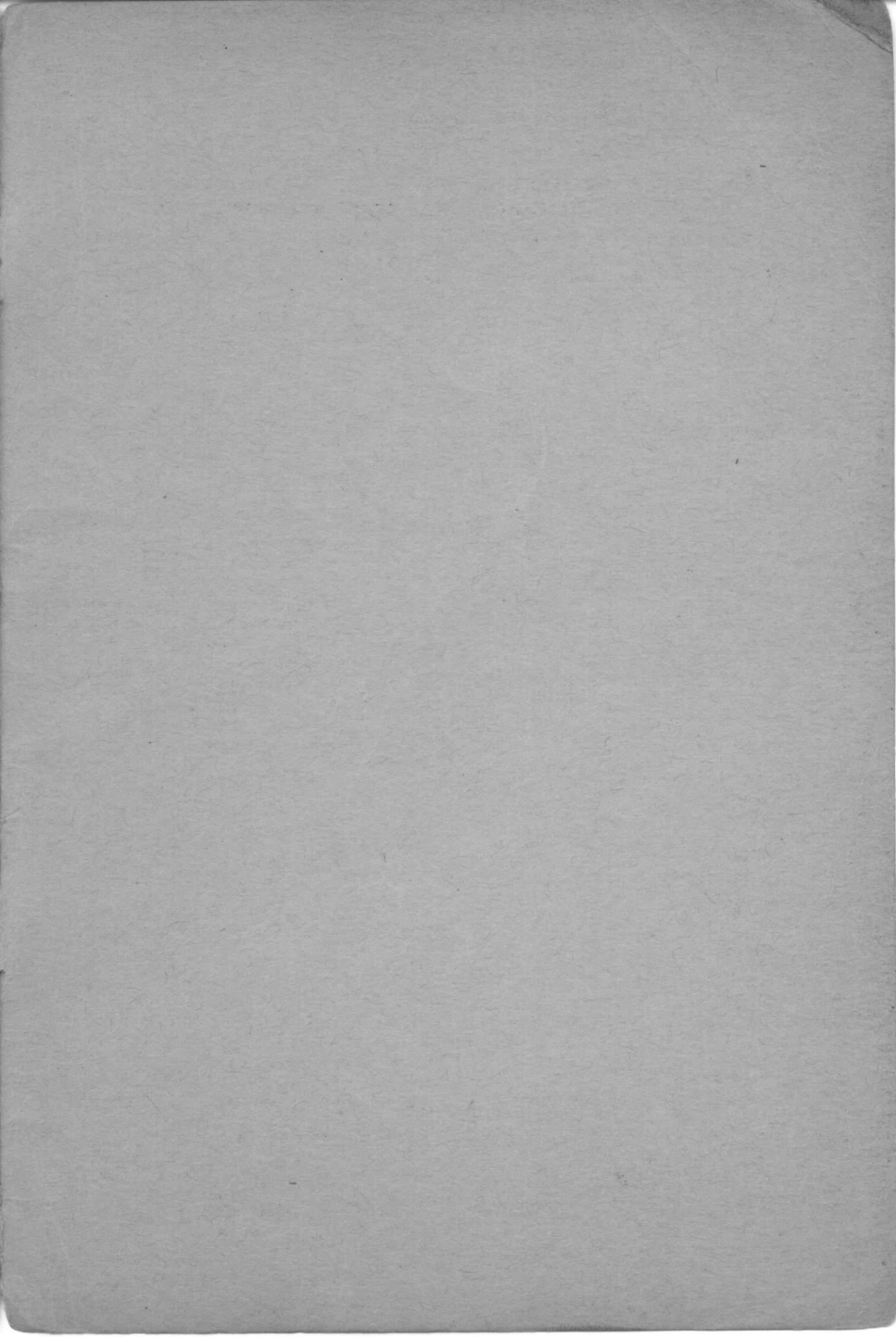
- 1.—God is a complete hiding place.
- 2.—The saints of all ages are hiding in him.
- 3.—Without this hiding place, man is exposed

to everlasting wrath.

4.—We shall realize his excellence now, at death, in the judgment.

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