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WM. MILLER'S  
APOLOGY AND DEFENCE.



"Saying none other things than those which the prophets and  
Moses did say should come."—Acts xxvi 22

MR. MILLER'S  
APOLOGY AND DEFENCE.

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TO ALL WHO LOVE THE LORD JESUS CHRIST IN SINCERITY.—

As all men are responsible to the community for the sentiments they may promulgate, the public has a right to expect from me a candid statement in reference to my disappointment in not realizing the Advent of Christ in A. D. 1843—4, which I had confidently believed. I have, therefore, considered it not presumptuous in me to lay before the Christian public a retrospective view of the whole question, the motives that actuated me, and the reasons by which I was guided.

DEISTICAL OPINIONS.

It may not become me to speak particularly of “my manner of life from my youth,” which is known to an extensive circle of neighbors and acquaintances; but I have ever endeavored to live “in all good conscience before God until this day,” and to discharge conscientiously my obligations to my fellow-men. I was early educated to reverence the Scriptures as a revelation from God to man; and I was, more or less, a reader of the Word, without being savingly affected by it. I was, however, always perplexed with what I then deemed inconsistencies and contradictions in the Bible, which I was unable to harmonize; and yet I knew that if the Bible was what it purports to be, it must, in some way, all be harmonized.



Not having any serious doubts of its authenticity, I was exceedingly anxious to reconcile all its various parts, and, unsuccessfully, resorted to all means within my reach. I was particularly anxious to have them harmonized by the preachers of the word; and, accordingly, embraced every opportunity, to present for their removal, the difficulties under which I labored. But I obtained from them no satisfaction; they usually adduced the opinions of various commentators, which were as contradictory as were their own, or told me they did not understand them, and that I could not, because God had hidden their meaning under a mystical veil. This served more to perplex my mind than to shed light on the questions at issue.

In this state of mind, at the age of twenty-two, I removed from Hampton, N. Y., where I had resided from the age of four years, to Poultney, Vt. There I became acquainted with the principal men in that village, who were professedly deists; but they were good citizens, and of a moral and serious deportment. They put into my hands the works of Voltaire, Hume, Paine, Ethan Allen, and other deistical writers, in which the difficulties that had perplexed my own mind were discussed in so plausible a manner, that I concluded the Bible was only the work of designing men, and I discarded it accordingly. I, however, believed in a Supreme Being, as brought to view by the works of Nature and Providence, and believed that there was to be an hereafter, in which our happiness would be proportioned to the virtue of our lives in the present state. With these views, I was associated with others in the defence of deistical sentiments, for about twelve years.

#### FIRST RELIGIOUS IMPRESSIONS.

Before the close of this period, however, I began to suspect that deism tended to a belief of annihilation, which was always very abhorrent to my feelings. In the fall of 1812, as I was returning to Poultney from the court at Rutland, in company with Judge Stanley, I asked him his opinion respecting our condition in another state.

He replied by comparing it to that of a tree which flourishes for a time, and turns again to earth; and to that of a candle which burns to nothing. I was then satisfied that deism was inseparably connected with, and did tend to, the denial of a future existence. And I thought to myself, that rather than embrace such a view, I should prefer the heaven and hell of the Scriptures, and take my chance respecting them. Still I could not regard the Bible as inspired.

#### CONNECTION WITH THE ARMY.

In 1813, I received a captain's commission in the U. S. service, and continued in the army until peace was declared. While there, many occurrences served to weaken my confidence in the correctness of deistical principles. I was led frequently to compare this country to that of the children of Israel, before whom God drove out the inhabitants of their land. It seemed to me that the Supreme Being must have watched over the interests of this country in an especial manner, and delivered us from the hands of our enemies. I was particularly impressed with this view when I was in the battle of Plattsburg, when, with 1,500 regulars, and about 4,000 volunteers, we defeated the British who were 15,000 strong; we being also successful, at the same time, in an engagement with the British fleet on the lake. At the commencement of the battle, we looked upon our own defeat as almost certain, and yet we were victorious. So surprising a result against such odds, did seem to me like the work of a mightier power than man.

#### REMOVAL TO LOW HAMPTON.

At the close of the war, I removed to my present residence in Low Hampton, N. Y., and being retired from public life, in the busy scenes of which I had been engaged for ten years, I had more leisure for reading and reflection respecting another state. I could, however find no assurance of happiness beyond the grave; all was

dim and uncertain there. One day in May, 1816, I detected myself in the act of taking the name of God in vain, a habit I had acquired in the service; and I was instantly convicted of its sinfulness. I was then led to inquire how a just Being could consistently save those who should violate the laws of justice. The works of Nature or of Providence could give no answer to this question; and I was almost led to despair. In this state of mind, I continued for some months, when suddenly the character of a Saviour was vividly impressed upon my mind. It seemed that there might be a Being so good and compassionate as to himself atone for our transgressions, and thereby save us from suffering the penalty of sin. I immediately felt how lovely such a Being must be; and imagined that I could cast myself into the arms of, and trust in the mercy of, such an One. But the question arose, How can it be proved that such a Being does exist? Aside from the Bible, I found that I could get no evidence of the existence of such a Saviour, or even of a future state. I felt that to believe in such a Saviour without evidence, would be visionary in the extreme. I saw that the Bible did bring to view just such a Saviour as I needed; and I was perplexed to find how an uninspired book should develop principles so perfectly adapted to the wants of a fallen world. I was constrained to admit that the Scriptures must be a revelation from God; they became my delight, and in Jesus I found a friend.

DETERMINED TO UNDERSTAND THE SCRIPTURES.

Soon after this, in the fall of 1816, I was conversing with a friend respecting my hope of a glorious eternity through the merits and intercessions of the Saviour, and he asked me how I knew there was a Saviour? I replied that He was revealed in the Bible. He then asked me how I knew the Bible was true? and advanced my former deistical arguments on the inconsistencies, the contradictions, and the mysticisms in which I had claimed it was shrouded. I replied that if the Bible was the word of God, everything contained therein might be understood,

and all its parts be made to harmonize; and I said to him, that if he would give me time, I would harmonize all these apparent contradictions, to my own satisfaction, or I would be a deist still.

#### MANNER OF STUDYING THE BIBLE.

I then devoted myself to prayer and to the reading of the word. I determined to lay aside all my prepossessions, to thoroughly compare Scripture with Scripture, and to pursue its study in a regular and methodical manner. I commenced with Genesis, and read verse by verse, proceeding no faster than the meaning of the several passages should be so unfolded, as to leave me free from embarrassment respecting any mysticisms or contradictions. Whenever I found anything obscure, my practice was to compare it with all collateral passages; and by the help of CRUDEN, I examined all the texts of Scripture in which were found any of the prominent words contained in any obscure portion. Then by letting every word have its proper bearing on the subject of the text, if my view of it harmonized with every collateral passage in the Bible, it ceased to be a difficulty. In this way I pursued the study of the Bible, in my first perusal of it, for about two years, and was fully satisfied, that it is its own interpreter. I found that by a comparison of Scripture with history, all the prophecies, as far as they have been fulfilled, had been fulfilled literally; that all the various figures, metaphors, parables, similitudes, &c., of the Bible, were either explained in their immediate connection, or the terms in which they were expressed were defined in other portions of the word, and when thus explained, are to be literally understood in accordance with such explanation. I was thus satisfied that the Bible is a system of revealed truths, so clearly and simply given, that the "wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein."

## THE RESULT ARRIVED AT.

While thus studying the Scriptures, I became satisfied, if the prophecies which have been fulfilled in the past are any criterion by which to judge of the manner of the fulfilment of those which are future, that the popular views of the spiritual reign of Christ, a temporal millennium before the end of the world, and the Jews' return, are not sustained by the word of God; for, I found that all the Scriptures on which those favorite theories are based, are as clearly expressed as are those that were *literally* fulfilled at the first advent, or at any other period in the past. I found it plainly taught in the Scriptures that Jesus Christ will again descend to this earth, coming in the clouds of heaven, in all the glory of his Father: \* that, at his coming the kingdom and dominion under the whole heaven will be given to Him and the saints of the Most High, who will possess it forever, even forever and ever: † that, as the old world perished by the deluge, so the earth that now is, is reserved unto fire, to be melted with fervent heat at Christ's coming, after which, according to the promise, it is to become the new earth wherein the righteous will forever dwell: ‡ that, at his coming, the bodies of all the righteous dead will be raised, and all the righteous living be changed from a corruptible to an incorruptible, from a mortal to an immortal state; that they will all be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air, and will reign with him forever in the regenerated earth: § that, the controversy Zion will then be finished, her children be delivered from bondage, and from the power of the tempter, and the saints be all pre-

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\* See John xiv. 3; Acts i. 11; 1 Thess. iv. 16; Rev. i. 7; Matt. xvi. 27; xxiv. 30; Mark viii. 38; xiii. 26; Dan. vii. 13.

† Dan. vii. 14, 18, 22, 27; Matt. xxv. 34; Luke xii. 32; xix. 12, 15; xxii. 29; 1 Cor. ix. 25; 2 Tim. iv. 1, 8; James i. 12; 1 Pet. v. 4.

‡ 2 Pet. iii. 7—10; Isa. lxx. 17—19; Rev. xxi. 22.

§ 1 Cor. xv. 20, 23, 49, 51—53; Phil. iii. 20, 21; 1 Thes. iv 14—17; 1 John iii. 2.

mented to God blameless, without spot or wrinkle in love;\* that, the bodies of the wicked will then all be destroyed, and their spirits be reserved in prison until their resurrection and damnation;† and that when the earth is thus regenerated, the righteous raised, and the wicked destroyed, the kingdom of God will have come, when his will will be done on earth as it is done in heaven; that the meek will inherit it, and the kingdom become the saints.‡ I found that the only millennium taught in the Word of God is the thousand years which are to intervene between the first resurrection and that of the rest of the dead, as inculcated in the xx. of Revelation; and that it must necessarily follow the personal coming of Christ and the regeneration of the earth:§ that till Christ's coming and the end of the world, the righteous and wicked are to continue together on the earth, and that the horn of Papacy is to war against the saints until his appearing and kingdom, when it will be destroyed by the brightness of Christ's coming; so that there can be no conversion of the world before the advent;|| and that as the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness, is located by Peter after the conflagration, and is declared by him to be the same for which we look, according to the promise of Isa. lxxv. 17, and is the same that John saw in vision after the passing away of the former heavens and earth, it must necessarily follow that the various portions of Scripture that refer to the millennial state, must have their fulfilment after the resurrection of all the saints that sleep in Jesus.¶ 1

\* Isa. xxxiv. 8; xl. 2, 5; xli. 10—12; Rom. viii. 21—23; 1 Cor. i. 7, 8; iv. 14; xv. 54, 56; Eph. v. 27; Col. i. 22; 1 Thess. iii. 13; Heb. ii. 13—15; Jude 24; Rev. xx. 1—6.

† Psa. l. 3; xcvi. 3; Isa. lx. 15, 16; xxiv. 21, 22; Dan. vii. 10; Mal. iv. 1; Matt. iii. 12; John xv. 29; Acts xxiv. 15; 1 Cor. iii. 13; 1 Thess. v. 2, 3; 2 Thess. i. 7—9; 1 Pet. i. 7; 2 Pet. iii. 7, 10; Jude 6, 7, 14, 15; Rev. xx. 3, 13—15.

‡ Psa. xxxvii. 9—11, 22, 28, 29, 34; Prov. ii. 21, 22; x. 30; Isa. xl. 21; Matt. v. 5; vi. 10.

§ Rev. xx. 2—7.

|| Matt. xiii. 37—43; xxiv. 14; Dan. vii. 21, 22; 2 Thess. ii. 8.

¶ 2 Pet. iii.; Isa. lxxv. 17; Rev. xxi., xxii.

also found that the promises respecting Israel's restoration, are applied by the apostle to all who are Christ's, — the putting on of Christ constituting them Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.\*

#### THE AGE OF THE WORLD IN WHICH WE LIVE.

I was then satisfied, as I saw conclusive evidence to prove the advent personal and pre-millennial, that all the events for which the church look to be fulfilled before the advent, must be subsequent to it; and that unless there were other unfulfilled prophecies, the advent of the Lord, instead of being looked for only in the distant future, might be a continually-expected event. In examining the prophecies on that point, I found that only four universal monarchies are anywhere predicted in the Bible to precede the setting up of God's everlasting kingdom; that three of those had passed away, — Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Grecia, — and that the fourth, Rome, had already passed into its last state, the state in which it is to be when the stone cut out of the mountain without hands shall smite the image on the feet, and break to pieces all the kingdoms of this world. I was unable to find any prediction of events which presented any clear evidence of their fulfilment before the scenes that usher in the advent. And finding all the signs of the times and the present condition of the world, to compare harmoniously with the prophetic descriptions of the last days, I was compelled to believe that this world had about reached the limits of the period allotted for its continuance. As I regarded the evidence, I could arrive at no other conclusion.

#### THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE SCRIPTURES.

Another kind of evidence that vitally affected my

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\* Rom. ii. 14, 15; iv. 13; ix. 6; x. 12; xi. 17; Gal. iii. 29; Eph. ii. 14, 15.

mind, was the chronology of the Scriptures. I found, (on pursuing the study of the Bible,) various chronological periods extending, according to my understanding of them, to the coming of the Saviour. I found that predicted events which had been fulfilled in the past, often occurred within a *given time*. The one hundred and twenty years to the flood, Gen. vi. 3; the seven days that were to precede it, with forty days of predicted rain, Gen. vii. 4; the four hundred years of the sojourn of Abraham's seed, Gen. xv. 13; the three days of the butler's and baker's dreams, Gen. xl. 12—20; the seven years of Pharaoh's, Gen. xli. 28—54; the forty years in the wilderness, Num. xiv. 34; the three and a half years of famine, 1 Kings xvii. 1; the sixty-five years to the breaking of Ephraim, Isa. vii. 8; the seventy years' captivity, Jer. xxv. 11; Nebuchadnezzar's seven times, Dan. iv. 13—16; and the seven weeks, three score and two weeks, and the one week, making seventy weeks, determined upon the Jews, Dan. ix. 24—27; the events limited by these times, were all once only a matter of prophecy, and were fulfilled in accordance with the predictions.

When, therefore, I found the 2300 prophetic days which were to mark the length of the vision from the Persian to the end of the fourth kingdom, the seven times' continuance of the dispersion of God's people, and the 1335 prophetic days to the standing of Daniel in his lot, all evidently extending to the advent, with other prophetic periods, I could but regard them as "the times before appointed," which God had revealed "unto his servants the prophets." As I was fully convinced that "all Scripture given by inspiration of God is profitable," that it came not at any time by the will of man, but was written as holy men were moved by the Holy Ghost, and was written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope, I could but regard the chronological portions of the Bible as being as much a portion of the Word of God, and as much entitled to our serious consideration, as any other portion of the Scriptures.

I therefore felt, that, in endeavoring to comprehend what God had in his mercy seen fit to reveal to us, I had



no right to pass over the prophetic periods. I saw that as the events predicted to be fulfilled in prophetic days had been extended over about as many literal years; as God in Num. xiv. 34, and Ezek. iv. 4—6, had appointed each day for a year; as the seventy weeks to the Messiah were fulfilled in 490 years, and the 1260 prophetic days of the Papal supremacy in 1260 years; and as these prophetic days extending to the advent were given in connection with symbolic prophecy, I could only regard the time as symbolical, and as standing each day for a year, in accordance with the opinions of all the standard Protestant commentators. If, then, we could obtain any clue to the time of their commencement, I conceived we should be guided to the probable time of their termination; and as God would not bestow upon us an useless revelation, I regarded them as conducting us to the time when we might confidently look for the coming of the Chiefest of ten thousand — One altogether lovely.

COMMENCEMENT AND TERMINATION OF THE PROPHETIC PERIODS.

From a further study of the Scriptures, I concluded that the seven times of Gentile supremacy must commence when the Jews ceased to be an independent nation at the captivity of Manasseh, which the best chronologers assigned to B. C. 677; that the 2300 days commenced with the seventy weeks, which the best chronologers dated from B. C. 457; and that the 1335 days, commencing with the taking away of the daily, and the setting up of the abomination that maketh desolate, Dan. xii. 11, were to be dated from the setting up of the Papal supremacy, after the taking away of Pagan abominations, and which, according to the best historians I could consult, should be dated from about A. D. 508. Reckoning all these prophetic periods from the several dates assigned by the best chronologers for the events from which they should evidently be reckoned, they all would terminate together, about A. D. 1843. I was thus brought, in 1818, at the close of my two years' study of the Scriptures, to the solemn

conclusion, that in about twenty-five years from that time all the affairs of our present state would be wound up ; that all its pride and power, pomp and vanity, wickedness and oppression would come to an end ; and that in the place of the kingdoms of this world, the peaceful and long-desired kingdom of the Messiah would be established under the whole heaven ; that in about twenty-five years the glory of the Lord would be revealed, and all flesh see it together, — the desert bud and blossom as the rose, — the fir-tree come up instead of the thorn, and instead of the briar the myrtle-tree, — the curse be removed from off the earth, death be destroyed, reward be given to the servants of God, the prophets and saints and them who fear his name, and those be destroyed that destroy the earth.

“LOOKING FOR THAT BLESSED HOPE.”

I need not speak of the joy that filled my heart in view of the delightful prospect, nor of the ardent longings of my soul, for a participation in the joys of the redeemed. The Bible was now to me a new book. It was indeed a feast of reason ; all that was dark, mystical, or obscure to me in its teachings, had been dissipated from my mind, before the clear light that now dawned from its sacred pages ; and O how bright and glorious the truth appeared ! All the contradictions and inconsistencies I had before found in the Word were gone ; and although there were many portions of which I was not satisfied I had a full understanding, yet so much light had emanated from it to the illumination of my before darkened mind, that I felt a delight in studying the Scriptures which I had not before supposed could be derived from its teachings. I commenced their study with no expectation of finding the time of the Saviour's coming, and I could at first hardly believe the result to which I had arrived ; but the evidence struck me with such force, that I could not resist my convictions. I became nearly settled in my conclusions, and began to wait, and watch, and pray for my Saviour's coming.

## THE QUESTION OF DUTY.

With the solemn conviction that such momentous events were predicted in the Scriptures to be fulfilled in so short a space of time, the question came home to me with mighty power regarding my duty to the world in view of the evidence that had affected my own mind. If the end was so near, it was important that the world should know it. I supposed that it would call forth the opposition of the ungodly; but it never came into my mind that any Christian would oppose it. I supposed that all such would be so rejoiced in view of the glorious prospect, that it would only be necessary to present it, for them to receive it. My great fear was, that in their joy at the hope of a glorious inheritance so soon to be revealed, they would receive the doctrine without sufficiently examining the Scriptures in demonstration of its truth. I therefore feared to present it, lest by some possibility I should be in error, and be the means of misleading any.

## OBJECTIONS TO THE DOCTRINE.

Various difficulties and objections would arise in my mind, from time to time; certain texts would occur to me, which seemed to weigh against my conclusions; and I would not present a view to others, while any difficulty appeared to militate against it. I therefore continued the study of the Bible, to see if I could sustain any of these objections. My object was not merely to remove them, but I wished to see if they were valid.

Sometimes when at work, a text would arise like this: "Of that day and hour knoweth no man," &c. : and how then could the Bible reveal the time of the advent? I would then immediately examine the context in which it was found, and I saw at once that in the same connection we are informed how we may know when it is nigh, even at the doors; consequently that text could not teach that we could know nothing of the time of that event. Other texts, which are advanced in support of the doctrine of a

temporal millennium, would arise; but on examining their context, I invariably found that they were applicable only to the eternal state, or were so illustrative of the spread of the gospel here, as to be entirely irrelevant to the position they were adduced to support.

Thus all those passages that speak of the will of God being done on earth as in heaven, of the earth being full of the knowledge of the glory of God, &c., could not be applicable to a time when the Man of Sin was prevailing against the saints, or when the righteous and wicked were dwelling together, which is to be the case until the end of the world. Those which speak of the gospel being preached in all the world, teach that as soon as it should be thus preached, the end was to come, so that it could not be delayed 1000 years from that time, nor long enough for the world's conversion after the preaching of the gospel as a witness.

The question of the resurrection and judgment, was for a time an obstacle in the way; being instructed that all the dead would be raised at the same time, I supposed it must be so taught in the Bible; but I soon saw it was one of the traditions of the elders.

So also with the return of the Jews; that question I saw could only be sustained by denying the positive declarations of the New Testament which assert, "There is no difference between the Jew and the Greek," — that "The promise that he shall be the heir of the world was not to Abraham and his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith" — that "There is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female," but that "If ye are Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." I was therefore obliged to discard an objection which asserts there is a difference between the Jew and Greek — that the children of the flesh are accounted for the seed, &c.

In this way I was occupied for five years, from 1818 to 1823, in weighing the various objections which were being presented to my mind. During that time, more objections arose in my mind than have been advanced by my opponents since; and I know of no objection that has been since advanced, which did not then occur to me. But

however strong they at first appeared, after examining them in the light of the Divine Word, I could only compare them to straws, laid down singly as obstacles, on a well-beaten road ; the car of truth rolled over them, unimpeded in its progress.

STILL IMPRESSED WITH THE DUTY OF PRESENTING THE  
EVIDENCES OF THE ADVENT. -

I was then fully settled in the conclusions which seven years previously had begun to bear with such impressive force upon my mind ; and the duty of presenting the evidence of the nearness of the advent to others, — which I had managed to evade while I could find the shadow of an objection remaining against its truth, — again came home to me with great force. I had, previously, only thrown out occasional hints of my views. I then began to speak more clearly my opinions to my neighbors, to ministers, and others. To my astonishment, I found very few who listened with any interest. Occasionally, one would see the force of the evidence ; but the great majority passed it by as an idle tale. I was, therefore, disappointed in finding any who would declare this doctrine, as I felt it should be, for the comfort of saints, and as a warning to sinners.

I continued to study the Scriptures, and was more and more convinced that I had a personal duty to perform respecting this matter. When I was about my business, it was continually ringing in my ears, "Go and tell the world of their danger." This text was constantly occurring to me: "When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thy hand. Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul." — Ezek. xxxiii. 8, 9. I felt that if the wicked could be effectually warned, multitudes of them would repent; and that if they were not warned, their blood might be required at

my hand. I did all I could to avoid the conviction that anything was required of me; and I thought that by freely speaking of it to all, I should perform my duty, and that God would raise up the necessary instrumentality for the accomplishment of the work. I prayed that some minister might see the truth, and devote himself to its promulgation; but still it was impressed upon me, "Go and tell it to the world: their blood will I require at thy hand."

The more I presented it in conversation, the more dissatisfied I felt with myself for withholding it from the public. I tried to excuse myself to the Lord for not going out and proclaiming it to the world. I told the Lord that I was not used to public speaking, that I had not the necessary qualifications to gain the attention of an audience, that I was very diffident and feared to go before the world, that they would "not believe me nor hearken to my voice," that I was "slow of speech, and of a slow tongue." But I could get no relief.

In this way I struggled on for nine years longer, pursuing the study of the Bible, doing all I could to present the nearness of Christ's coming to those whom circumstances threw in my way, but resisting my impressions of duty to go out as a public teacher. I was then fifty years old, and it seemed impossible for me to surmount the obstacles which lay in my path, to successfully present it in a public manner.

MR. MILLER WRITES A SERIES OF ARTICLES FOR THE  
PRESS.

Quite a number wished me to write out my views. I accordingly prepared a series of articles over the signature of W. M., and sent them to the *Vermont Telegraph*, a Baptist paper, then published at Brandon, Vt. The editor refused to publish them unless he could know the name of the writer. I accordingly communicated it to him, supposing that he would not make it public. The articles then appeared, in a series of sixteen numbers, the first of which was published in the paper dated May 15th, 1832.

I had supposed, in communicating my views to the world in this series of articles, that I should have performed all that was required of me; but I could not escape the impression, "Go and tell it to the world; their blood will I require at thy hand." It some how became known that I was the writer of those articles; I began to be flooded with letters of inquiry respecting my views; and visitors flocked to converse with me on the subject. I became more distressed, lest the blood of souls should be required of me.

#### THE COVENANTS WITH GOD TO GO WHERE THE WAY OPENS.

One Saturday, after breakfast, in the summer of 1833, I sat down at my desk to examine some point, and as I arose to go out to work, it came home to me with more force than ever, "Go and tell it to the world." The impression was so sudden, and came with such force, that I seflled down into my chair, saying, I can't go, Lord. "Why not?" seemed to be the response; and then all my excuses came up, my want of ability, &c.; but my distress became so great, I entered into a solemn covenant with God, that if he would open the way, I would go and perform my duty to the world. "What do you mean by opening the way?" seemed to come to me. Why, said I, if I should have an invitation to speak publicly in any place, I will go and tell them what I find in the Bible about the Lord's coming. Instantly all my burden was gone, and I rejoiced that I should not probably be thus called upon, for I had never had such an invitation. My trials were not known, and I had but little expectation of being invited to any field of labor.

In about half an hour from this time, before I had left the room, a son of Mr. Guilford, of Dresden, about sixteen miles from my residence, came in and said that his father had sent for me, and wished me to go home with him. Supposing that he wished to see me on some business, I asked him what he wanted? He replied that there was to be no preaching in their church the next day, and his father wished to have me come and talk to the people on

the subject of the Lord's coming. I was immediately angry with myself for having made the covenant I had; I rebelled at once against the Lord, and determined not to go. I left the boy without giving him any answer, and retired in great distress to a grove near by. There I struggled with the Lord for about an hour, endeavoring to release myself from the covenant I had made with him, but I could get no relief. It was impressed upon my conscience, "Will you make a covenant with God, and break it so soon?" and the exceeding sinfulness of thus doing overwhelmed me. I finally submitted, and promised the Lord that if he would sustain me, I would go, trusting in him to give me grace and ability to perform all he should require of me. I returned to the house, and found the boy still waiting; he remained till after dinner, and I returned with him to Dresden.

#### MR. MILLER COMMENCES HIS ORAL LECTURES.

The next day, which, as nearly as I can remember, was about the first Sabbath in August, 1833, — I delivered my first public lecture on the Second Advent. The house was well filled with an attentive audience. As soon as I commenced speaking, all my diffidence and embarrassment were gone, and I felt impressed only with the greatness of the subject, which, by the providence of God, I was enabled to present. At the close of the services on the Sabbath, I was requested to remain and lecture during the week, with which I complied. They flocked in from the neighboring towns; a revival commenced, and it was said that in thirteen families, all but two persons were hopefully converted.

On the Monday following I returned home and found a letter from Elder Fuller, of Poultney, Vt., requesting me to go and lecture there on the same subject. They had not heard of my going to Dresden. I went to Poultney and lectured there with similar effect.

From thence I went by invitation to Pawlet and other towns in that vicinity. The churches of Congregationalists, Baptists, and Methodists were thrown open. In



almost every place I visited, my labors resulted in the reclaiming of backsliders, and the conversion of sinners. I was usually invited to fields of labor by the ministers of the several congregations whom I visited, who gave me their countenance ; and I have never labored in any place to which I was not previously invited. The most pressing invitations from the ministry, and the leading members of the churches poured in continually from that time, during the whole period of my public labors, and with more than one half of which I was unable to comply. Churches were thrown open everywhere, and I lectured to crowded houses, through the western part of Vermont, the northern part of New York, and in Canada East. And powerful reformations were the results of my labors.

PUBLISHES HIS VIEWS IN A PAMPHLET FORM.

I received so many urgent calls for information, and to visit places with which I could not comply, that in 1834, I concluded to publish my views in pamphlet form, which I did in a little tract of 64 pages. These I scattered, the most of them gratuitously, sending them in reply to letters of inquiry, and to places which I could not visit. In the same year, unknown to myself, a license to preach was granted me by my Baptist brethren. About the same time, I received a recommendation to the public as a lecturer on the prophecies, which was signed by about fifty ministers of my Baptist brethren, and by some twenty or thirty from other denominations.

I continued to labor and travel at my own charges until 1838, and many churches thereby greatly added to their numbers. The first clergyman that embraced my views in full, was Elder Fuller, of Poultney, Vt. Many others, previous to 1838, expressed themselves favorably, but none of them came out in full, or if they did, they all with that exception, relapsed and abandoned their advocacy.

## HE WRITES HIS COURSE OF LECTURES.

In 1836 I wrote my series of sixteen lectures, which were published by Elder Wescott, in Troy, New York, the profits of which I gave to him. All the copies received of that edition, I purchased at his regular price.

The first assistance I received from any source to defray my expenses, were two half dollars which I received in Canada, in 1835. The next assistance I received was the payment of my stage fare to Lansingburg, in 1835. Since then I have never received enough to pay my travelling expenses; so that my labors have been of no pecuniary advantage to me. I should not have alluded to this, were it not for the extravagant stories which have been circulated to my injury.

## VISIT TO MASSACHUSETTS.

I received an invitation from Randolph, Mass., to visit that place, which I did on the 21st day of April, 1834. This was my first visit to that State. I lectured there and in Stoughton, East Randolph, Lowell, Groton and Lynn. I closed my lectures at Lynn on the 10th of June following, making 800 lectures which I had given since June 9th, 1834. At Lowell, May 14th, I became acquainted with Elder T. Cole, who had written to me to visit him before I left home. He was among the first ministers in that state who embraced these views, and was the means of introducing me into many of the churches of the Christian connection. Elder Plumer, of Haverhill, soon after embraced them.

At Lowell I also became acquainted with my Bro. Litch, who had previously embraced my views, and who has since so aided their extension, by his faithful lectures and writings, and energetic and consistent course.

The first church that was ever closed against me was the Congregational church in Westford, Mass., Decemb 17th, of the same year.

**INVITATION TO VISIT BOSTON.**

I visited Exeter, in November, 1839, and on the 12th, I became acquainted with my Bro. J. V. Himes, who with about twenty other ministers of the Christian connection, were present to hear me lecture. He invited me to Boston, which I visited December 8th, of the same year. I then gave my first course of lectures in the Chardon St. Chapel. Soon after this, about the first of January, 1840, Mr. B. B. Mussey republished my course of lectures, in an edition of 5000, of which he gave me 200 copies.

**PUBLICATION OF THE „SIGNS OF THE TIMES, NOW ADVENT  
HERALD.**

For a long time previous to this, the papers had been filled with abusive stories respecting my labors, and they had refused to publish anything from me in reply. I had greatly felt the need of some medium of communication to the public. Efforts had been frequently made to commence the publication of a paper which should be devoted to the advocacy of the doctrine, and the communication of information on the fulfilment of prophecy. We had, however, never been able to find a man who was willing to run the risk of his reputation and the pecuniary expense, in such a publication.

On my visit to Boston in the winter of 1840, I mentioned to Brother Himes my wishes respecting a paper, and the difficulties I had experienced in the establishment of one. He promptly offered to commence a paper which should be devoted to this question,—if I thought the cause of truth would be thereby advanced. The next week, without a subscriber or any promise of assistance, he issued the first No. of the Signs of the Times, on the 20th of March, 1840,—a publication which has been continued to the present time.

With this, commenced an entire new era in the spread of information on the peculiar points of my belief. Mr. Mussey gave up to him the publication of my lectures,

and he published them in connection with other works on the prophecies, which, aided by devoted friends, he scattered broad cast everywhere to the extent of his means. I cannot here withhold my testimony for the efficiency and integrity of my Br. Himes. He has stood by me at all times, periled his reputation, and by the position in which he has been placed, has been more instrumental in the spread of these views than any other ten men who have embarked in the cause. His course, both in laboring as a lecturer, and in the manner that he has managed his publications, meets my full approval.

#### THE FRUITS OF MR. MILLER'S LABORS.

From the commencement of that publication, I was overwhelmed with invitations to labor in various places; with which I complied as far as my health and time would allow. I labored extensively in all the New England and Middle States, in Ohio, Michigan, Maryland, the District of Columbia, and in Canada East and West, giving about four thousand lectures in something like five hundred different towns.

I should think that about two hundred ministers embraced my views, in all the different parts of the United States and Canada; and that there have been about five hundred public lecturers. In all the sections of country where I labored, not only in the towns I visited, but in those in their vicinity, there were more or less that embraced the doctrine of the Advent. In some places only a very few, and in other places there have been a large number.

In nearly a thousand places Advent congregations have been raised up, numbering, as near as I can estimate, some fifty thousand believers. On recalling to mind the several places of my labors, I can reckon up about six thousand instances of conversion from nature's darkness to God's marvellous light,—the result of my personal labors alone; and I should judge the number to be much greater. Of this number I can recall to mind about 700 who were, previously to their attending my lectures,

**infidels ; and their number may have been twice as great. Great results have also followed from the labors of my brethren, many of whom I would like to mention here, if my limits would permit.**

In all my labors I never had the desire, or thought, to establish any separate interest from that of existing denominations, or to benefit one at the expense of another. I thought to benefit all. Supposing that all Christians would rejoice in the prospect of Christ's coming, and that those who could not see as I did, would not love any the less those who should embrace this doctrine, I did not conceive there would ever be any necessity for separate meetings. My whole object was a desire to convert souls to God, to notify the world of a coming judgment, and to induce my fellow-men to make that preparation of heart which will enable them to meet their God in peace. The great majority of those who were converted under my labors, united with the various existing churches. When individuals came to me to inquire respecting their duty, I always told them to go where they would feel at home ; and I never favored any one denomination in my advice to such.

But my brethren began to complain that they were not fed by their ministers, and wanted expository preaching. I told them it was their duty to interest their ministers in the prophecies, but if they could not receive the teachings under which they sat, they must act in accordance with their own sense of duty. They then began to complain that they had not liberty in the churches to present their views freely, or to exhort their brethren to prepare for the judgment. Those in the neighborhood of Advent preaching, felt that when they could listen to these glorious truths, it was their privilege so to do. For this many of them were treated coldly. Some came out of their churches, and some were expelled. Where the blame lay it is not necessary here to inquire ; there was doubtless wrong on both sides. The result was, that a general feeling of opposition arose on the part of the ministers and churches that did not embrace these views, against those who were looking for the blessed hope and

the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

#### DEFINITENESS OF PROPHETIC TIME.

I had never been positive as to any particular day for the Lord's appearing, believing that no man could know the day and hour. In all my published lectures, it will be seen on the title-page, "about the year 1843." In all my oral lectures, I invariably told my audiences that the periods would terminate in 1843, *if* there were no mistake in my calculation; but that I could not say the end might not come even before that time, and they should be continually prepared. In 1842, some of my brethren preached with great positiveness the exact year, and censured me for putting in an *if*. The public press had also published, that I had fixed upon a definite day, the 23d of April, for the Lord's Advent. Therefore, in December of that year, as I could see no error in my reckoning, I published my belief, that sometime between March 21st, 1843, and March 21st, 1844, the Lord would come. Some had their minds fixed on particular days, but I could see no evidence for such, unless the types of the Mosaic law pointed to the feast of Tabernacles.

During the year '43, the most violent denunciations were heaped upon me, and those associated with me, by the press, and some pulpits. Our motives were assailed, our principles misrepresented, and our characters traduced. Time passed on, and the 21st of March, 1844, went by, without our witnessing the appearing of the Lord. Our disappointment was great, and many walked no more with us.

Previously to this, in the fall of '43, some of my brethren began to call the churches Babylon, and to urge that it was the duty of Adventists to come out of them. With this I was much grieved, as not only the effect was very bad, but I regarded it as a perversion of the word of God, — a wresting of Scripture. But the practice spread extensively; and from that time, the churches, as might have been expected, were closed against us. It preju-

diced many against us so that they would not listen to the truth. It created a deep feeling of hostility between Adventists and those who did not embrace the doctrine; so that most of the Adventists were separated from their respective churches. This was a result which I never desired, nor expected; but it was brought about by unforeseen circumstances. We could then only act in accordance with the position in which we were thus placed.

On the passing of my published time, I frankly acknowledged my disappointment in reference to the exact period; but my faith was unchanged in any essential feature. I therefore continued my labors, principally at the West, during the summer of '44, until "the seventh month movement," as it is called. I had no participation in this, only as I wrote a letter eighteen months previously, presenting the observances under the Mosaic law, which pointed to that month as a probable time when the Advent might be expected. This was written because some were looking to definite days in the *Spring*. I had, however, no expectation that so unwarranted a use would be made of those types, that any should regard a belief in such mere inferential evidence a test of salvation. I therefore had no fellowship with that movement, until about two or three weeks previous to the 22d of October, when, seeing it had obtained such prevalence, and considering it was at a probable point of time, I was persuaded that it was a work of God, and felt that if it should pass by, I should be more disappointed than I was in my first published time.

But that time passed; and I was again disappointed. The movement was of such a character, that for a time it was very mysterious to me; and the results following it were so unaccountable, that I supposed our work might be completed, and that a few weeks only might elapse between that time and the appearing of Christ. However that might be, I regarded my own work as completed, and that what was to be done for the extension of these views, must be done by younger brethren, except an occasional discourse from myself.

## ERRONEOUS VIEWS CONNECTED WITH THE DOCTRINE.

As time has progressed, I have been pained to see many errors which have been embraced in different sections of the country by some who have labored in connection with myself; errors which I cannot countenance, and of which I wish to speak freely, although I may lose the fellowship of some for faithfully doing my duty.

I have been pained to see a spirit of sectarianism and bigotry, in some sections, which disfellowships everything that does not square with the narrow prejudices of individual minds. There is a tendency to exalt individual opinions as a standard for all to submit to; a disposition to place the results of individual investigation upon a level with solemn conclusions to which the great body of brethren have arrived. This is very wrong; for, while we are in this world, we are so short-sighted that we should never regard our conclusions as infallible, should bear with the imperfections of others, and receive those that are weak in the faith, but not to doubtful disputations.

Some have an inclination to indulge in harsh and denunciatory remarks against all who do not agree with them. We are all liable to err; but we should avoid thus giving occasion of offence. We should instruct with meekness those that oppose themselves, and avoid foolish and unlearned questions, that gender strifes.

There may be causes operating on the minds of others, of which we know nothing, that influence them contrary to the truth, as we have received it. We should therefore, in all our intercourse with those we deem in error, treat them with kindness and affection, and show them that we would do them good, and not evil; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

Some are prone to indulge in a spirit of uneasiness and disorder, and looseness with regard to church government and doctrine. In all the essential doctrines of the



Bible, as they have been held by the pious of the church in all ages, were given to the saints, and for which we are commanded earnestly to contend, I have never seen any reason to change my faith. Jesus I regard as my all-sufficient Saviour, by whose merits alone I can be saved. No being but Him, "whose goings forth were of old, from everlasting," who should take upon himself our nature, and bear our sins in his own body, could make an atonement, on the efficacy of which I should dare to rely. The Bible speaks as plainly of my Saviour's divinity as it does of his humanity. He is therefore Emanuel, God with us. The Bible tells us plainly what the Saviour is. That should satisfy us without venturing beyond the Bible to say what he is not.

It is in the use of terms not found in the Scriptures, that disputations arise. For instance, the difference between the Calvinist and Arminian, I often thus explain: Both are in the same dilemma. They are like a company of men in the lower story of a house when the tide is entering, and from which there is no escape only by a rope by which they may be drawn up. All endeavor to lay hold of the rope; the one is continually afraid he has not hold of the right rope; if he was sure he had the right rope he would have no fears. The other has no fear but he has hold of the right rope; he is continually afraid his rope will break. Now both are equally fearful they may perchance not escape; their fears arise from different causes. How foolish it is, then, for them to begin to quarrel with each other, because the one supposes the rope may break, and the other that it is the wrong rope.

Now I have found Christians among those who believed that they were born again, but might fall away; and among those that believed that if they were ever born again they should certainly persevere. The difference between them I regard as a mere matter of education; both have their fears; and both believe that those only who persevere unto the end will be saved. I therefore look on men as bigots who quarrel with others, and deny that those are Christians who cannot see just as they do.

Some are disposed to lay a stress on the seventh month

movement which is not warranted by the Word. There was then a dedication of heart, in view of the Lord's coming, that was well pleasing in the sight of God. Desire for the Lord's coming and a preparation for that event are acceptable to Him. But because we then ardently desired his coming, and sought that preparation that was necessary, it does not follow that our expectations were then realized. For we were certainly disappointed. We expected the personal coming of Christ at that time; and now to contend that we were not mistaken is dishonest. We should never be ashamed frankly to confess all our errors.

I have no confidence in any of the new theories that have grown out of that movement, viz., that Christ then came as the Bridegroom, that the door of mercy was closed, that there is no salvation for sinners, that the seventh trumpet then sounded, or that it was a fulfilment of prophecy in any sense. The spirit of fanaticism which has resulted from it, in some places, leading to extravagance and excess, I regard as of the same nature as those which retarded the reformation in Germany; and the same as have been connected with every religious movement since the first advent. The truth is not responsible for such devices of Satan to destroy it. I have never taught a neglect of any of the duties of life, which make us good parents, children, neighbors, or citizens. I have ever inculcated a faithful performance of all those duties, enjoining good works with faith and repentance. Those who have taught the neglect of these, instead of acting with me or being my followers, as they are called, have departed from my counsels, and acted in opposition to my uniform teachings; men have crept in unawares, who have given heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, teaching lies in hypocrisy, denying any personal existence of Christ, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from certain kinds of food, denying the right to pray for sinners, and commanding to violate our social duties, &c. With such things I have no sympathy.

The doctrine of annihilation and the soul's unconsciousness in death, has been connected in the minds of some with the doctrine of the Advent. With this there is no

necessary connection. This its advocates acknowledge. The doctrine of the Advent was the faith of the primitive church; while the doctrine of annihilation was no part of their faith. It evidently arises from a mistaken use of Bible terms, and a stress on words not warranted by parallel Scriptures. The fact that no trace of this doctrine is found among the ancient Jews, except the Sadducees, who were reprov'd for not believing in angels, spirits, and the resurrection, shows that none of the pious of that nation attached a meaning to the words of the Old Testament that would sustain such a doctrine. And the fact that no trace of such a belief is found among the early Christians, shows that those who sat under the teachings of the apostles and martyrs gathered no such doctrine from their instructions. Therefore, when such a doctrine is taught, a meaning must be attached to words that they would not bear at the time the Scriptures were written; to get the correct understanding of Scripture we must use words as they were used at that time.

The translators of the Bible had no faith in such a doctrine; therefore they attached no such meaning to the language they used in rendering the original as is attached to the words of the texts by those who quote them to maintain that doctrine. All the arguments in its favor rest on a certain meaning attached to such words as perish, destroy, death, &c. But when we find that the old world, being only overflowed with water, perished; and that when our Saviour told the Jews to destroy the temple of his body, and in three days he would raise it up, John ii. 19, he did not mean that his body should cease to be a body during those three days; we see that such words do not necessarily convey a meaning that proves that doctrine. In fact, one evangelist uses the word *destroy*, Wilt thou "destroy" us before the time? where another does the word *torment*, Wilt thou torment us before the time? compare Mark i. 24 and Matt. viii. 29. God said that in the flood he would destroy man with the earth, Gen. vi. 23, but the earth did not cease to be. Therefore we learn that these words cannot set aside the declarations that the wicked shall go away into everlasting punishment, &c.

If the word death implies that there can be no part of the man then conscious, it would follow that when Christ died, there could be no part of Him that was conscious; and if there could be no part of Christ conscious after his body was dead, there could have been no part of Christ conscious before he was born of Mary. Death, therefore, can only apply to the body. But that doctrine carried out, must lead to a denial of the divinity of Christ; and we find that in all past history, in the different periods when it has come up for a time, it has been connected with that and other heresies.

The calling of all churches, that do not embrace the doctrine of the advent, Babylon, I before remarked, was the means of our not being listened to with candor; and, also, that I regarded it as a perversion of Scripture. This I think all will see who compare Rev. xiv. and xviii., and observe the chronology of the fall of Babylon.

Rev. xiv. 6, 7, represents an angel flying in the midst of heaven, proclaiming the hour of God's judgment as having come. This proclamation must of course continue until Christ shall actually come to judge the quick and dead at his appearing and kingdom. In the 8th verse another angel follows, crying, Babylon is fallen; but as the first continues till Christ comes, this cannot follow till Christ comes. But, on turning to Rev. xviii. 1, 2, we find the angel that follows, crying, Babylon is fallen, is one that comes down from heaven, having great power, and lightens the earth with his glory. This angel that follows must therefore be the Lord Jesus Christ descending from heaven to take the kingdom; and when he takes to himself his great power to reign, Satan is no longer the god of this world. It may then be well said, Babylon is fallen, i. e., it has lost the supremacy, Christ has taken that; but while it has fallen, it is not destroyed; before that can be done the saints must be taken out, that they may not partake of the consequences of her sins, nor receive of her plagues, which shall be poured out when Great Babylon shall come in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. When the angel has cried the hour of his judgment come, and the angel has come down from heaven,

declaring the fall of Babylon, then, in Rev. xiv. 9—12 another angel follows, pronouncing the fate of the worshippers of the beast, which they are to experience when the cup is poured upon them; then, in v. 13, a voice is heard from heaven, declaring those who died in the Lord blessed from thenceforth. The time has then come when the dead are to be raised; and this must synchronize with the voice from heaven in Rev. xviii. 4, saying, "Come out of her, my people." To come, is to go in the direction of the invitation. It must therefore be the invitation from where Christ will then have come to meet him in the air.

In Rev. xiv. 14—16, Christ is symbolized as seated on a cloud, the cry is given to reap the earth, and the earth is reaped; the saints are caught up to meet the Lord in the air. Then, in vs. 17—20, the vine of the earth is reaped and cast into the wine-press of God's wrath; Babylon is thus destroyed.

Thus we have a harmonious view of those Scriptures. If this is the correct application, to apply them differently is to pervert them. And if it is, then everything, of whatever name, that is conformed to this world, that loves this world more than the kingdom of God, must have its portion with it; it is Babylonish.

The "woman," or mystical Babylon, I regard as the fallen church, that ruled by means of the kings of the earth; and all churches that have the papal spirit of *formality, or persecution*, are partaking of her abominations. But it does not therefore follow that there can be no churches that love the Lord in sincerity.

Intimately connected with the construction which has been given to this portion of God's word, is a notion respecting the writing out of our belief. It is said by some to be Babylon to be associated together, to write out a synopsis of our belief, or to subscribe our names to our opinions. I am never afraid to put my name to whatever I may believe; and I can find no text of Scripture that forbids it. When the Jews went up from the Babylonian captivity, they made a sure covenant, and wrote it, and the princes, Levites, and priests sealed unto it, Neh. ix. 38.

With regard to the association of the church, her practice has varied in different ages, according to the circumstances in which she has been placed. When all thought alike, or understood the Bible alike, there was no necessity for an expression of opinion respecting its meaning. But when heresy crept in, it was necessary to guard the meaning of Scripture by expressing, in plain and unequivocal language, our understanding of it. It is because the early Christians did this that we are enabled to ascertain the understanding which the primitive church had of the faith once delivered to the saints. When this has not been done, the history of the church shows that error has spread with the greatest rapidity. For instance, Theodore Parker, among the Unitarians, celebrated for his transcendentalism, takes ground that his brethren have not the right to disfellowship him on account of his constructions of Scripture; and as they have heretofore denied the right of the church to express its belief, they must, on their own ground, fellowship him with all his infidel sentiments; for the dispute between them respects only interpretations of Scripture. To guard against such evils, I am in favor, where erroneous views prevail, of expressing my understanding of the Word in such plain terms, that all may be able to compare my views with the Bible, and see whether I make a faithful application of it. And if the world wishes to see, in short, the peculiar characteristics of my faith, and of those who associate with me, I see no harm in giving, as did the mutual Conference of Adventists at Albany, a synopsis of the views in which we can unite and act, and which, among others, we believe the Bible teaches.

I have thus given a plain and simple statement of the manner of my arriving at the views I have inculcated, with a history of my course up to the present time. That I have been mistaken in the time, I freely confess; and I have no desire to defend my course any further than I have been actuated by pure motives, and it has resulted to God's glory. My mistakes and errors, God, I trust, will forgive. I cannot, however, reproach myself for having preached definite time; for, as I believe that whatsoever was written aforetime was written for our learn-

ing, the prophetic periods are as much a subject of investigation, as any other portion of the Word.

I therefore still feel that it was my duty to present all the evidence that was apparent to my mind; and were I now in the same circumstances, I should be compelled to act as I have done. I should not, however, have so done, had I seen that the time would pass by; but not knowing that it would, I feel even now more satisfaction in having warned my fellow-men, than I should feel, were I conscious that I had believed them in danger, and had not raised my voice. How keen would have been my regret, had I refrained to present what in my soul I believed to be truth, and the result had proved that souls must perish through my neglect! I cannot, therefore, censure myself for having conscientiously performed what I believed to be my duty.

But while I frankly acknowledge my disappointment in the exact time, I wish to inquire whether my teachings have been thereby materially affected. My view of exact time depended entirely upon the accuracy of chronology; of this I had no absolute demonstration; but as no evidence was presented to invalidate it, I deemed it my duty to rely on it as certain, until it should be disproved. Besides, I not only rested on received chronology, but I selected the earliest dates in the circle of a few years on which chronologers have relied for the date of the events from which to reckon, because I believed them to be best sustained, and because I wished to have my eye on the earliest time at which the Lord might be expected. Other chronologers had assigned later dates for the events from which I reckoned; and if they are correct, we are only brought into a circle of a few years, during which we may rationally look for the Lord's appearing. As the prophetic periods, counting from the dates from which I have reckoned, have not brought us to the end; and as I cannot tell the exact time that chronology may vary from my calculations, I can only live in continual expectation of the event. I am persuaded that I cannot be far out of the way, and I believe that God will still justify my preaching to the world.

With respect to other features of my views, I can see

no reason to change my belief. We are living under the last form of the divided fourth kingdom, which brings us to the end. The prophecies which were to be fulfilled previous to the end, have been so far fulfilled that I find nothing in them to delay the Lord's coming. The signs of the times thicken on every hand; and the prophetic periods I think must certainly have brought us into the neighborhood of the event.

There is not a point in my belief in which I am not sustained by some one of the numerous writers who have opposed my views. Prof. Bush, the most gentlemanly of my opponents, admits that I am correct in the time with the exception of the precise day or year; and this is all for which I contend. That the 70 weeks are 490 years, and the 1260 and 2300 days are so many years, are admitted by Messrs. Bush, Hinton, and Jarvis. That the 2300 days and 70 weeks commence at the same time, Prof. Bush does not deny. And Dr. Jarvis admits that the former carry us to the resurrection and judgment. Prof. Bush, Dr. Jarvis, Mr. Hinton and Mr. Morris admit that the legs of iron and fourth beast are Rome, and that the little horn of Daniel 7th is papacy. While Dr. Jarvis and Mr. Hinton admit that the exceeding great horn of Dan. 8th, is Rome. The literal resurrection of the body, the end of the world and a personal coming of Christ, have not been questioned by several who have written against me.

Thus there is not a point for which I have contended, that has not been admitted by some of those who have written to disprove my opinions. I have candidly weighed the objections advanced against these views, but I have seen no arguments that were sustained by the Scriptures, that in my opinion invalidated my position. I cannot, therefore, conscientiously refrain from looking for my Lord; or from exhorting my fellow-men, as I have opportunity, to be in readiness for that great event. For my indiscretions and errors, I ask pardon; and all who have spoken evil of me without cause, I freely forgive. My labors are principally ended. I shall leave to my younger brethren the task of contending for the truth. Many years I toiled alone; God has now raised up those



who will fill my place. I shall not cease to pray for the spread of truth.

In conclusion, suffer a word of exhortation. (You, my brethren, who are called by the name of Christ, will you not examine the Scriptures respecting the nearness of the advent? The great and good of all ages have had their minds directed to about this period of time; and a multitude are impressed with the solemn conviction that these are emphatically the last days. Is not a question of such moment worthy of your consideration? I do not ask you to embrace an opinion of mine; but I ask you to weigh well the evidence contained in the Bible. If I am in any error, I desire to see it; and I should certainly renounce it; but do look at the question, and in view of the teachings of the inspired Word, decide for eternity.

What shall I say to my unconverted friends? I have faithfully exhorted you these many years to believe in Christ; you have excused yourselves. What can I say more? Will not all the considerations that are presented in the Scriptures of truth move your hearts to lay down the weapons of your rebellion? You have no lease of your lives, and if the Lord should not come, your eyes may be soon closed in death. Why will you not improve the present moment, and flee from the wrath to come? Go to Christ, I beseech you; lay hold on the promise of God, trust in his grace, and he will cleanse you by his blood.

I would exhort my Advent brethren to study the Word diligently. Let no man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit. Avoid everything that shall cause offences. Let your lives be models of goodness and propriety. Let the adversary get no advantage over you. We have been disappointed; but disappointments will work for our good, if we make the right use of them. Be faithful. Be vigilant. Exhort with all long-suffering and patience. Let your conversation be in heaven, from whence you look for the blessed hope. Avoid unnecessary controversy, and questions that gender strifes. Be not many masters; all are not competent to advise and direct. God will raise up those to whom he will

commit the direction of his cause. Be humble. Be watchful; be patient, be persevering. And may the God of peace sanctify you wholly, and preserve you blameless unto the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

WM. MILLER.

*Low Hampton, N. Y., August 1, 1845.*

**FIRST PRINCIPLES**

**OF THE**

**SECOND ADVENT FAITH;**

**WITH SCRIPTURE PROOFS**



**"The Lord himself shall descend from heaven." — PAUL.**

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## FIRST PRINCIPLES, & c.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### THE LORD JESUS CHRIST WILL COME TO THIS EARTH A SECOND TIME.

Acts i. 9—11. “And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly towards 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.”

Heb. ix. 28. “And to them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.”

Job xix. 25—27. “For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.”

—For proof that this will be at the resurrection, see Psalms xvii. 15. “As for me, I shall behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied, when I awake with thy likeness.”

Isa. xxiv. 23. “Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously.”

xxvi. 21. “For behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their

antiquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain."

lix. 20. "And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord."

lxvi. 15. "For behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire."

Dan. vii. 13, 14. "I saw in the night visions and behold, one like the Son of man, came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."

Matt. xxiv. 30. "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."

Mark xiii. 34. "For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants and to every man his work; and commanded the porter to watch."

Luke xvi. 26, 27. "And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all."

John xiv. 1—3. "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

1 Cor. xv. 22, 23. "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man

in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming."

Philip. iii. 20. "For our conversation\* is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ."

1 Thess. ii. 19. "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?"

iii. 13. "To the end that he may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints."

iv. 16—18. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever with the Lord. Wherefore, comfort one another with these words."

2 Thess. ii. 1. "Now we beseech you brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him."

Titus ii. 13. "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

1 John iii. 2. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is."

Rev. i. 7. "Behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him; and they *also* which pierced him; and all kindreds of the earth shall mourn because of him. Even so, Amen."

xxi. 3. "And I heard a voice from heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God."

\* Politeuma, Citizenship.

xiii. 20. "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. AMEN; EVEN SO, COME, LORD JESUS."

## CHAPTER II.

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST WILL BE PERSONAL AND VISIBLE.

Acts i. 9—11. John xiv. 3. 1 Thess. iv. 16. See Chap. I.\*

2 Thess. i. 7. "And to you who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels."

Matt. xxiv. 30. See Chap. 1.

Matt. xvi. 27. "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."

Mark xiii. 26. "And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory."

Rev. i. 7. Job xix. 26, 27. See Chap. I. 1 Pet. i. 13. "Wherefore, gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

The Greek word *parousia* (coming) occurs twenty-four times in the New Testament, and in every instance it refers to the actual appearing or coming of the object referred to. People talk of Christ's coming *spiritually*. But as he has never left this world by his Spirit, he cannot be said to come *spiritually again*; for how can that which is with us, be said to *come* to us?

## CHAPTER III.

THERE WILL BE NO MILLENNIUM PREVIOUS TO THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST.

Dan. vii. 21, 22. "I beheld, and the same horn

\* Where texts are referred to, and not quoted in full, it will be found they have been given in some previous chapter.



(Papacy) made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom."

Here we see that *war* is to be made upon the saints till the coming of Christ. If we have a millennium to precede the coming of Christ it must be infested with Papacy. See also,

Dan. xii. 1—3, 10. "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time; and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise, shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars forever and ever. . . . Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand."

Matt. xiii. 30. "Let both (the tares and the wheat) grow together until the harvest: and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, gather together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn."

39, 40. "He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; the field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; the enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world."

The tares and the wheat are to grow together till the harvest, which is the end of the world. If we have

a millennium before Christ comes, it must have a mixture of tares and wheat.\*

Matt. xxiv. 37—39. “But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.”

Luke xvii. 26—30. “Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drunk, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all; even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.”

Instead of there being a day of millennial glory before Christ comes, it is to be as it was in the days of Noah and Lot.

1 Tim. iv. 1—3. Now the spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with them which believe and know the truth.”

2 Tim. iii. 1—5, 12, 13. “This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; from such

\* That the original word *aion*, here translated world, does not signify the Jewish age or dispensation, is manifest from such passages as these where this word [*aion*] is rendered world. 2 Tim. iv. 10. Luke xx. 35. Titus ii. 12. Eph. i. 21.

turn away. . . . Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution. But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived."

1 Peter iv. 13. "But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."

2 Peter iii. 3—7. "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water; whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished; but the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men."

Rev. xi. 15—18. "And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldst give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name small and great: and shouldst destroy them that destroy the earth."

This is far from presenting a picture of millennial glory to precede Christ's coming!

#### CHAPTER IV.

THE JEWS AS A NATION WILL NOT RETURN TO PALESTINE, BECAUSE THEY ARE NOT THE RIGHTFUL HEIRS OF THE PROMISED LAND.

Matt. iii. 9. "And think not to say within yourselves we have Abraham to our father; for I say unto

you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham."

John viii. 39—44. "They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, if ye were Abraham's children ye would do the works of Abraham. . . . Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do: he was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth: because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar and the father of it."

Rev. ii. 9. "I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich,) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, but are not, but are of the synagogue of Satan."

iii. 9. "Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee."

Isa. lxxv. 11—15. "But ye are they that forsake the Lord, and forget my holy mountain, that prepare a table for that troop, and that furnish the drink-offering unto that number. Therefore will I number you to the sword, and ye shall all bow down to the slaughter,—because when I called, ye did not answer; when I spake, ye did not hear; but did evil before mine eyes, and did choose that wherein I delighted not. Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, my servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry: behold, my servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty; behold, my servants shall rejoice, but ye shall be ashamed; behold, my servants shall sing for joy of heart, but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, and shall howl for vexation of spirit. And ye shall leave your name for a curse unto my chosen: for the Lord God shall slay thee, and call his servants by another name."

Could the title of the carnal Jews to the land of promise, be denied in stronger language!

Acts xiii. 45, 46. "But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake

against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should have been spoken to you; but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles."

Rom. ix. 25—28, 31, 32. "As he saith also in Osee, I will call them my people, which are not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved. And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called, the children of the living God. Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, though the number of the children of Israel, be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved; for he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness, because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth. . . . But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? (or why?) Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumbling stone."

Isa. vi. 9—11. "And he said, go and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes, lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert and be healed. Then said I, Lord, how long? And he answered, Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate."

Deut. xxviii. 61, 63. "Also every sickness, and every plague which is not written in the book of this law, them will the Lord bring upon thee, until thou be destroyed. . . . And it shall come to pass, as the Lord rejoiced over you to do you good, and to multiply you; so the Lord will rejoice over you to destroy you and to bring you to nought; and ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it."

Jer. xxiii. 39, 40. "Therefore behold, I even I will utterly forget you, and I will utterly forsake you and cast you out of my presence; and I will bring an everlasting reproach upon you, and a perpetual shame, which shall not be forgotten."

In the above passages we are taught that the Jews are to be left in utter desolation and blindness, till the land be without inhabitant, or till the end—and that instead of being restored, they are to be plucked up forever—to be an *everlasting* reproach, and a *perpetual* shame.

## CHAPTER V.

BELIEVERS,—CHRISTIANS, ARE THE TRUE JEWS, THE REAL ISRAEL OF GOD, THE TRUE SEED, AND THE RIGHTFUL HEIRS OF THE PROMISED LAND.

Rom. ii. 28, 29. "For he is not a Jew which is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh. But he is a Jew which is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men but of God."

Those whom we *call* Jews are NOT Jews.

Rom. ix. 6—8. "Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect; for they are not all Israel, which are of Israel. Neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children; but in Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted for the seed."

Gal. iv. 28. "Now *we* brethren, (ALL who believe, whether Jew or Gentile,) as Isaac was, are the children of promise."

We will now examine the *original promise*, as made to Abraham.

Gen. xiii. 14, 15. "And the Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up, now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou

art, northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward; for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever."

Gen. xvii. 7, 8. "And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting covenant; to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God."

The following passages show that the promise was not of *literal Canaan*.

Acts vii. 4, 5. "Then came he out of the land of the Chaldeans, and dwelt in Charran, and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him into this land wherein ye now dwell. And he gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on; yet he promised that he would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child."

Heb. xi. 8—11. "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and whose maker is God."

13—16. "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city."

39, 40. "And these all having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise; God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."

Original promises to Isaac and Jacob.

Gen. xxvi. 3, 4. "Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee and thy seed I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father. And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed."

Gen. xxviii. 13, 14. "And behold the Lord stood above it and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac; the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed. And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth; and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south; and in thee and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed."

Now, who are THE SEED?

Gal. iii. 7—9. "Know ye, therefore, that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which are of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham."

16—19, 26—29. "Now to Abraham and to his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many, but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. And this I say, that the covenant which was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise. Wherefore, then, serveth the law? —It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. . .



For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

The above texts show to whom the promises belong. The following allegory presents the subject in a clear light.

Gal. iv. 21—26, 28, 30, 31. "Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law! For it is written, Abraham had two sons, the one by a bond woman, the other by a free woman. But he who was of the bond woman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory; for these are the two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem, which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above, is free, and is the mother of us all. . . . Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. . . . Nevertheless, what saith the scripture! Cast out the bond woman and her son; for the son of the bond woman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman. So then brethren, we are not children of the bond woman, but of the free."

## CHAPTER VI.

THIS EARTH RENEWED IS THE PROMISED INHERITANCE  
OF THE SAINTS.

Gen. iii. 14, 15. Gen. xvii. 7, 8. See Chap. V.

Dan. ii. 34, 35. "Thou sawest till that a stone was cut of the mountain without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces.—Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold broken to pieces

together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors : and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them : and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth."

44. "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed ; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever."

Dan vii. 13, 14, 27. "I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him ; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. . . . And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him."

Heb. xi. 8—10, 13, 16. See Chap. V.

Ps. xxxvii. 9, 11, 18, 22, 27, 29, 34. "For evil doers shall be cut off, but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth.—But the meek shall inherit the earth, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace. . . . The Lord knoweth the days of the upright, and their inheritance shall be forever. . . . For such as be blessed of him shall inherit the earth, and they that be cursed of him shall be cut off. . . . Depart from evil and do good, and dwell forevermore. . . . The righteous shall inherit the land and dwell therein forever. . . . Wait on the Lord and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land ; when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it."

The foregoing passages prove the extent and duration of the inheritance promised to Abraham and his

seed. Paul corroborates this view of the extent of the territorial dominion.

Rom. iv. 13. "For the promise that he should be heir of the WORLD was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith."

The earth is to be renewed before the saints possess it. It is "the purchased possession," yet to be redeemed.

Eph. i. 13, 14. "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."

2 Peter iii. 6, 7. See Chap. III.

10—13. "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for a new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

Where is the promise?

Isa. lxxv. 17—19. "For behold I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered or come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice forever in that which I create; for behold I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem and joy in my people; and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying."

John alludes to the same.

Rev. xxi. 1—4. "And I saw a new heavens and a new earth : for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away : and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes : and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain : for the former things are passed away."

Rev. xi. 15. See Chap. III.

## CHAPTER VII.

THE WICKED WHO ARE LIVING ON THE EARTH WHEN CHRIST COMES, WILL BE DESTROYED BY FIRE.

2 Thess. i. 7—9. "And to you who are troubled, rest with us when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power."

2 Peter iii. 7, 10. "But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.—But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night ; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burned up."

Rev. xi. 18. See Chap. III.

xviii. 8. "Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine ; and she shall be utterly burned with fire ; for strong is the Lord who judgeth her."

Deut. xxxii. 22. "For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains."

Isa. lxvi. 15, 16, 24. "For by fire and by sword will the Lord plead with all flesh; and the slain of the Lord shall be many. . . . And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me; for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh."

Ps. xxxvii. 20, 38. "For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be; yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be.—But the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs—they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away. . . . But the transgressors shall be destroyed together; the end of the wicked shall be cut off."

Ps. xi. 6. "Upon the wicked he shall rain snares\* fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest; this shall be the portion of their cup."

Prov. ii. 22. "But the wicked shall be cut off from the earth, and the transgressors shall be rooted out of it."

Nahum i. 5. "The mountains quake at him, and the hills melt, and the earth is burned at his presence, yea, the world, and all that dwell therein."

Zeph. i. 3. "I will consume man and beast, I will consume the fowls of heaven, and the fishes of the sea, and the stumbling-blocks with the wicked; and I will cut off man from off the land saith the Lord."

Malachi iv. 1—3. "Behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble—and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of Hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch."

\* The word rendered snares, is, in the margin, quick burning coals, or *burning wind*, which more accurately expresses the original word.

**Matt. iii. 12.** "Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

**xiii. 30, 40—42.** "Let both grow together until the harvest; and in the time of harvest, I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so shall it be in the end of the world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire, there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."

## CHAPTER VIII.

**AT THE COMING OF CHRIST THE RIGHTEOUS DEAD WILL BE RAISED, THE RIGHTEOUS LIVING CHANGED, AND TOGETHER ESCAPE THOSE THINGS THAT SHALL COME UPON THE EARTH.**

**Job xix. 25—27.** **Ps. xvii. 15.** See Chap. I.

**Ps. l. 3—5.** "Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence; a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people. Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice."

**Isa. xxvi. 19—21.** "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise.—Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust—for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead. Come my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee; hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast.—For behold the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity; the earth

also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain."

Ezek. xxxvi. 11, 12. "And I will multiply upon you man and beast; and they shall increase and bring fruit; and I will settle you after your old estates, and will do better unto you than at your beginning, and ye shall know that I am the Lord. Yea, I will cause men to walk upon you, even my people Israel; and they shall possess thee, and thou shalt be their inheritance, and thou shalt no more henceforth bereave them of men."

1 Cor. xv. 22, 23, 51, 52. "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order; Christ the first fruits; afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming. Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."

1 Thess. iv. 14—18. "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God—and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

2 Thess. ii. 1. See Chap. I.

Rev. xx. 6. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of his Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."

Luke xxi. 36. "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all

these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man."

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE PERIOD OF CHRIST'S COMING IS FIXED BY THE SCRIPTURES.

Acts xvii. 30, 31. "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent,—because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."

Dan. vii. 13, 14. See Chap. I.

When did this take place? At the breaking up of the fourth, or Roman Empire.

Dan. ii. 44, 45. "And in the days of these kings (feet and toes of the image) shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms and it shall stand forever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that a stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure."

Dan. vii. 17, 18, 23, 26, 27. "These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth. But the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever. . . The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. . . . But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion to consume and to destroy it unto the



**end.** And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him."

Dan viii. 19, 13, 14. "And he said, behold I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation; for at the time appointed the end shall be. . . . Then I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain saint which spake, How long the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot? And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days, then shall the sanctuary be cleansed."

Dan. ix. 24, 25. "Seventy weeks (of the two thousand three hundred days) are determined (i. e. cut off) upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy. . . . Know therefore and understand, that, (the commencement is,) from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem (which see, in Ezra ch. vii. B. C. 457) unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks; the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times."

Hab. ii. 2, 3. "And the Lord answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. . . . For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie; though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry."

Heb. x. 35. "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward."

Matt. xxiv. 27, 30, 38. "For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so also shall the coming of the Son of man be. . . . And then shall appear the sign of the Son of

man in heaven ; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. . . . So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, KNOW that it is near, even at the doors."

1 Thess. v. 4, 5. "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are children of light, and the children of the day ; we are not of the night, nor of darkness."

Matt. xxiv. 37. See Chap. III.

How was it in the days of Noah? *Ans.* God revealed the time of the flood. Gen. vi. 12, 13, 3. The time was one hundred and twenty years.

Rev. xiv. 6, 7. "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him ; for the hour of his judgment is come : and worship him that made heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters."

It is obvious that this angel (or messenger) is the symbol representing men who should preach this gospel. That this judgment is a final one, will be seen by comparing verses 14—20 with Matt. xiii. 36—43. See also Joel iii. 13.

## CHAPTER X

**THERE WILL BE TWO RESURRECTIONS, ONE THOUSAND YEARS APART. THE FIRST, OF THE RIGHTEOUS, TO TAKE PLACE AT THE COMING OF CHRIST.**

Isa. xxvi. 19—21. See Chap. VIII.

Hosea xiii. 14. "I will ransom them from the power of the grave ; I will redeem them from death. O death, I will be thy plagues, O grave, I will be thy destruction ; repentance shall be hid from mine eyes."

Dan. xii. 2. "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."

John v. 28, 29. "Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

Acts xxiv. 14, 15. "But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and the prophets. And I have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust."

1 Cor. xv. 22, 23, 51, 52. 1 Thess. iv. 14—16. See Chap. VIII.

The following passages show a marked distinction between the resurrection of the righteous and the wicked.

Luke xiv. 13, 14. "But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind, and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee; for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just."

xx. 34, 35. "And Jesus answering, said unto them, The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage; but they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage."

Phil. iii. 10, 11. "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." [Or, according to the Greek, *out from among* the dead, leaving some behind.]

Heb. xi. 35. "Women received their dead raised to life again; and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection."

Rev. xx. 4—6, 13. "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them; and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his

image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands ; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection, on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. . . . And [after the thousand years] the sea gave up the dead which were in it ; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them ; and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the lake of fire ”

The following extract from DR. GILL'S *Body of Divinity*, shows that that very learned and godly man applied the Scriptures concerning the two resurrections as we now do.

“ The distribution of the persons to be raised, are of two sorts, the just and the unjust ; that the just, or righteous ones, will be raised from the dead, there can be no doubt ; since the resurrection of the saints is called *the resurrection of the just* from them, Luke xiv. 14, it being peculiar to them ; and *the first resurrection*, Rev. xx. 6, because they will rise first ; and *the better resurrection*, Heb. xi. 35, being better than that of the wicked, and of which only some are counted worthy, Luke xx. 35, and is what the apostle Paul desired to attain unto, Phil. iii. 11, called [*exanastasis*] *a resurrection from the dead—the wicked dead.*”

## CHAPTER XI.

CHRIST'S KINGDOM IS NOT YET SET UP ON THE EARTH,  
BUT IS TO BE AT HIS COMING.

Dan. vii. 13, 14. Christ's kingdom is not set up till he comes in the clouds of heaven.

Dan. ii. 44. See Chap. VI.

Luke xii. 32. "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

xix. 11, 12. "And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear. He said therefore, a certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return."

Christ is the nobleman who is gone to receive his kingdom.

2 Tim. iv. 1. "I charge thee, therefore, before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom."

Rev. xi. 15. See Chap. III.

Christ does not come into the possession of his kingdom till the seventh angel sounds—this is the last trump.

Rev. x. 7. "But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets."

1 Cor. xv. 51, 52. See Chap. VIII.

Luke xi. 2. "And he said unto them, when ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come; thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth."

Why pray for the kingdom to come, if it be already here!

## CHAPTER XII.

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST IN THE GLORY OF HIS FATHER, WITH HIS HOLY ANGELS, IS PRESENTED IN THE SCRIPTURES AS THE GREAT OBJECT, OF THE DESIRE, HOPE, AND PRAYER OF THE SAINTS.

1 Thess. i. 9, 10. "For they themselves show of what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols, to serve the living and

true God ; and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come."

2 Thess. i. 7. See Chap. VII. Titus ii. 11—13. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

Rom. viii. 18, 19, 23. "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. . . . And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."

Phil. iii. 20, 21. . . . "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things to himself."

Heb. ix. 28. See Chap. I.

2 Peter iii. 11, 12. "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?"

The word *spoudontas*, rendered hasting, signifies "earnestly desiring." See Doddridge, Macknight, Campbell, and others.

1 Pet. iii. 3—5, 13. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation,

ready to be revealed in the last time. . . . Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

1 Pet. iv. 12, 13. "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you; but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's suffering; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."

James v. 7, 8. "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and the latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts, —for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh."

Matt. xxv. 31, 34. "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. . . . Then shall the king say unto them on the right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you, from the foundation of the world."

Dan. xii. 11, 12. "And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days. Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days."

Job xix. 25—27. See Chap. I.

Psalms xxxix. 14. "Like sheep they are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them; and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning; and their beauty shall consume in the grave from their dwelling."

Rev. xxii. 20. "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly; Amen, Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

It is when the seventh angel sounds, that the reward is given to them that fear the Lord.

Rev. xi. 18. "And the nations were angry, and

thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them that destroy the earth."

Col. iii. 4. "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."

1 John iii. 2. "We know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."

2 Tim. iv. 8. "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto them also that love his appearing."

The meaning of "THAT DAY," is plain from the first verse of the chapter.

Matt. xvi. 27. "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."

Rev. xxii. 12. "And behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be."

Heb. x. 36, 37. "For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry."

Compare xi. 29, 40. 1 Peter v. 4.

Review this array of testimony, which shows that the righteous do not receive their reward till Christ comes; remember, the popular notion that the righteous enter into complete glory at death, is mere "guessing," and you will not wonder that the Scriptures throw such a bright halo around the subject of Christ's SECOND COMING, and that, by precept and example, they teach us to pray, hope, look, watch, and eagerly long for that day.



THE  
WORLD TO COME!

THE PRESENT EARTH TO BE  
DESTROYED BY FIRE

AT THE  
END OF THE GOSPEL AGE.



“ But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.” — PETER.

## NOTE.

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THE following pages are taken from a work entitled "The Age to Come," many copies of which have been circulated in years past. We now give the argument for the *consummation*, at the personal Advent, this being the only portion of the work that is of importance in the support of our present position on the Second Advent.

J. V. HIMES.

## WORLD—MEANING OF THE TERM.

IN the Greek there are four expressions which have been translated *world*, namely, *ge*, *he oikoumene*, *kosmos*, and *aion*. The appropriate meanings of these several words are *earth*, *inhabited earth*, *mankind*, and *age*. This world is to have an end in all of these senses.

I: The name *ge*, or earth, is applied not only to the original matter itself which composes the earth,\* but to the *organization* of that matter; as we learn from Gen. ii. 1, where it says, “thus [as described in the first chapter] the heavens and the earth were *finished*.” Now we read of *two* such organizations. “I saw a new heaven and a *new earth*, for the first\* heaven and the *first earth* were *passed away*.”† The word *heaven* here may mean the firmament, or atmosphere, which surrounds the earth, and which, of course, will pass away with it;‡ or it may mean the planetary system of which the earth forms a part, and which possibly may be destroyed and renewed along with the earth.

II. We also read of *two* worlds of *mankind* (*kosmoi*.) Of these, one is born of corruptible seed—the family of the first Adam, with blood for the life thereof—the *perishing* world, into which sin and death entered by the offence of one man, and which “God so loved as to give his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life”—in a word, the whole human race, from the time of Adam until there shall be no more marrying or giving in marriage,—whose place of abode is this present earth.‡

It is true that Peter, in his second epistle, speaks of

\* Gen. i. 2.

† Is. lrv. 17; 2 Pet. iii. 13; Rev. xx. 11; xxi. 1.

‡ Gen. i. 8; Matt. xxiv. 35; Mark xiii. 31; Eph. iv. 10.

§ Gen. ix. 4, 5; John i. 29; iii. 16; Rom. v. 12; Heb. xi. 4—7; 1 Pet. i. 20, 23; 1 John iv. 14.

“the old world,” and “the world that then was,” which, “being overflowed with water, perished,” (ch. ii. 5, iii. 6.) He evidently meant, however, *not* the *whole* world, but so much of it as *then was*—all the people living at that time—excepting Noah’s family, which both inherited and propagated the corruption of Adam, connecting the inhabitants of earth after the flood with those before it, as being all parts of *the* world into which sin and death were introduced by Adam, and which God so loved as to give his only begotten Son, that Abel, Enoch, Noah, and all other believers, should not perish.

Christ said, “My kingdom is not of *this* world.” Of course, there is to be *another* world, of which he can say, “My kingdom *is* of this.” It will be a perfect contrast to the one of which we have been speaking—the family of the *second* Adam—the nation that shall be born *at once* on the day of the resurrection,—“a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues,”—all having bodies like unto Christ’s *glorious body*, quickened by the same *Spirit*, and free from *pain* and *death*. These shall dwell upon the *new earth*, and “shall neither marry nor be given in marriage, but be as the *angels* of God in heaven.”\*

III. We also read of *two ages* (aiones)—the *present*, which Christ tells us will end,† and the *age to come*. If asked to describe these fully, I should say they were the age for sowing, and the age for reaping;—the age of probation, and the age of reward;—the age during which God manifests his long suffering, and the age to follow the declaration, “there shall be no longer delay”—when “the wine of the wrath of God shall be poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation;”—the age during which the earth is corrupted, and the age when the meek alone shall inherit it;—

\* Is. lxvi. 8; Matt. xxii. 30; Rom. viii. 11; 1 Cor. xv. 22, 45—57; Eph. iii. 15; Philip. iii. 21; 2 Pet. iii. 13; Rev. vii. 5—9; xxi. 4.

† Matt. xiii. 39, 40, 49; xxviii. 20.

the age during which tares are permitted to grow with the wheat, and the age that shall commence after all things that offend have been gathered out of the kingdom ;—the age during which the earth under the curse groans to be delivered, and the age when Christ shall “make all things new ;”—the age for sealing subjects for the kingdom of glory, and the age for that kingdom itself. All these different forms of expression are descriptive, as I think, of the *same two ages*.

I grant that we also read of ages past and ages to come (plural.) But whoever will examine those passages,\* will find *ages past* to be the Greek expression for *from eternity*, and *ages to come* for *to eternity*,—the context requiring them to be so rendered. Or they express time past, or future, *indefinitely*; ages past, meaning simply time past. But, whenever the expressions, “*the age to come*,” “*this age*,” and the like, are used, they point definitely, as I think, to the two ages above described. In *the age to come* (singular) Christians have *eternal life*. Therefore, that age must be synonymous with the *ages to come*.

#### THE EARTH MELTED BY FIRE.

It would seem as though God himself regarded the revelation of this event as of especial importance ; for nearly all the inspired penmen were directed to write more or less concerning it. According to Isaiah, “Fear, and the pit, and the snare are upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth. And it shall come to pass, that he who fleeth from the noise of the fear shall fall into the pit ; and he that cometh up out of the midst of the pit shall be taken in the snare ; for the windows from on high are open, and the foundations of the earth do shake. The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean *dissolved*, the earth is moved exceedingly. The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage ; and the transgression

\* Col. i. 26 ; Eph. ii. 7 ; iii. 9.

shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again." (Ch. xxiv. 17 to 20.)

Micah said, "Behold, the Lord cometh forth out of his place, and will come down, and tread upon the high places of the earth. And the mountains shall be molten under him, and the valleys shall be cleft, as wax before the fire, and as the waters that are poured down a steep place." (Ch. i. 3, 4.)

Peter also testified in language as explicit as could be used: "But the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store *reserved unto fire* against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." "The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the *elements shall melt with fervent heat*; the earth also; and the works that are therein shall be *burned up*. Seeing, then, that all these things shall be *dissolved*, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness; looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the *heavens being on fire* shall be *dissolved*, and the *elements shall melt with fervent heat*?" 2 Pet. iii. 7, 10—12.

It is unnecessary to quote other passages; for such as are not convinced by these, would not be convinced were we to give a whole book of quotations.\*

\* Those who wish to consult the Bible further on the subject, can examine Deut. xxxii. 22, 24; Ps. xxxvii. 20; xlv. 6; l. 3; xcvi. 3—5; Is. i. 23—31; ii. 10—21; xxxiii. 12; xxxiv. 4, 9, 10; lxiv. 1—3; lxvi. 15, 16; Ez. xx. 47, 48; Dan. vii. 9, 10; Joel ii. 1—11; iii. 15, 16; Amos i. 2; ix. 5; Obad. 18; Nahum i. 5, 10; Zeph. i.; iii. 8; Mal. iv. 1; Matt. iii. 12; xiii.; 1 Cor. iii. 13; 2 Thes. i. 7—9; Heb. vi. 7, 8; Rev. xiv. 18; xix. 12.

The following passages also refer to the *event*, though the agency of fire is not mentioned. Job xxi. 30; Ps. xxiv. 16; l. 22; lxxv. 8; cii. 25, 26; Prov. ii. 22; Is. xiii. 9; li. 6; lxx. 17; Jer. x. 10; xxv. 30—33; Dan. viii. 17, 19; xi. 27; Hos. iv. 3; Hab. ii. 3; iii. 3—19; Hag. ii. 6, 7, 21, 22; Zech. xiv. 12; Matt. xxiv. 35; Mark xiii. 31; Heb. i. 10—12; Rev. vi. 14; xiv. 15; xx. 11 xxi. 1.

### OBJECTION I. IT IS IMPOSSIBLE.

**ANSWER.** Chemistry tells us that *any* thing can be melted, if we have only heat enough; the rocks and hills may all be melted like wax. And if it be asked whence shall come a fire sufficient to do this, I answer,

1. He who, by a word, created the earth with all its internal fires, and latent heat, to say nothing of ten thousand suns, can certainly create with equal facility a fire sufficient for this purpose.\*

2. But it is unnecessary to suppose any fire created for the purpose. I recollect that, years ago, Dr. John Torrey, Professor of Chemistry and Botany in the New York Medical College, took occasion, in one of his lectures, to show how very easily the earth might be burned up. I do not now recollect his course of reasoning; but it was based upon chemistry and geology. Science teaches us that if the atmosphere were slightly changed at various points in respect to its density, the sun's rays might be concentrated at those points, and produce heat sufficient to melt, almost in an instant, the hardest substances.

3. Or if the air were separated into its constituent gases, or the waters, which might be done in an instant, the oxygen gas would feed the fires both on and in the earth so plentifully that the work of destruction as foretold by the prophets, would be literally accomplished. There are few probably who have not attended lectures on chemistry, and seen a piece of naked iron burn up completely in oxygen gas, just as if it were a piece of wood or paper.

4. Or the work might be accomplished by the inflammable gases, which might be separated in an instant from their present combinations, which have kept them inactive hitherto.

5. Or by condensation, or otherwise, the latent caloric, which is in everything, might be rendered active, and thus destroy the very substances that contain it. We all know that two pieces of wood, being

\* Gen. xix. 24; Rev. xx. 9. .

rubbed together, can be made to develop their latent caloric, and at last they will be set on fire and burn up. And why may not the latent caloric in the atmosphere and earth be rendered active also, if God wills it? Thus our bodies, the trees, plants, water, and even ice, the earth and air, might each contribute a share of *heat* as well as *fuel*.

6. Beside the *latent* heat in the earth, there are also internal *active* fires, whether caused by condensation of matter, or how, we know not. Their existence is evidenced by the hot springs and volcanoes scattered all over the earth; also by earthquakes and the gas emitted from the openings made during the violence of the shock. By removing the pressure of the atmosphere, or in other ways, these internal fires might be brought to act upon the crust of the earth.

7. Or, according to the theory of latent and active electricity, *this* agent might be employed.

8. What has been, may be. "During the last two or three centuries, thirteen fixed stars have disappeared. One of them situated in the northern hemisphere, presented a peculiar brilliancy, and was so bright as to be seen by the naked eye at mid-day. It seemed to be on fire, appearing at first of a dazzling white, then of a reddish yellow, and lastly of an ashy pale color. La Place supposes it was burning up, as it has never been seen since. The conflagration was visible about sixteen months. And is it impossible that such may soon be the fate of this terraqueous globe? Nay, it is not only possible, but we are assured by the word of the Immutable, that it is reserved unto fire, to be burned."

## OBJECTION II. THE EARTH IS TOO BEAUTIFUL.

God will never melt up this *beautiful* earth, his own handiwork. I answer,

1. *One* declaration from God's word to the contrary is sufficient to sweep away forever this and all other vain statements of Philosophy, so called; and we have given an abundance of such declarations.



2. But if the objection is valid, it is equally valid against matters of fact. The vale of Siddim, once well watered as the garden of the Lord, could never have been converted into an arid waste; and the plain where the doomed cities stood would be yielding golden fruit instead of the apples of Sodom.\* The good man, bringing glad tidings, whose feet are "beautiful upon the mountains," could never die; the garden of Eden has remained to this day; the earth was never cursed; the fountains of the great deep were never broken up; islands have never been sunk by earthquakes; no stars have faded from the vault of heaven; no beautiful thing has ever ceased to be. The objection takes for granted that the existence of *this* earth, and the things therein, is *necessary* for illustrating the wisdom and goodness of God, or for rendering his happiness complete. Was he not the same before the creation of this speck as now! And may he not *change* the vesture, and remain the same God still?

3. We are expressly told that the present material earth was *cursed* for man's sake: "Cursed is the *ground* for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground."† The event has shown that this curse was not to cease at Adam's death, but to last as long as those begotten *in the likeness* of sinful Adam might inhabit the earth. Thorns, briars, thistles, tares, poisonous herbs, and the like, are *emblems* of a CURSE, and if they had been in the earth at its formation, we can hardly think it would have been recorded, that "God said, Behold I have given you *every* herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for *meat*. And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the

\* Gen. xix. 25. † Gen. iii. 17—19.

earth, wherein there is life, I have given *every green herb for meat*; and it was so. And God saw *every thing* that he had made, and, behold, it was VERY GOOD.\* Who can believe that when the six days' work came fresh from the hand of the Great Creator, pronounced by himself in all respects VERY good, and gazed upon with admiration by the morning stars, who celebrated the event with a united song of joy and praise—who can believe that then three-fourths of the entire surface of the globe were covered with the briny sea; that, of the land, even the better part yielded in abundance, thorns, briars, thistles, poisonous herbs, and tares, and exhaled the most deadly miasmata; while the rest consisted of deserts of burning sand, and barren regions covered with perpetual snow and ice; that two hundred volcanoes then began to burn and desolate the regions at their base; that earth quaked and trembled, as if in convulsion; the sirocco, the simoom, the whirlwind, and the tornado immediately received their commission; the lion and the tiger, the leopard, the jaguar, the wolf, and hyena, roamed about with their present ravenous natures, seeking for living prey; the *tree of life* existed only in imagination, while the *tree of death*—the *bohon upas*—was an emblem of the Destroyer, then as now; the flower was told to bloom for a day only; the trees, that spread out their arms to heaven in praise, began to decay as soon as they had reached a state of glory, and mortality was written upon the brow of man, and upon every lineament of the face of nature? For one, I cannot. “No chilling winds, nor poisonous breath,” nor storm, nor earthquake, nor volcano, nor raging beast, nor pestilence, nor sickness of any kind disturbed the tranquillity of earth, or excited alarm in the breasts of its innocent inhabitants, or gave them any pain. There was nothing to convey to their minds even the *idea* of evanescence, and give them any fear of themselves finally passing away, except as the penalty of disobedience,

\* Gen. i. 29—31.

and that was known only by the threatening. But when the tempter gained admission, not only into the garden, but into the hearts of those placed there to enjoy its beauties and luxuries, then earth and heaven were cursed for their sakes, and forbidden any longer to minister unmingled pleasure :

“ And obedient Nature, from her seat,  
Sighing through *all* her works, gave signs of wo,  
That all was lost.”

But shall it thus continue for ever? What, then, mean all those texts which have been quoted, representing the earth and elements as melting with fervent heat? And what becomes of the promise of “ a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness? ”\* And what is meant by “ the times of *restoration* of *all* things, ” † when Jesus Christ will leave heaven, and come to earth a second time, glorious in his apparel, and all his holy angels with him? And why is the earth described by the apostle ‡ as groaning to be delivered from the manacles of sin, and brought into the same liberty with the children of God, at the redemption of their bodies? As the second Adam, Christ will make good *all* that was lost by the first. The *whole* curse of the fall will be removed. Now recollect that the *ground* was *cursed* for man’s sake. “ Behold, I make all things new ! ” §

To me it seems so plain, that I wonder how any can think otherwise, that this present organization of matter (that is, the earth under the curse,) is to have a an end, the particles of matter to be separated by fire into an unorganized mass, as at first; || and from this mass a new organization to take place, pure from the curse—a new earth in which there shall be nothing to hurt

\* 2 Pet. iii. 13; Is. lxxv. 17; Rev. xxi. 1.

† Acts iii. 21. ‡ Rom. vii. § Rev. xxi. 5.

|| That the earth was originally a fluid, unorganized mass, is proved from Gen. i. 2, and from its spheroidal shape, being flattened at the poles,—a shape which a fluid ball would naturally assume from whirling round upon its axis.

or to destroy. "The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock; and dust shall be the serpent's meat." God will make "a covenant of peace" with his people, "and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land; and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods." "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away." "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice, even with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it; the excellency of Carmel and Sharon." "In the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land, springs of water. In the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes." "Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the briar shall come up the myrtle tree, and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off." "And there was no more sea."\*

#### THE SPIRITUAL VIEW.

The only answer I have ever heard to the view above given, regards all the passages quoted as having a spiritual import. The new earth, according to the spiritualizers, will consist in the triumph of truth over error, superstition, prejudice, oppression, infidelity, and *every thing* upon which the *truth* can act. But *first*, if such explicit statements can be so completely spiritualized away, why may not all other parts of the Bible, none of which are more explicit? There was, then, only a spiritual creation, and a spiritual flood, and a spiritual destruction of Sodom, and a spiritual cruci-

\* Isa. lxxv. 25; lv. 13; xxxv. 1, 2, 6, 7; Ez. xxxiv. 25; Rev. xxi. 1, 4.

fixion of the Lord Jesus.\* No man can prove from the Bible that these events *literally* took place, if he adopts principles of interpretation that will allow him to spiritualize away the clear and oft-repeated testimony respecting the destruction of the literal earth by literal fire, and the creation literally of a new heaven and a new earth. The Bible is thus made to mean anything or everything; and becomes a *fog* instead of a "*light shining in a dark place.*"

But, *secondly*, why is that day called "that great and terrible day," and repeatedly spoken of as terrible, not to the empire of Satan, but to the *men* who shall be working iniquity when it overtakes them?† If the truth is to gain a triumph over their errors, infidelity; and lusts, the day, instead of being terrible to them, will be one of mercy—of glorious deliverance from a most galling bondage.

But *thirdly*, the doctrine that this present organization of matter called earth is to continue forever, and that man with his *present physical nature* is to continue to inhabit it, and that truth is to triumph over every species of error so completely, that our globe will become the theatre of scenes so different as to render appropriate the expressions *new earth*, and *restitution of all things*—I say this doctrine unavoidably leads either to blasphemy or absurdity.

Truth is to triumph over error—morality over im-

\* A minister of the New Jerusalem church, told me, not long since, that these accounts, excepting that of the death of Christ, are allegorical. Such events never actually took place. They are only represented as having taken place, in order to convey spiritual instruction; or they describe in figurative language things which occurred in the spiritual world, and which could not be described except by illustrations. In other words, the Bible is a collection of fables, each conveying an excellent moral, and that is all! I shall not attempt to refute this; the conversation having been mentioned simply to show how far the spiritualizing principles of interpretation legitimately lead. My friend might have spiritualized the death of Christ on the same principles.

† Mal. iv. 5; Joel ii. 11, 31; Ps. ii. 9; Is. i. 23; ii. 19—21; Matt. xxiv. 48—51; 2 Pet. iii. 7; Rev. xi. 18.

morality! Then errors in dress, in the mode of living generally, and in the physical education of children; want of cleanliness in person; licentiousness, polygamy, concubinage, luxury, intemperance in eating and drinking, slavery, undue labor of body or mind, and indulgence of angry and other destructive passions—all these will have ceased, and men will learn war no more. Moreover, reckless administration of medicine and tampering with God's stringed instrument, will also have ceased; and we may very properly suppose that in such a state of society there will be a great advance in the sciences, and that the healing art will not only be practised by none but the conscientious, but also *more skilfully* by these. The result of such an abridgment of destructive influences would *necessarily* be a great decrease of mortality, and an increase in the vigor of the human constitution; and man would again attain to a good old age,—at least double the length of his present age,—and fulfil as never before, the command to “multiply and replenish the earth.”\*

Now follow me through a short calculation. The increase by *emigration* in the population of the United States for the last fifty years has been a mere trifle, compared with the whole population, as the *records* show; very much *less* than the *admitted decrease* by war and prevailing crimes. Therefore we may safely take this country for our guide.

“From official documents, it appears that the United States have increased regularly since the adoption of the constitution, or from 1790 till 1840, at the rate of about thirty-four per cent. every ten years, or so as to *double* every *twenty-four years*. This is a curious fact, that it should hold its increase so regularly under the various phases through which we have passed.” Now, commencing with only eight hundred millions as the population of the earth, although it is commonly estimated at nine hundred millions, we should have in twenty-four years, 1,600,000,000; in forty-eight years,

\* Gen. i. 28; ix. 1.

3,200,000,000 ; in seventy-two years, 6,400,000,000 ; in ninety-six years, 12,800,000,000 ; in one hundred and twenty years, 25,600,000,000 ; in one hundred and forty-four years, 51,200,000,000 ; in one hundred and sixty-eight years, 102,400,000,000 ; in one hundred and ninety-two years, 204,800,000,000 ; in two hundred and sixteen years, 409,600,000,000 ; in two hundred and forty years, 819,200,000,000 ; in two hundred and sixty-four years, 1,638,400,000,000 ; in two hundred and eighty-eight years, 3,276,800,000,000 ; in three hundred and twelve years, 6,553,600,000,000 ; in three hundred and thirty-six years, 13,107,200,000,000 ; in three hundred and sixty years, 26,214,400,000,000 ; in three hundred and eighty-four years, 52,428,800,000,000 ; in four hundred and eight years, 104,857,600,000,000. When this last generation arrives at the age of twenty years, let us add to their number that of the preceding generation who would still be living, which would make-

$$\begin{array}{r}
 104,857,600,000,000 \\
 52,428,800,000,000 \\
 \hline
 157,286,400,000,000
 \end{array}$$

Or, one hundred and fifty-seven trillions, two hundred and eighty-six billions, and four hundred millions for the total population of the earth at that time. But there are only fifty millions of square miles on the surface of the earth, not covered by the sea,—or one hundred and fifty-four trillions, and eight hundred and eighty billions of square yards. Therefore, supposing all of this to be good habitable, arable land, there would still be less than one square yard to each individual! And this in four hundred and twenty-eight years!! “What, then, would it be at the end of a thousand years? But the thing is impossible, and I have only followed out this train of thought, to show how utterly irreconcilable it is with the present organization of man,” to suppose that the earth, as it now is, was ever intended for his

abode during a state of millennial virtue and prosperity, or world without end.\*

The argument is not a little strengthened by the fact that, instead of the fifty millions of square miles being good habitable, arable land, about one fifth of the whole consists of deserts, swamps, ragged or snow-covered mountains, pine or oak barrens, rivers, lakes, and polar regions as desolate as if they were covered by the ocean.

Such is the *absurdity* to which spiritualizing the Bible leads. The only way to avoid this absurdity, is to run into *blasphemy*, and maintain that in proportion as man avoids the causes of death over which he has control, God will increase those causes over which he has no control, just so as to destroy him; that when man ceases to bring disease upon himself and posterity by vice, God will increase the number of miasmatic diseases, earthquakes, tornadoes, &c., just so as to prevent any increase in the population; or that, with "the restitution of all things," "the earth shall not yield her increase" as promised,† and in the age of sobriety, industry, and morality—in the "*new earth*"—men are to be more straitened for the means of subsistence than they have ever been in the ages of intemperance, debauchery, oppression and heathenism,—straitened to such a degree as to check the growth of population!!! The idea is so perfectly revolting, that no one can entertain it for a moment.

#### OPINIONS OF THE CHURCH.

The purification of the earth by fire has been the doctrine of the church from the very days of the apostles down to these last times, when men have learned to spiritualize away "ancient landmarks," and "the faith once delivered to the saints."

Thomas Burnet, in his "Theory of the Earth," printed in London, A. D. 1697, states that it was the

\* For this argument I am chiefly indebted to G. F. Cox.

† Ps. lxxvii. 6; Gen. iv. 12, compared with Acts iii. 21.



received opinion of the primitive church from the days of the apostles to the Council of Nice, A. D. 325. This Council consisted of three hundred and eighteen bishops from all parts of Europe, Asia, and Africa, and adopted, unanimously, I believe, the same sentiment. It was also the doctrine of Luther, and the other Reformers,—of Fuller, Thomas Burnet, Thomas Vincent, Wesley,—in a word, of the church so universally, that it is embodied in the poetry of the world as an admitted truth.

"When, rapt in fire, the realms of ether glow,  
And heaven's last thunder shakes the world below,  
Hope, undismayed, shall o'er the ruins smile,  
And light her torch at Nature's funeral pile!"

Dr. Clarke makes the following comment upon the passage in 2 Pet. iii. 11 :

"All these things shall be dissolved. They will all be separated, all decomposed; but none of them destroyed. As they are the original matter out of which God formed the terraqueous globe, consequently they may enter again into the composition of the new system. We look for a new heaven and a new earth; the other being decomposed, a new system is to be formed out of their materials.

"It does appear from these promises, what the apostle says here, and what is said in Rev. xxi. 27; xxii. 14, 15, that the present earth, though destined to be burnt up, will not be destroyed, but be renewed and refined; purged from all natural and moral imperfections, and made the endless abode of blessed spirits. That such an event may take place is very possible, and, from the terms used by Peter, is very probable. And, indeed, it is more reasonable and philosophical to conclude that the earth shall be refined and restored, than finally destroyed."

## THE EARTH AND THE WORLD END AT THE SAME TIME.

That the world will not be destroyed *before* the earth is evident from Gen. viii. 21, 22; ix. 11—16. That it will be destroyed *then*, is evident from the organization of our present bodies, which could not endure the flames that shall melt the earth. See, also, 2 Pet. iii. 7.

### THEY END WITH THIS AGE.

I premise a few things, as

1. Christ's second advent will be as *King*, and at the end of this age. Matt. xiii. 38, 43; xxiv. 3, 30; Acts iii. 21; Titus ii. 12, 13.

2. *All* the righteous, dead and living, shall then "be changed," and receive their "reward"—"have eternal life"—"shine forth as the sun." Matt. xiii. 43; Mark x. 30; Luke xviii. 30; 1 Cor. xv. 50—53; 1 Thess. iv. 14—17; Heb. vi. 5; Rev. xi. 18.

3. As respects the wicked, their *age of probation* ends with this age.

*First proof.* 1 Cor. viii. 13: "If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the age standeth [or lasts,] lest I make my brother to offend." From this, it is evident that *the age*, of which Paul's lifetime constituted a part, is the period of time during which a brother can be made to offend,—is on probation.

*Second proof.* This age is the time for preaching the gospel,—for teaching and baptizing *all* nations,—implying that mercy will not be offered in the age to come.—Matt. xxiv. 14; xxviii. 19, 20. The righteous, be it remembered, are *all* to be changed at Christ's coming. Therefore, if the gospel is preached afterward, the preachers will have spiritual bodies. But this idea is contradicted by Matt. xxv. 11; Luke xvi. 31; 1 Cor. i. 27; 2 Cor. iv. 7. Moreover, it is inconsistent with the idea of Christ's reigning himself, or of the righteous reigning with him, to suppose them travelling about as the "servants" of the wicked, exposed to their scoffs and contempt, trying to persuade

them to repent. Now we are told it is by *preaching* that men are saved. 1 Cor. i. 21. Moreover, if the salt is all withdrawn from the earth into a kingdom by itself, how can we expect the earth to be salted? Matt. v. 13, 16; Luke xv. 2, 4; xiv. 21, 23. That Christ's kingdom will not be coercive, in the sense of forcing men into it, see Matt. xi. 12; John v. 40; Luke xiii. 3; Acts iii. 23. ¶ Compare Rev. xi. 14, 15, with x. 7.

*Third proof.* In 2 Pet. iii. 4, 9, 13, we are informed that the reason why the promise of his coming has not been fulfilled already, is, that God is long suffering, "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." Does not this clearly imply that at and after his coming, mercy will not be offered, none will come to repentance—probation will be over.

*Fourth proof.* At the end of this age the *harvest* takes place. Matt. xiii. 39. When harvest comes, the time for sowing either good or bad seed—by the Son of man or by the devil—is past. Of course, there can be no more conversions—probation is in reality over.

*Fifth proof.* The age to come will be the time for review and punishment of actions done by the wicked in this age, implying that probation will be over, and the judgment set. Matt. xii. 32.

4. At the second coming of Christ, this heaven and earth shall be destroyed, and the new be created.

*First proof.* Acts iii. 21: "Jesus Christ—whom the heaven must receive [retain] until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the age began." What age? Evidently the one from the loss to the restitution,—an age that began *before* the *first* prophecy respecting a restitution, uttered immediately after the fall. Gen. iii. 15; Luke i. 70; John ix. 32; Titus ii. 12, 13; Rev. xxi. 1, 4, 5.

*Second proof.* In 2 Pet. iii. 10, 12, we are told Christians should "haste unto," or *earnestly desire*, the day of the Lord. And, in another place, the

believer exclaims, "I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness." But he will awake in Christ's likeness on the day of Christ's second advent. Of course, he cannot earnestly desire another day. See, also, Titus ii. 13. From this it is evident that the day spoken of here is the day of the second advent, and then "the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements melt with fervent heat—the earth also: and the works that are therein shall be burned up."

Now we are prepared to prove that this *world* (*kosmos*) will end with this *age* (*aion*.)

I. The god of *this kosmos* is the same as the god of *this aion*. "In whom the god of *this age* (*aion*) hath blinded the minds of them which believe not," &c. "For the prince of *this world* (*kosmos*) cometh, and hath nothing in me."\*

Again: the prevailing disposition of each is the same. "That he might deliver us from *this present evil age* (*aion*)." "Know ye not that the friendship of the *world* (*kosmos*) is ENMITY with God?"† Also, we are told that in *this world* (*kosmos*) Christians "shall have tribulation." This clearly implies that, so long as the present world continues, there is to be no dispensation of righteousness—Christ will not reign here personally or spiritually—the prevailing spirit will be that which causes tribulation to the children of God. But they must be of good cheer; for Christ assures them the world is overcome in prospect that shall certainly be realized. It shall be destroyed at his glorious appearing, and his disciples then will be left without a foe forever. See, also, Eph. ii. 2, where walking "according to the *age* of *this world*," is spoken of as synonymous with walking "according to the prince of the power of the air," &c.

\* For references containing *aion*, see 2 Cor. iv. 4; Matt. xiii. 39; Eph. ii. 2; and for *kosmos*, see John xiv. 30: xii. 31; xvi. 11; Matt. iv. 8, 9.

† For *aion*, see Gal. i. 4: 1 Cor. ii. 6; and for *kosmos*, see James iv. 4; i. 27; John viii. 23; xv. 19; xvi. 33; 2 Cor. vii. 10; Gal. vi. 14; 1 John ii. 15—17.

II. The two words are used one for the other. Thus, (2 Cor. v. 19,) "God was in Christ reconciling *the age* (aion) to himself, not imputing *their* trespasses unto them." "For I came not to judge *the world*, but to save *the world*\* (kosmos.)"

Again, (1 Cor. i. 20:) "Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this age (aion?) Hath not God made foolish *the wisdom* of this world (kosmos?)" In chap. ii. 6: "wisdom of this *age* (aion.)" In chap. iii. 18, 19: "If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this age (aion,) let him become a fool, that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world (kosmos) is foolishness with God."

Again, Tit. ii. 12: "Denying ungodliness and worldly (kosmikos) lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present *age* (aion.)" If there is to be *another* age of *this* world, does the apostle mean to imply that then we need not live soberly, righteously, and godly, and deny worldly lusts? Or does he not rather mean that *this* age is the only one in which men shall have lusts of the world to deny—in other words, that probation ends with this age?

III. At the end of this age Christ will come as King. But his "kingdom is not of this world (kosmos.)" He will not reign in it personally or spiritually. If the *whole* world does not end with this age, then there will either be some living on the earth over whom Christ will not exercise jurisdiction, or else his kingdom will be *in part* of this world. Moreover, as *this* world is subject to death, instead of his being King of kings, and his kingdom independent, he would see it continually and successively invaded by the King of Terrors. John xviii. 36, 37.

IV. Eph. ii. 2: "Wherein in time past ye walked according to *the age* (aion) of *this* world (kosmos)—according to the prince of the power of the air," &c. It does not say, "according to *this* age of *the* world."

\* For kosmos, see John xii. 47; i. 29; iii. 16, 17; vi. 33, 51; Rom. xi. 16; 1 Tim. i. 15.

Therefore, *the age* which is “according to the prince of the power of the air,”—in other words, “this present evil age,”—is *the age of this world*, and there will be no other until the world ends.

V. In Luke xx. 34, 35, the children of *this age* are contrasted with those of *the age to come*, and in that we are told they “neither marry nor are given in marriage.” But all admit that, so long as *this world* continues, marriage will be honorable. Therefore, with the next age there will be a new world.

VI. At the end of this age ALL the wicked shall be destroyed; because, in addition to what has already been said,

*First.* Probation will be over; and we can hardly believe God will permit the continuance of the human family, much less an increase, after the age of probation is past.

*Secondly.* The harvest then takes place. When harvest comes, sowing time is over. Not only are the tares already sown to be gathered, but the devil is to sow *no more*. Thus, we see, there can be no further addition to the depraved family of Adam; in a word, no more births—no more marrying or given in marriage—that is, the end of the world will have come. Matt. xiii. 39.

*Thirdly.* We are explicitly told that “the field [to be harvested] is THE WORLD (kosmos,)” Matt. xiii. 38.

*Fourthly.* It also says explicitly, “all things that offend, and they which do iniquity”—all the tares which the wicked one hath sown—all that destroy, or corrupt the earth—shall be gathered out of the kingdom, not by conversion, but to be cast into the fire. Matt. xiii. 41; xxiv. 30, 31; Rev. xi. 18.

*Fifthly.* Then, also, the earth itself is to be destroyed, as we have already proved; and, as the righteous alone shall be caught up to meet the Lord, *all the wicked must perish*.

☞ All the righteous changed and caught up, and all the wicked destroyed, the world, of course would be at an end; and all this is to be at the end of this *æon*, or age.

THE  
LORD'S COMING  
A  
GREAT PRACTICAL DOCTRINE.

BY  
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HE sitteth on the right hand of the Father, God Almighty; from whence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. At whose coming all men shall rise again with their bodies; and shall give account for their own works. And they that have done good shall go into life everlasting; and they that have done evil into everlasting fire. — ATHANASIUS' CREED.

## NOTE.

THE following treatise on the Practical Influence of the Second Advent doctrine, is from the pen of a distinguished minister of the Church of England. The lofty ground occupied by Mr. Brock in reference to the tendency of a belief in the speedy personal coming of our Lord, cannot fail to be appreciated by every true Christian, and especially by those who indulge the hope, that they will be permitted to behold, at no very distant day, the consummation of their most ardent desires. It would therefore bespeak for it the candid and serious examination of Christians of all denominations; and it is confidently believed, that whenever the subject shall have been fully and impartially examined, in the light in which it is discussed in the following pages, the legitimacy of the doctrine of the Speedy Personal Advent of the Lord will be freely and fully acknowledged.

J. V. HIMES.



# THE LORD'S COMING

## A GREAT PRACTICAL DOCTRINE.

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*This Tract is of a practical character, and is written chiefly for those who have either not considered the subject of which it treats, or who feel some aversion towards it; as, also, for imaginative persons, who, having gone into the subject, entertain it only in a speculative manner.*

THE object of this Tract, as above stated, is to give A PRACTICAL VIEW OF THE LORD'S SECOND ADVENT. Many have heard of this subject, whose attention has not been decidedly drawn to it. Many have theorized on the event, who have never applied it for useful purposes; and many regard its consideration as speculative and imaginary, wholly unconnected with the daily walk of the Christian, and of no practical benefit.

It is proposed to show that the subject of the Lord's Advent demands the most serious attention; that it is anything but speculative; nay, on the contrary, *that it is of the most solemn, practical, and useful character.*

May it please God that the arguments now to be brought forward from his Holy Word, shall bring home his conviction, fully and clearly, to the minds of all who read.

Omitting the Scriptures of the Old Testament, it is from those of the New only that we propose to show the practical character of the doctrine of the Second Advent. We begin by—

### I. STATING THE SUBJECT.

1. As to the fact itself, that the Lord will come

in his glorious majesty, all professing Christians are agreed. Whether he will return to the earth, and, in the words of the prophet, "His feet shall stand on the mount of Olives," (Zech. xiv.) or whether he shall only come to the region of the air, are subjects much debated, and on which it is no part of our plan to enter. Suffice it here to say, that all professing Christians agree in the fact of the glorious coming of our great God and Saviour to judge the quick and the dead.

2. The prominence given in the New Testament to this coming of our Lord, and to subjects connected with it, is very remarkable.

(a.) This shall be shown from his own words.

It is thus that our Lord himself draws the attention of his church to his second coming.

First,—by his DISCOURSES on the subject. Amongst these stands prominently that remarkable description of his return which the Lord gave his disciples when on the mount of Olives. They asked him, "What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world," or age.

Again, by his PARABLES he presses the same great truth. These amount, in all, to twenty-seven, the greater number of which point to his Second Advent, or events connected with it.

The Lord's EXHORTATIONS, also, to preparedness for that great event are very forcible:—"Watch, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh." "In such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh." "What I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch."

In these exhortations, our Lord brings this

great subject prominently forward, and urges it on his church to the end of time.

(b.) Passing from our Lord's teaching to certain remarkable passages in his life, we notice first HIS TRANSFIGURATION.

In this event, we have a representation of the glories of the Second Advent. The witnesses of this surprising fact were Peter, and James, and John, the former and latter of whom thus allude to it; the former in his second epistle: "We were eye-witnesses of his majesty . . . when we were with him in the holy mount." And the latter, apparently, in the first chapter of his gospel: "We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father."

In this transaction, our Lord gave a manifestation of his own future glory, and of that of his saints in the resurrection state; and this was according to a promise which, "about an eight days before," he had given to his apostles; namely, that there were some then present who should not taste of death till they had seen the Son of man coming in his kingdom. Accordingly, he takes with him into the mount the three fore-named witnesses, and there they behold that glory which the Lord and his saints will possess in his kingdom. Elijah had in his flesh been translated, and his glorified humanity was there beheld radiant with light. Moses had died, and was buried. He might, or might not, have seen corruption. Of this we are not informed. But this we know, that for his dead body, angels of light and darkness contended; and here we see the fact and fruit of the Archangel's victory. Moses dead, buried,

and raised again in glory, is a pledge to dying believers of their own glorious resurrection; whilst Elias, and our Lord himself, are, in this transaction, types of the sudden glory of those who shall be "caught up" alive from the earth at our Saviour's Advent, "to meet the Lord in the air."

The INSTITUTION OF THE EUCHARIST is another event in the history of our Lord which calls the attention of his church to his future Advent. "As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come." (1 Cor. xi.) Hence, in this monthly, or, which is better, weekly celebration, believers are habitually reminded of this great doctrine.

The ASCENSION of our Lord is also used to direct the eyes of his people to his return. The Apostles gazed on Him whom they loved, whilst "a cloud received him out of their sight." (Acts i.) But, behold, from an ascending Saviour their attention is called to a coming King; for, "whilst they looked steadfastly towards heaven, as he went up, 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 who is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."

Thus, both from the teaching of our Lord, and from these several passages in his life, we see the fact of his Second Advent prominently brought before his Church.

(c.) From the teaching and life of our Lord, we pass on to show that equal prominence is

given to this great subject in the writings of his Apostles. It is thus noticed by them:—

## ST. PAUL.

Rom. viii.—I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature (creation) waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God; j. e. at the resurrection.

1 Cor. i.—Ye come behind in no gift, waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Cor. v.—Earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven.

Eph. i.—Until the redemption of the purchased possession.

Phil. iii.—Our conversation (citizenship) is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, who shall change our vile body.

Col. iii.—When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye appear also with him in glory.

1 Thess. iii.—Unblamable in holiness before God, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.

2 Thess. iii.—The Lord direct your hearts into the patient waiting for Christ.

1 Tim. vi.—Keep this commandment until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Tim. iv.—A crown of righteousness, which the righteous Judge shall give me at that day.

Titus ii.—Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Heb. ix.—To them that look for him, he shall appear the Second time.

## JAMES.

Jas. v.—Stablish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

## PETER.

1 Pet. v.—When the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory.

2 Pet. iii.—The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night.

## JOHN.

1 John iii.—When he shall appear, we shall be like him.

## JUDE.

Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all.

## REVELATION.

Beginning with—Behold, he cometh with clouds.

Ending with—Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

Thus, all the Apostles, and that in almost all their writings, bring forward this doctrine, a few specimens only of which are given above. For further evidence, the reader is referred especially to the Letters to the Thessalonians, and to those by St. Peter.

The prominence given in Scripture to the Second Advent having been thus noticed,—

3. We proceed to point out its importance.

To the **RIGHTEOUS**, how important is it! **Believers** are now pardoned, their sins are blotted out, for they are justified by faith in the Son of God. At death they go to Him, and "rest from their labors." But they do not then receive their reward, or *fully* enter into the joy of their Lord. Death is never mentioned in Scripture as the period when the saints are to be wholly blessed. This is always referred to the **Second Advent**. It is at the resurrection only, when they shall be clothed upon with their new bodies, and when the whole church shall be perfected, that they shall enter into their state of complete felicity. Most deeply momentous, therefore, to the saints, is that coming of the Lord, which alone shall bring to them their "perfect consummation and bliss, both in body and soul."

And if to the righteous this event is important, is it not especially so to the **WICKED**? The ungodly man dies. His soul goes to its own place. His body lies in the ground; but, at the coming of the Judge that body is raised. In that body he stands before the dreadful tribunal, and so in body and soul enters into that dreary abode, at the contemplation of which the soul recoils with horror.\*

To **CHRIST**, also, as well as to his people, the period of his coming is one of no slight interest.

\* The writer believes that the Second Advent of Christ is spoken of in Scripture, not only as a point, but as a *period* of time; not only as regarding the mere fact of his coming, but also, of his stay during a lengthened period, in which many and distinct acts are to be performed, commencing with the "resurrection of the just," and closing with the "resurrection of the unjust."

For it is not till then that He will assume "his many crowns." It is not till then that he will fully see of the travail of his soul, and take possession of that kingdom stipulated to Him in everlasting covenant.

To SATAN, Christ's great adversary, that day is of equal importance; for not till then, having been first chained in the abyss, will he be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, his final prison-house. (Rev. xx. 3, 9, 10.)

To those EVIL SPIRITS, whether abroad on the earth, or "reserved in chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day," there is the same dreadful importance in the Lord's appearing. "Art thou come hither to torment us *before the time*? I know thee who thou art," was the significant cry of one of these wretched spirits. And no marvel; for he dreaded that which, by some divine oracle, he knew; namely, that at the appointed time, he was to be plunged into everlasting fire, "reserved for the devil and his angels."

And GOOD SPIRITS, as well as evil, look forward also to this grand period. As intelligent beings, they are desirous of knowledge, and these are among "the things which the angels desire to look into;" for they give the fullest development of the mysteries of redemption. Whilst, as benevolent beings, they must anticipate with deep interest that blessed period, when those "heirs of salvation," over whom, as ministering spirits, they have carefully watched, shall receive the happy reward of their painful conflict.

Nor can we doubt, that to the WHOLE OF CREATION, the consummation to be effected at the com-

ing of the Lord will be a subject of the deepest interest. We may reasonably suppose that all God's creatures, located in their appointed regions throughout the immensity of space, are, or will be made acquainted with the stupendous fact of the incarnation of the Eternal Word, and of its full effects at his appearing. Nothing, I presume, will so manifest the character of God as the atonement, and its future results. Thus, as it is said in a figure, that "the earnest expectation of the creature (*i. e.*, of this lower creation) waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God;" (the glorious appearing of the saints at the Second Advent;) so we may suppose that event will, to the rest of God's creation, be one of the deepest moment, as manifesting in the grandest possible manner God's justice, mercy, wisdom, faithfulness, and all the other attributes of his adorable character.

As, therefore, the Second Advent of our Lord thus concerns the church and the world, Christ and Satan, angels both of light and of darkness, and we may add, the whole of the rest of God's creation, since it is an event so vast and comprehensive in its results, it cannot be denied that it is thus proved to be a subject of the greatest moment.

4. From the importance of the Second Advent we shall, in further stating the subject, proceed to notice only the aspect of the church respecting it.

And this we show from the letters of the Apostles. In them we find believers constantly described as WAITING for that event. The faithful are spoken of as "looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God;" "Looking for him," &c.



And for this we find they are **COMMENDED**. For example, the Corinthians: "Ye come behind in no gift, waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." And the Thessalonians: "Ye turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven." And again: "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief."

Other examples might also be given, and we might likewise notice passages in which the strongest censure is passed on those who neglect or despise the day of his coming; thus clearly showing what is the will of the Lord on this subject, and what is the proper aspect of the Church concerning it.

Having thus stated the subject of the Second Advent,—the fact,—its prominence in the New Testament,—its importance,—and the aspect of the church respecting it, the way is now opened to show, —

## II. THE PRACTICAL CHARACTER of the doctrine.

In treating this part of our subject, we shall show how influential it is on the Christian, whether Contemplative, Passive, or Active.

1. First, then, its practical influence on the *contemplative* Christian.

(a.) It gives him clear light as to the present state of Christ's church.

Whilst others are expecting that by setting in operation a human instrumentality, that palmy condition of the church described in Scripture, is to be brought in, he is enabled distinctly to see, that uniformity belongs not to the present, but to the future state. He does not therefore expect,

at this time, more than God has promised. He blesses God for the good that exists, and does not vex his soul because he cannot bring all to one opinion, or to one form of worship,—in other words, to unity and uniformity. He does not follow the chimera of expecting, till the great change come, one external church uniting Christendom, or even uniting one nation, in a general conformity. He knows that the hidden and spiritual church has now a true, though imperfect unity—a unity of spirit, and a unity of holy practice. But the Christian is well persuaded that an outward uniformity is not to be expected in the present dispensation; and that the withholding this blessing is one of those means used by God, to lead his people to an earnest looking for the Lord from heaven. Then, and not till then, the thoughtful Christian sees that there will be a perfect unity of mind and principle, and, consequently, a perfect uniformity of action.

(b.) It leads him, further, to exalted views of Christ.

In the Scripture, Messiah is revealed as suffering, and triumphant. Every instructed believer knows “Christ crucified,” and receives the atonement as the sole ground of his hope. But, by the contemplation of Christ in his Second Advent, he discovers his glories as a KING. Christ is the “Nobleman gone into a far country, to receive a kingdom, and to return.” At the end, he comes to administer that kingdom, “when the stone cut out without hands shall fill the whole earth,” when he shall put on his “many crowns,” and shall reign “King of kings and Lord of lords.”

The King will also be a JUDGE. He "shall execute judgment and justice in the earth." He will bring judgment on the apostate nations, "such as they have not known;" whilst to his own people he will be "as the rain on the mown grass."

The King will also be the BRIDEGROOM of his church. His coming will be to take his spouse unto himself. He will deliver her from her present state of banishment and sorrow, and will make her glad with the light of his countenance.

Thus, by considering what, at his second coming, Christ will be to his church, the contemplative Christian obtains high and exalted views of his absent Lord; and the effect on his mind is animating, cheering, and joyful. He rejoices in hope of the glory of God, and habitually throws himself forward into that time, when his "eyes shall see the King in his beauty."

Hence, in reference to the Lord's Advent, a doubly practical effect is produced on the believer's heart. First, an enlargement in his views of the Redeemer's excellence and glory; and, secondly, a cheerful and animating hope of partaking in the same.

(c.) In regard to his fellow-men, a similar practical result is also by these doctrines produced on the contemplative Christian.

He considers HIS OWN FAMILY in connection with their probable state at the coming of Christ.

How does he in spirit rejoice over those, who, amongst many dear to him, are seen with their loins girded, and their lamps burning, as men who wait for their Lord! For these he devoutly gives

thanks. Whilst, on the other hand, what deep concern is begotten in his heart for those who love not Christ's appearing! How the soul of that man, with whom the thought of a coming Saviour is habitual; how his soul yearns over those careless ones whom he loves, with earnest desire that they may be awakened to a just sense of their danger. His affections, his endeavors, his prayers,—how earnestly are they called out on their behalf! and how does he “travail in birth for them,” till they shall “be accounted worthy to escape those things that are coming on the earth, and to stand before the Son of man.” Thus, in regard to his family, or to those he loves, through the contemplation of the Second Advent, in the heart of the meditative believer a deep practical effect is produced.

And he experiences the same result, in regard to the CHURCH of the living God.

The mind of the Christian being deeply imbued with the value of the doctrine of a coming Lord, and feeling how little it is *practically* entertained by the majority even of Christ's people, he is excited to strive, as far as in him lies, to bring the saints to an adequate sense of their privileges, as connected with this bright hope. Knowing something of the comfort, the peace, and joy, which is lost by those who entertain not in a lively manner this “glorious hope,” his soul is called forth into earnest desires and fervent prayers on their behalf. He knows, that even “the wise virgins,” at the Lord's coming, will be found slumbering. How fervent, then, his desire to be, in these last days, among the number of those who are raising

the warning cry, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh."

Thus, also, in regard to **THE WORLD**. The contemplative Christian, through study of the same word of prophecy, has his mind fully alive to a sense of the desolating judgments, which, at the Second Advent, will be poured on apostate Christendom. He has deeply realized those declarations of "distress of nations with perplexity;" and his mind has freely expatiated over those scenes, when "the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every freeman shall hide themselves in the dens, and in the rocks of the mountains, and shall say to the rocks and mountains, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb." With these dreadful realities, the mind of the contemplative Christian is deeply conversant. His faith embraces them, and he has habitually realized their existence.

What is then the consequence?—That he feels a deep concern for those who, by their present worldliness, promise to be among the number which will be overwhelmed in that dreadful overthrow: and moved by a profound emotion of pity, he strives to snatch them from impending ruin.

(*d.*) And what is the practical good which results to the thoughtful Christian himself from meditating on the coming of the Lord?

Much every way. But suffice it now to say, that the contemplation of a Returning Saviour especially leads to **SELF-EXAMINATION**.

Do we indeed expect the coming of our Lord? Do we believe that there is nothing now to hinder, but that in this, or in any succeeding year, He may be restored to his expecting church? Do we, moreover, see distinctly in Scripture, that it is the mind of God that we should be living in daily expectation of his Advent? Then, how watchful shall we be, and how forcibly will the question be applied, O, my soul, art thou prepared to meet thy God?

He who lives in the daily and sanctified expectation of his Saviour's return, cannot but be considering, whether he is prepared to behold his face with joy; always having before him the thought of a Saviour ready to be revealed, he trims his lamp, and looks well to his ways; only careful that, whether his Lord comes at the second, or comes at the third watch, he may be found ready.

Thus, whether regarded in reference to light thrown on this present dispensation, or to enlarged views of the glory of Christ, or in leading to a deeper interest in the welfare of his fellow-men, or in promoting the benefit of his own soul, it will be seen, that the contemplative Christian finds abundant practical benefit in the meditation of a coming Saviour.

2. Let us now view the *passive* Christian in the aid which he obtains under suffering, from this influential object of faith.

(a.) Is it in his own person that he is afflicted?

Is it BODILY SUFFERING, for instance, that presses him down? Is it the languor of disease which he experiences, or does agonizing pain rend his frame? Is he worn by long protracted illness, or do the

throes of unaccustomed agony make him their prey? Does death invade him, and is his earthly tabernacle shaken by the terrible destroyer? "To the godly there ariseth up a light in the darkness!" The believer knows Him, who, for his sake, has endured pain and death. Christ is "the resurrection and the life. He that believeth in Him, though he were dead, yet shall he live." To that resurrection, the believer with confidence looks forward. In suffering, and in death, he rests his eye on that grand event, expecting the new body, wherewith he shall then be clothed. In that body he will be subject neither to pain, nor decay. It shall be a body like unto that of his Saviour, incorruptible and glorious. Well, therefore, may the suffering Christian derive consolation from meditating on the return of that Saviour, who shall thus clothe him with an immortal frame; and strengthened by this bright hope, well may he be patient in the hours of sickness, and defy the terrors of death.

Or, is it MENTAL SORROW which weighs down his spirit? Does dejection press him to the earth, or melancholy set her seal upon his brow? How cheering the prospect of the future, when sorrow and sighing shall flee away! No bitterness of soul shall enter there! Welcome, then, the day of consolation, which brings the Lord of glory to his sorrowing people! How comforting to his dejected servants, the meditation of his return!

Or, does affliction arise from LOSS OF FRIENDS? Ah! bitter stroke! Broken-hearted, the world a dreary wilderness, the light of his soul departed, where shall the Christian go, and whither shall he

turn? Yet, check that hasty ejaculation, still that bursting sigh, and let those gushing tears be stayed, for, to the Christian mourner a voice is thus heard to speak: "Them also that sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him." Happy, then, the day when the Lord returns; for in his train shall appear all with whom in Christ we have been united, and whose loss we now deplore. This is a delightful view of a returning Saviour! He comes, and he comes not alone! He brings with him those we love, and from whom we are never again to be disunited. Blessed anticipation! What Christian mourner does not find consolation while dwelling on the return of his Lord? The thought is strong consolation to his aching heart.

(b.) Again; let us view the passive Christian suffering for sorrows not properly his own; in other words, sympathizing with others' pain. Here also, we shall see what effectual consolation is afforded, by looking to a coming Saviour.

The believer is a member of Christ's holy catholic, or universal church.\* That church is now in a militant, low, and distressed state, struggling for existence, and oppressed with foes.

As a member of this afflicted body, the Christian SUFFERS WITH THE CHURCH; and every stab which that church receives pierces his heart. With her afflictions from without, he sympathizes; and for her sorrows from within, for her pollutions, divisions, and low state of grace, he deeply

\* This means not any particular national church, but the general church, or assembly of God's people, from the beginning of the world, and out of which there is no salvation.



feels. And such, he knows, must be the condition of the church till the time of the end, for the decree is, "Let both grow together unto the harvest." How deeply momentous, therefore, to his soul, becomes the time of the end, when Christ, at his coming, shall take his church unto himself! With lively pleasure, the believer anticipates the advent of his Lord, by which alone, to that body, in the existence of which his own life is bound up, he sees final deliverance. On that event his soul reposes with profound consolation, as alone bringing full salvation, by translating the spouse of Christ from a state of reproach, suffering, and sorrow, to one of glory, rest, and joy.

And not only with the church, but WITH CREATION also, does the Christian sympathize.

"The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." These groans of creation, rational and irrational, find an echo in the believer's heart, for he has a heart which feels for the sorrows of others. When shall these sorrows cease? he inquires. "At the manifestation of the sons of God," when Christ comes, "to be admired in his saints," the sacred oracles reply. He longs, therefore, for that period, and is comforted in its anticipation; for then shall it be said by the great Regenerator, "Behold, I make all things new;" and then shall be brought in the "new heavens, and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." Hail, auspicious day! Soon may the counsels of eternal wisdom cause its brightness to dawn upon this dark earth. Soon may that "morning without clouds" arise. So shall the groans of creation cease; and, from a ransomed

and regenerated world shall one wide and universal Hallelujah ascend to the throne of God.

Thus, to the suffering Christian, whether he be distressed by his own private sorrows, or sympathizing with the afflicted church, or moved by the groans of creation,—under either of these circumstances, the consideration of the advent of Christ brings strong consolation.

3. We now shall consider the practical influence which the doctrine of the Second Coming of the Lord exercises on the *active* Christian.

DECISION OF CHARACTER AND CONDUCT is one effect produced by the consciousness of the Lord's speedy advent. Who will halt between two opinions, or pursue a lukewarm course, if he believes that the Judge is standing at the door? No man, under the full impression that Christ is indeed at hand, that in the term of his own natural life he probably may behold Him,—no man, under these impressions, can be undecided in his conduct. The habit of his mind being to contemplate an absent Saviour as presently coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory, he acts with firmness and resolution in the service of Christ. He regulates the whole tenor of his life by this influential object of expectation, being careful only that when his Lord appears, he may stand before Him with joy.

WATCHFULNESS, is another grace which the Christian, engaged in the active pursuits of life, finds powerfully called forth by the consideration of the Second Advent.

The direction of our Saviour is, "Be ye like unto men who wait for their Lord." This, there-

fore, is the state in which Christ would have his people constantly to be found, as servants in a family, who are waiting the return of their absent master. Of the precise moment of that return, they have not been informed, but they know that it will take place when the majority of their fellow-servants are unprepared. Thus it is with the Christian. He knows the will of his absent Lord concerning the state of preparation in which he would have his church to be; he knows how speedily his Lord may return, and what universal terror and dismay that return will occasion. He is, therefore, on his guard; for to be found sleeping at his post would bring to him shame and confusion. His language is, "Let us not sleep, as do others," and with this, his conduct is in accordance. Day and night he is looking out to see what sign there is of his Lord's return. His anxious eye continually ranges round the portentous horizon. He watches unto prayer, and prepares himself for impending events.

DETACHMENT FROM THE WORLD is another important benefit arising from the doctrine which we are considering.

Over the Christian's engagements, liabilities, habits, and pursuits, whether social, professional, literary, scientific, or otherwise, the thought of a coming Saviour exercises a strong control. If the love of gain besets him, the eternal riches which Christ at his coming will bestow, are to him an effectual counterpoise. If the natural bent of his mind be the love of pleasure, the anticipated joys of the Second Advent are calculated to quench the unhallowed flame. If the love of ease, and a

lethargic indolence beset him,—if some favorite pursuit too much engrosses, or if some master passion with galling bondage lords it over him,—in either of these cases, and in any similar ones, what a motive is here presented to an energetic effort for deliverance! Or, is he naturally ambitious? In contemplating the glories of the future, how do all the objects of human esteem sink into insignificance! Or, does the love of man's applause, or the dread of man's censure,—those fearfully influential principles,—do these too strongly appeal to the corrupt principle within? Behold, in the anticipation of a coming Saviour, a principle still more influential! For, when a believing man has learned to realize the smile of an approving God, how little will he esteem the applause of his fellow-men! And, when he has had brought home to his soul a dread of that terrible denunciation, "Depart, ye cursed," how little will he care that his name is now cast out as evil! The power of the world is disarmed by the vision of things invisible; and all its pomp and circumstance, its pageants and applause, its triumphs and its fame, all these have no glory to the mind imbued with heavenly faith, by reason of the glory which excelleth. That glory will be revealed by Christ, who is emphatically "the King of Glory." This, "in his times, he will show." The heart of the Christian is full of the times; and in the many temptations to worldliness which beset him, he finds no stronger resisting power than a lively perception of the day when glory shall be revealed.

In SELF-CONTROL a Christian is, also, much aided by the anticipation of the Lord's coming.

What moderation in the regulation of his desires is he taught, by looking to the speedy manifestation of Christ? "The end of all things is at hand." This solemn sentence being written in his heart he does not immoderately desire any of those things which perish in the using. His imagination does not wander over visions of earthly bliss, or of worldly aggrandizement. The word addressed to the son of Neriah, he feels well suited to himself: "Seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not; for, behold, I will bring evil upon all flesh." Thus, the near approach of the consummation, by presenting to the Christian the destruction of all those things on which the children of men so fondly dote, is made a means of moderating his desires, and of checking the ardor of his covetous and roving imagination.

And, as the desires after what we do not possess are thus subdued, so, also, is immoderate indulgence in what we do possess restrained. Though we may be surrounded by many earthly blessings, we learn not to abuse them, remembering that word of our Master: "Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares." Oh, what a call to moderation in all things is the nearness of the Lord's advent! See, in the following passage to the Philippians, how Paul uses it as a check to all excess. "Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing." And again, to the Corinthians: "But this I say, brethren, the time is short;

it remaineth that both they that have wives be as though they had none; and they that weep as though they wept not; and they that rejoice as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy as though they possessed not; and they that use this world as not abusing it; for the fashion of this world passeth away." It is thus that a sense of nearness of our Lord's advent, which will be attended with the dissolution of this present mundane state, is directly calculated to call forth the exercise of Christian moderation, and to bring the whole man, in body, soul, and spirit, under the wholesome regulation of self-control.

DILIGENCE IN THE USE OF TALENTS is the last beneficial result which I shall notice, from the consideration of the subject before us, produced on the Christian in action.

If a man is perpetually realizing the fact, that the Judge is standing at the door,—that at any moment he may appear, and, that when he comes, an exact reckoning will be taken of his talents—in these considerations, he finds a powerful stimulus to action. With what gifts, then, is he endowed? Are they powers of mind or of body? Is it health, or wealth, or leisure, or influence, or station in society, that he possesses? All, and every talent, a man thus instructed, will endeavor to cultivate. And if he possesses but one, he well knows that he dare not hide it, whilst, on the other hand, if gifted with many, he is aware they are not to be used for his own aggrandizement, but to be employed as the property of that Lord, before whom he is so soon to stand.

Nor will he overlook the reward; for, though

salvation is all of grace from first to last, yet, the saved shall be "rewarded according to their works." He reads that the gift of a cup of cold water will be recompensed; that a secret prayer will be openly acknowledged; that he that receiveth a prophet because he is a prophet, will receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man, because he is a righteous man, will receive a righteous man's reward. He knows that the eyes of the Lord are on his servants for good; that "verily there is a reward for the righteous; doubtless there is a God who judgeth the earth." He knows that the day of this judgment is fixed, and that it will be then be fully seen, that "God is a rewarder of all them that diligently seek him." Who, then, with such thoughts as these, will slumber? Who will not labor for "a full reward?"

Thus, on the active, as well as on the contemplative and passive Christian, the doctrine of the Second Advent exercises a directly practical influence, leading him to decision, both of mind and conduct; to a greater separation from the world; to a watchfulness and self-control; and to diligence in the employment of talents.

It is then evident, that the Second Coming of Christ, when properly considered, instead of being a speculative, is a practical doctrine, and calculated to be deeply influential on the heart and life of the people of God. And the cause of this is manifest; namely, *because that day brings most vividly to the mind, a sense of RESPONSIBILITY.* He, therefore, that has that day constantly before him, most sensibly feels his responsibility, and is proportionably more careful in the regulation of his conduct.

In closing this part of the subject, I would add, that in considering the Second Advent, due distinction is to be made between *the fact* of the Lord's return, and the *details of those events* which will then take place. The former is a grand practical subject, to be received by all real Christians. With the latter there is much which is of minor importance, on which Christians may differ. Let this be well observed, for Satan, through the details, constantly leads men away from the fact, or prejudices them against the fact, by an undue stress being laid on the details. Let Christians be on their guard against these delusions of Satan, for "we are not ignorant of his devices."

III. In conclusion, I would endeavor to bring home the subject to different characters and classes of professing Christians.

1. There are those, WHO LAY AN UNDUE STRESS on the doctrine of the Second Advent, as if it were the only doctrine of Scripture.

This is a great mistake. The coming of the Lord is, indeed, a subject of surpassing grandeur; but Scripture presents to us many points, both of doctrine and practice, on which the mind of a Christian is called constantly to dwell. All are liable to the common error, of entertaining favorite subjects to the exclusion of others. A well-instructed Christian will be on his guard against doing this. It will be his endeavor, from the study of the *whole* Scripture, to assign to each particular doctrine its due proportion. When the word of God gives prominence to any subject, he will endeavor that in his own mind and heart, that subject may have the same prominence. Whilst,



on the other hand, he will not unduly dwell on that, whereon the sacred oracles lay no particular stress. It is a happy art, thus to be enabled rightly to divide the word of God, attaching to each subject its due weight, and not bestowing on any, more than God himself bestows. In reference to the subject before us, there is peculiar need of attending to this, for it is of so grand and engrossing a character, that once effectually embraced, it will necessarily occupy in the mind, not only, as it should do, a prominent place, but, unless care be taken, an exclusive attention.

It behoves Christians, therefore, to be careful of this extreme, and not to take an exaggerated view of the promineney of this, or of any other doctrine of Scripture. They must endeavor to keep that harmony and proportion of doctrine, which is observable throughout the whole teaching of holy writ.

2. But, if there be some who lay on the Second Advent too great a stress, what is to be said of others, WHO LAY ON IT NO STRESS AT ALL? These constitute large masses of professing Christians, and, among them, many excellent persons, whose attention has not been directed towards the subject. If in the circle of our acquaintance we ask individuals whether they have realized the Coming of Christ,—whether they have had brought home to their minds the awakening fact, that they themselves may be amongst the number of those who shall be alive on the earth at the Advent of the Lord,—if we ask them, whether they have considered that it is within the verge of possibility, and, (as many conclude,) of probability, that they

may never taste of death, being "caught up to meet the Lord in the air,"—were we to put such questions as these, the reply, in too many instances, would be, "The subject has never much attracted our attention." But does not the Scripture most clearly and fully bring it before you? Is it not, as we have seen, strongly and decidedly pressed on your notice by our Lord in his parables, discourses, and exhortations, as well as by his apostles in all their writings? And, do you consider, that, enforced by such sanctions, it is lawful for you to remain regardless of such a subject? I would solemnly press on you your responsibility. Remember, that not to attend to that which God has revealed, is to slight his revelation. And, here is a subject not only revealed, but lying on the surface of Scripture, and reaching throughout its whole extent. You are not, therefore, at liberty to be inattentive to it. You cannot turn aside from its consideration without dishonoring God, and doing injury to your own soul. It is a subject which must be entertained, because God has revealed it; and it is one which must be extensively entertained, because it has been extensively revealed. Meditate on these things: and may your meditation of them be sweet.

3. But, what is to be said of those, who not only do not consider the subject, but are PREJUDICED AGAINST IT? Surely, in such characters there is a want of conformity to the divine mind and revealed will of God. For, if in his word, God continually brings this subject before us,—as we must allow that he does,—how opposed must that mind be to the mind of God, which

rejects it! And be it remembered, that it is merely of the *bare fact* of the Lord's speedy return,—“the Lord is at hand,”—that we are speaking. Now, what does an aversion to this subject indicate? It shows, as before observed, a want of conformity, in this respect, of the mind to God. It shows, also, that there can be no desire to meet Christ, for we take pleasure in speaking of the return of any one we long to see. Now, the Scripture expressly describes real Christians as those “who love his appearing.” Surely, then, those who are prejudiced against hearing of *the fact of his return*, must see that they are deficient in one mark of the people of God. Oh! let the prejudiced look into their own hearts, and they will find that it is because they do not desire “the day of the Lord,” that they do not like to hear of its approach. The fact of his coming is painful to them, and therefore, they love not to hear the subject mentioned. Let it not be concealed—*The real cause of aversion to the subject of the Lord's coming, is, mainly, aversion to the fact that he will come.* Let the prejudiced calmly consider this, and see if it be not the truth as it regards their case. The coming of Christ will be the breaking up of the present state of things. All, on which men most set their affections, will then pass away. Not only will they leave them, as at death, but the very objects themselves will depart also. When the heart is set on sublunary things, it does not like to dwell on the time when they shall be dissolved. But at Christ's coming all this will take place. Aversion to the subject of that day is therefore felt, because the day itself is hateful.

And as the mind is set on earthly things, in the same proportion is that day dreaded. I solemnly, therefore, appeal to the consciences of those who love not to hear of this subject, and entreat them to consider *the cause* of their aversion to it. If your heart is with the world, you will not like to hear of the world's catastrophe. If, on the other hand, your heart is with Christ, you will love to hear of his speedy return. "I speak as unto wise men; judge ye what I say." Here is a test by which you may ascertain the state of your affections. Deal faithfully with yourselves, and may this test, by God's good Spirit, be powerfully applied to your hearts.

4. TO THOSE WHO THEORIZE on this subject, unmindful of its holy and serious tendency, a few words may not be inapplicable.

Consider how solemn, how stupendous, is the fact of the coming of the Lord! It is then you will have to render an account of the deeds done in the body, and to receive the eternal doom of weal or woe. It is then that every secret of the heart is to be revealed, and that judgment is to be passed for every action. And will you lightly theorize and speculate on the events of a season fraught with such tremendous realities? Will you lightly speak of that which so closely concerns your eternal welfare? Surely, this is holy ground on which we tread; surely these are verities which should be approached with the deepest reverence. Cease, then, from all unhallowed speculations, and let holy reverence prevail. Every doctrine of Scripture, if it be not received practically, and with a view to holiness of life, is a pearl

trodden under foot. Remember that Scripture which saith, "Knowledge puffeth up; but love edifieth." You have "knowledge," but where is your "love?" Your mind is enlightened, but is your heart sanctified? You smile at the ignorance of others on these subjects, but is your life holier than theirs? May the Lord give you to see your error, and to repent; for, otherwise, unto you, "shall not the day of the Lord be darkness, and not light? even very dark, and no brightness in it?"

5. To the subject before us, I would venture also to call the attention of THE REFLECTIVE MAN.

What abundant and pregnant matter for meditation does the coming of Christ present! The account which is then to be rendered; the burning of the earth, of the works that are therein, and of the atmosphere which surrounds it; the period abruptly put to all human schemes, and speculations; the dismay of the professing church, and the consternation of the world; the eternal disruption of ties which are not cemented by faith in Christ, with the everlasting reünion of those who have "died in the Lord." These, and many similar subjects of elevated meditation, are afforded by the fact of the Lord's Second Advent. And what thoughts more worthy to fill the mind! How solemn, how grand, how calculated to excite the deepest interest! These are no idle speculations, no vain imaginings. They are subjects vast and elevated, edifying and profitable. Let, therefore thoughtful men hitherward direct their attention. They will find in the Second Advent matter of abundant interest. They will learn lessons in the

school of Christ, which they cannot learn elsewhere; and, whilst in the general wreck of all things, the gigantic results of human thought and intellect shall vanish away, the fruit of their meditation on the day of God shall not be abortive, but effectual, through Christ, to preparedness to meet the Bridegroom, and to enter with him into the marriage.

6. Nor is there less in the Second Advent, to engage the MAN OF IMAGINATION.

God has been pleased to give you, peculiarly, that remarkable gift, whereby you are enabled to expatiate over regions boundless, and unexplored. Remember, however, that it is a gift, and is to be used to the glory of the giver. Now, to what point can this high and wondrous quality of the human mind be better addressed, than to the consideration of those things which "must shortly come to pass?" The whole compass of creation presents no such lofty and varied subjects to man's imagination, as the period of consummation. Does splendor dazzle? What splendor shall equal the lustre of that day, when all the glories of heaven shall descend to earth,—when the bright forms of the celestial host, angel and archangel, shall irradiate this lower world,—nay, when He, who is himself "the Light," shall be revealed, "whose going forth is prepared as the morning," arising "with healing in his wings!" Or, does beauty charm? What beauty may be compared to the grace and comeliness of those forms, which, just risen from the sleep of death, and moulded in their Saviour's image, surround his throne! Theirs is the hue of immortality, and their colors

are from the storehouse of heaven, for they "shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father, and as the brightness of the firmament, forever and ever." Again; does variety please? Behold, "a new heaven and a new earth," with new wonders of creation. There, the wilderness shall bloom like Eden, and the desert as the garden of the Lord; there, fountains shall spring up in the desert; there, "dust shall be the serpent's meat," and "the lion shall eat straw like the ox;" and there, "nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

Here are subjects real, vast, and brilliant, and more worthy to occupy the imagination, than any which ideal worlds can supply.

7. And if there is much in these subjects to engage men of imagination, shall we not urge them, also, on THOSE MEN OF FACT AND CALCULATION, who can see no real good in anything beyond this present world? But the world will not last forever. Nay, we are all made to feel that the fashion of this world passeth away. In things around us, in the changes of society, in our own families, fortunes, and persons, the consciousness is forced upon us that there is no stability, and that "man walketh in a vain shadow." But what does the future disclose? Eternity, with all its tremendous accompaniments of judgment, retribution, and everlasting doom! Here are realities in comparison to which the things of earth are but shadows. Here are facts, amazing facts, suited to the consideration of men of fact; and here are calculations as to the amount of their own interest in these things, suited to cal-

culating men. Let the men of the world pause. Let them consider on what they are spending their strength, their labor, their talents. At best, they are but uncertainties, of which the tie may suddenly be broken, and from which they must, of necessity, soon be called to part. Is it wise, then, to dwell so exclusively on these things? Is it wise to make them the first pursuit? Is there no deep instruction in that counsel propounded by the Eternal Wisdom: "Seek ye *first the kingdom of God*, and his righteousness?" Truly, "God taketh the wise in their own craftiness." Those whom the world despises and accounts as fools, are, like the ants, "a people not strong, but wise," who lay up against the evil day. Whilst, on the other hand, the wise of this world, the men of thought and calculation, whose word is an oracle to their generation, they, unable to look beyond the present, are making no provision for the future. Thus, on either hand, will be fulfilled in multitudes that Scripture, "A prudent man foreseeth the evil and hideth himself; but the simple pass on and are punished." Oh, that the worldly wise would seek true wisdom; considering another Scripture, which says, "If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise."

8. Lastly, how excellent is this subject to **THE REAL CHRISTIAN.**

Believer, it is thy happy privilege to be "accepted in the beloved," to have had thy "sin covered," and to have "passed from death unto life." Wait then for the manifestation of Him, who is "the life;" for, "when Christ, who is our life,



shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory." A waiting attitude is that which becomes thee, for Christ has commanded, "Be ye like men who wait for their Lord."

Wait, therefore, but wait *with patience*. Let not the anticipation of the near approach of the Saviour beget restlessness, but rather lead to calmness and repose. There is a patient, and there is an impatient waiting. It is the former that the Christian is thus exhorted: "The Lord direct your hearts into the *patient* waiting for Christ." And, again: "In *patience* possess ye your souls." Wait, also, with the *expectation of its near approach*. Realize the coming of the Lord as near at hand. Do not suppose that any considerable period must intervene before the Second Advent. Accustom yourself to regard it as "nigh, even at the doors." Familiarize yourself with the event; and always have before you, at least, the possibility, that your eyes may shortly behold, coming in the clouds, Him whom, not having seen, you love. And, need it be further added, wait *with diligence* in appointed duties. The Master, in the parable, when leaving his house, gave to each servant his appointed work, and commanded the porter to watch. How great, how urgent is our work; how short the time appointed for its execution, and how certain the account to be rendered! Let the Christian, therefore, be found "not slothful in business," but "fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." Let him be with his loins girt and his lamp burning, diligently occupied in his Master's service. Thus engaged, he shall "not be ashamed before Him at his coming." He shall hail with joy the

harbingers of his advent, "the signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars." Then shall he lift up his head, knowing that his salvation draweth nigh. And, amidst the groans of dissolving nature, and the wreck of a shattered creation, he shall be received into those scenes of enduring felicity, where there shall be no decay, and where repose, and happiness, and joy, shall be his everlasting portion.

Such are the sure realities which await the Christian when his Lord returns, the lively expectation of which now cheers and animates the soul.

Reader, are these thy hopes, and are these thy expectations? Where is thine heart? Is it with Christ, or is it fixed on things of sense? Remember that "the time is short." Delay no more. "Seek the Lord while he may be found." Press into his kingdom; and whilst it is permitted, "Acquaint thyself with him, and be at peace. Thereby good shall come unto thee."

# GLORIFICATION.

- I. IN WHAT GLORIFICATION CONSISTS.
- II. WHEN IT TAKES PLACE.
- III. THE PERIOD OF THE SECOND ADVENT.
- IV. THE NEARNESS OF THE SECOND ADVENT.
- V. THE FIRST RESURRECTION.
- VI. THE LIVING SAINTS CAUGHT UP.
- VII. PRACTICAL BEARING OF THE SUBJECT.

BY THE

REV. MOURANT BROCK, M. A

Chaplain to the Bath Penitentiary.



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THAT it may please thee of thy gracious goodness shortly to accomplish the number of thine elect, and to hasten thy kingdom ; that we, with all those that are departed in the true faith of thy holy name, may have our perfect consummation and bliss, both in body and soul, in thy eternal and everlasting glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. — *Burial Service.*

## NOTE.

THE English pre-millennial adventists have given to the world many valuable works on the subject of the advent. They differ somewhat from us on the question of the restoration of Israel, and of the nature of the millennium. But in the speedy return of our King, the first resurrection, the personal reign, and the high practical influence of the doctrine, we perfectly accord. This work, which we now give to the public, we regard as among the best small works of the kind. We commend it to the prayerful examination of all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth.

J. V. HIMES.

## GLORIFICATION.

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SALVATION is a work present and future. Present, as it regards the justification and sanctification of the believer—future, as it relates to his glorification. Thus, the Scriptures sometimes speak of the people of God as now saved: “He that heareth my word and believeth on him that sent me hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but *is passed* from death unto life;”\* and sometimes of their salvation as future—“Salvation *ready to be* revealed;”† and again, “Now is our salvation *nearer* than when we believed.”‡ Hence, believers *are now* saved, and yet *to be* saved. They are *now* saved, entirely saved from the guilt of sin by the grace of God through the blood of the Redeemer, which is their Justification; they are *now* saved, partially saved from the power of sin, by the influence of the Holy Ghost, the purchase of the Redeemer, which is their sanctification; and they are yet *to be* saved, fully and finally saved, from “the bondage of corruption,” by the mighty power of God, at the resurrection, which is their glorification.§

It is of this GLORIFICATION that it is now pro-

\* John v. 24.

† 1 Pet. i. 5.

‡ Rom. xiii. 11.

§ For the two former subjects, see the opposite page.

posed to treat. And may God the Spirit be pleased to bless what is offered?

Glorification is a subject for believers. It is their inheritance. They ought, therefore, to acquaint themselves with what the Lord has graciously revealed concerning it; and to such especially as are under tribulation, will the consideration of the joy set before them be found most precious:

The subject, moreover, peculiarly belongs to tried and experienced Christians, to those who know the power of "the dying of the Lord Jesus." It is not so much a subject for those who are but just initiated into the divine life. We must first become acquainted with the doctrines of the cross, before we go on to those of the crown. Paul, when present with the Corinthians, would only know among them "Christ, and him crucified;" not glorified, but crucified.\* This was a doctrine most suited to the state of that corrupt church. Amongst other churches, he was willing to know Christ glorified, as he did when present with the Thessalonians, a church advance in grace.† From the order and nature of the subjects, it is evident that we must receive a crucified Saviour, before we can know him as a glorified king. Christ was first debased, then exalted; and as we are conformed to him in his humiliation, so are we prepared to follow him in his exaltation. The cross leads to the crown. He talks vainly of the latter,

\* Is not this text frequently misapplied, as if *we now* were to know only a *crucified* Jesus? — whereas, this is only the grand fundamental doctrine whence we go on to others.

† 2 Thes. ii. 5.

who has not experienced the power of the former . Well says Martin Luther, speaking of the false prophets of his day, "If you hear nothing from them but smooth, tranquil, and forsooth what they call devout religious contemplations, regard them not; for there is wanting the characteristic of the Son of man, of the Man of sorrows; there is wanting the cross, the only touchstone of Christians, and the sure discerner of spirits. Listen not even to a glorified Jesus, unless you find he was first crucified."\* Admirable counsel!

In attempting to state the doctrine of glorification, we notice—

I. IN WHAT GLORIFICATION CONSISTS.

1. There will be a great change in the bodies of believers.

St. Paul gives us five particulars of this change, teaching us that these bodies will be incorruptible—glorious—powerful—spiritual—heavenly.† And, again he says that "our vile body shall be fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body."‡ What "the glorious body" of Christ is, we know from the transfiguration, when "the fashion of his countenance was altered," "and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light." Such, then, will be the bodies of his saints. "We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is."

2. Further, there will be a great enlargement in the intellectual faculties of the saints. Speaking of the present state compared with the future,

\* Milner's Church History, vol. v., p. 48.

† 1 Cor. xv. 42, 43, 44, 49. ‡ Phil. iii. 21.

St. Paul says, "Now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." As, therefore, we are now known, and thoroughly discerned by the heavenly powers, so shall we then know, and thoroughly be acquainted with, them. As to any future change in the *soul*, I am not aware of such being mentioned in Scripture. The change in the body is future, the change in the soul present. Believers are in their souls now regenerated, and made new creatures in Christ Jesus. They will require, in a future state, no new creation or new birth. But their bodies will need both. And from the soul no longer oppressed by the body, but aided by it, who can tell what glowing love shall then burst forth to God! At that period there will be no exercise of hope—none of faith—none of patience; love alone will remain. Then, all hindrances from the old and corrupt nature being removed, the regenerate principle in the soul, at present under restraint, shall fully shine forth. Thus with perfect knowledge in the intellect, with perfect love in the soul, and a perfect body as a fit receptacle for both, what glorious creatures shall the saints be! "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." Adored be that grace which hath set before us this lively hope through the Gospel of truth!

II. THE TIME WHEN GLORIFICATION TAKES PLACE comes next to be considered.

1. From what has been said above, it will be evident that this is not at death. Death is the dismemberment of the creature, and to a being



so dislocated there can be no glory. God has united the soul and body; the one, therefore, without the other cannot be in a state of perfection, and hence cannot be in a state of glory. Again; believers are members one of another. United, they make one catholic body. But, there can be no glory to this body unless it has all its members complete, because the deficiency, even of the least, would cause want of symmetry and proportion. Now, the death of an individual only adds one fresh member, nay, only part of a fresh member, a soul without a body, to those who have gone before; and many other members, it is evident, yet remain to be gathered before the church can be glorified.

The Scripture describes the condition of the departed as one of *rest*—"They rest from their labors." Blessed is this state indeed! but this is not glory—rather, it is not the glory of which the Scriptures speak. Nay, the heavenly vision implies that the souls of the departed are yet praying for something ulterior. Their cry, as heard by the beloved disciple, was, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" They are represented as looking for some better thing yet to come. Surely, then, the expression, "church triumphant," as applied to departed saints, is not in its fullest sense correct—whilst, a similar term, "gone to glory," conveys also an erroneous idea. The souls of deceased saints are happy and blessed; but they are neither "triumphant," nor "in glory," in the sense in which Scripture represents they shall be. Glory, moreover,

is never in the New Testament connected with death; nor is the subject of death used in Scripture as a motive to any end. What a discrepancy is there here between the word of God and a multitude of pious, well-intentioned books, which have been written on the subject!

2. When, then, does Glorification take place? We reply, *at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*. The Scripture is explicit on this head. It is written, "The earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God;" and, believers "wait for the redemption of the body."\* The body is as much the purchase of Christ's blood as the soul. Its redemption from the power of death will be at the last day: "I will redeem them from death,"—and then, in body and soul complete, will be the "manifestation of the sons of God" in glory. So also in Col. iii., "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." To Timothy, Paul writes, "The time of my departure is at hand: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give at that day." And Peter, in his first epistle, says, "Hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ:" and again, "Salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." Hence, we may see that the Second Advent, and not the hour of death, is the period appointed by the Lord for the glory of his people. Death is an individual act, but the coming of the Lord a catholic event.

\* Rom. viii. 19, 23.

Then only will the Church be complete; and, consequently, then only can she be glorified.\* The full glory of Christ and his people shall take place together: "He shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe." Then shall he assume his "many crowns," and his people enter into the joy of their Lord.

III. THE PERIOD OF THE SECOND ADVENT is the point which we propose next to consider.

On this subject, as is well known, there exists great diversity of opinion.

Christians, however, are generally agreed in this, that there will be a reign of righteousness upon earth, commonly called the Millennium. Whether the Lord's Advent will be before, or after, this time is the question debated. That it is *before*, we now from Scripture endeavor to show. Omitting any proof from the Old Testament, we at once pass to the New.

1. Our Saviour, in two discourses, one spoken at a distance from Jerusalem,† and another delivered on Mount Olivet,‡ teaches us what the state of society will be at the time of his coming. He says, "As it was in the days of Noe,—as it was in the days of Lot,—they were eating and drinking, planting and building; even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed." And, he adds, "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith§ on the earth?"¶—implying

\* See. Heb. xi. 39, 40.

† Luke xvii. 20, to the end; and xviii. 1 to 8.

‡ Matt. xxiv. 37.

§ Or, "*the* faith,"—from what goes before, probably, the faith of his coming.

¶ Luke xviii. 8.

that He shall find but little faith. St. Paul, Jude and Peter, in their epistles, testify to the same state of things. Hence, it follows, that, when Christ is revealed, it will be at a period of general corruption of manners. Now, up to the present time, which is nearly two thousand years since our Lord's manifestation in the flesh, what have we seen but apostasy? What is the world's present state but apostasy? And the above Scriptures teach, that, at the time of the end, there will be apostasy still, and that even to a greater extent than at present! Where, then, are we to introduce the Millennium? It clearly has not been manifested; it is not now being manifested; whilst, the chronological prophecies plainly show, that, with the greatest latitude of interpretation, there is no space for it to be interposed between the present time and the coming of Christ. If, then, this reign of righteousness has not been, is not now, and cannot be before the Second Advent of Christ, it is evident that it must take place after he comes: hence, we look for a Premillennial Advent of our Lord.

2. Many of our Lord's parables establish this fact, the greater number of them being prophetic.

The parable of the wise and foolish virgins points to the state of the professing church at our Lord's second coming, when even the wise virgins slumbered and slept. Thus, when our Lord appears, and even when the cry goes forth, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh!" it will generally take even believers by surprise. It is at *midnight* that the cry is made. Look at Christendom; consider the gross darkness of the Papacy, the profound

ignorance of the Greek, Coptic, and Oriental churches, the deep slumber of the Protestant and other churches abroad; mark the unwillingness too generally displayed at home to hear this warning voice, which is now, blessed be God, from watchman to watchman taken up. Slumber is upon the eyelids, though the cry is being raised. What, then, hinders but that the Bridegroom should be at hand, even at the doors? \* This parable, therefore, shows that the state of Christendom at the time of the end will not be one of activity and watchfulness. Our Lord's discourses in the previous section † show the same truth, but in stronger colors, and, perhaps take in a wider range. The argument there used, as to the impossibility of a period of blessedness intervening between the present time and that period, will apply also to the interpretation of the parable now under consideration, and will again show that Christ comes before the Millennium.

The parable of the nobleman intrusting money to his dependents next claims our attention. ‡

\* It is not merely in Great Britain that the expectation of the near return of the Redeemer is entertained, and the voice of warning raised, but also in America, India, and on the continent of Europe. I was lately told by one of our German missionaries that in Wirtemburgh there is a Christian colony of several hundreds, one of the chief features of which is the looking for the Second Advent. And a Christian minister from near the shores of the Caspian Sea has told me, that there is the same daily expectation among his nation. They constantly speak of it as "the day of consolation." In a little publication, entitled "The Millennium," the writer says that he understands in America about 300 ministers of the Word are thus preaching "the Gospel of the kingdom;" whilst in this country, he adds, about 700 of the Church of England are raising the same cry.

† Page 9.

‡ Luke xix. 11.

It was spoken when our Lord was near Jerusalem, and the object was to undeceive his disciples who thought "that the kingdom of God should *immediately appear*." Their idea of the kingdom, as that of the whole nation, was, that it was to be established on earth, and at Jerusalem. Nor does our Lord, either here or elsewhere, tell them that they were mistaken. Nay, this parable, and others, rather tends to confirm them in their error, if, indeed, error it was, for from it one would rather infer that they were right as to the kingdom, though wrong as to the time. On another occasion he teaches them that it was not allowed them "to know the *times* and the *seasons*" of its manifestation. They expected a kingdom: this the parable allows. They expected it *then*: this the parable disallows. The scope of the parable, therefore, is clear—namely, that the kingdom of God was not to appear for a considerable period. Now, let us consider the parable itself.

It refers, as all will allow, to our Lord's coming and his kingdom. We are, therefore, to learn from it facts as to their manifestation.

The character spoken of is a nobleman—one who in rank was raised above his fellow-citizens, but not possessing kingly power till a period subsequent to the opening of the parable. In order to be invested with this kingdom, or, as it may be rendered, *royalty*,\* he goes "into a far country, and returns," to exercise at home the regal authority he has acquired. In the mind of his sovereign, he was a king when he left his country; but it was

\* See Campbell's Note.

not till his return, after investiture, that he could exercise regal power. To show that the kingdom in question was not foreign, but domestic, it is added, "His citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, 'We will not have this man to reign over us.'" As to his servants, before his departure, he calls ten of them, (for such is the meaning of the phrase,) and entrusts to them several sums of money. In process of time he returns, "having received the kingdom," and then proceeds to its administration, recompensing his *servants* by rewarding the deserving and punishing the slothful; whilst, as to his *enemies*—namely, the rebellious citizens—these he commands to be slain before him.

Here, then, we see the Lord Jesus Christ, and his kingdom, in their present and future manifestations. When the Lord was on earth, he was by right a king, but had not then entered upon the administration of his kingdom. At his ascension, he went "into a far country," even into "the heaven of heavens," where the Father invests him with a kingdom,—“Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.” His *citizens* have refused his rule, and his *servants* are some using, and some abusing, the talents he has committed to them. By and by, the time appointed by the Father for the subjugation of his enemies arrives, and “He comes in his glory,” and “sits in the throne of his glory;” then, he receives the kingdom for which he went, and possesses it, not only in right, but in reality; then, he administers it in person; then, he rewards his servants, bad and good, according to their deserts,

and his enemies who refused his reign are cast into outer darkness.

Can any one from this parable avoid the conclusion that the advent of our Lord is premillennial? \* •

We next pass to "the parable of the tares of the field."† Good seed is sown by a householder; by night an enemy sows tares among the wheat; they appear, and spring up together: the servants desire to root up the tares, but are prevented, lest the wheat should be injured.

Such is the parable. Our Lord's interpretation is as follows. He himself is the sower; the field is the world; the good seed and the tares are, respectively, "the children of the kingdom," and "the children of the wicked one; the enemy is

\* So strong was the conviction produced on the mind of the learned author of the *Harmonia Evangelica* by this parable, that he says, "The consideration of the parable, and the difficulty, or, rather, the impossibility of explaining it satisfactorily and consistently upon any other principle than that of a reference to the millenary dispensation, contributed, as much as anything else, to confirm the author's belief in the futurity of that dispensation, and, in fact, first to draw his attention seriously to this subject. The difficulty which was felt by himself, he is persuaded, will be felt by any other person who shall attempt to explain the parable without doing violence to it, and to find a counterpart for it in any economy, or in reference to any kingdom of Christ, whether past or to come, but that." —*Greswell*. The application of this parable, as the above author observes, is made yet more clear from circumstances happening at the period when it was spoken. Great men were wont to go to Rome for investiture in governments conferred on them by that mighty power; and our Lord probably had in his eye an event which had happened about 30 years previously. For Archelaus, who had been appointed to reign in Judea, was a nobleman, being the son of Herod the Great, and went into a far country, to Italy, to receive his kingdom, and to return.

† Matt. xiii. 24.



the Devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels," whom the Lord "shall send forth, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity." Here, is the state of the church from the first preaching the Gospel up to the time of the Lord's Advent. Good and bad are mixed together; iniquity abounds; and the decree is, "Let both *grow together until* the harvest."

The parable of the drag-net,\* lastly, claims our attention. Being cast into the water, it gathers of every kind of fish; when full, it is drawn to shore; the good are then gathered into vessels, but the bad are cast away. The interpretation is thus given by our Lord: "So shall it be at the end of the world (or, close of the age:) the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire." This parable, therefore, as the preceding, marks the state of the church from the beginning of the Gospel up to the time of the end. Like the former, it shows that the bad and good are to be mixed together even to the last; that there is to be *no gradual amelioration* of the world, as is often supposed; but that at Christ's epiphany the state of mankind will be as corrupt and vile as it now is.

Taken together, these parables establish *two* facts. One, that at the first preaching of the Gospel the righteous and the wicked were con-founded together, even as fish, good and bad, enclosed in the same drag-net; or, as tares and

\* Matt. xii. 47.

wheat growing together in the same field. The other, that, from that period up to the time of separation at the Lord's coming, *without any intermission or change*, they were to *continue*, and *will continue*, mixed and confused together. Hence, therefore, it is again evident that there is no blessed period of righteousness to the church before the Lord's appearing; but that by his coming he will himself bring in his glorious kingdom.

With declarations so plain of the continuance of the present state of things unaltered up to the period of judgment, it seems surprising that we have not always clearly seen that it was Christ's appearance at his Advent, and that alone, which was intended in the Divine counsels to introduce his happy reign. When he comes, but not till then, will the tares be separated from the wheat, and the net being drawn to shore, the assortment of its contents will take place. Then, as when the priests of Baal were cut off by Elijah, the rain long withheld fell upon the earth; so, the wicked being removed, the curse shall be taken away from the ground, and, the dew of the Divine blessing being no longer restrained, all shall be happiness and peace and joy.\*

4. The declaration contained in Acts iii. 21, also leads to the same conclusion—"Whom the heaven must receive till the times of the restitution of all things." Here, two facts are evident. One, that there can be no millennium till this restitution takes place; the other, that Christ comes not

\* See Isa. xi. and lxx. 17, 25.

to destroy the earth, but to restore it. There is nothing of annihilation in Scripture, either as it regards the earth or our bodies; *change only* is spoken of.

5. We will take only one other argument further to confirm this doctrine. St. Paul, in his second epistle\* to the Thessalonians, delivers a prophecy concerning "*the apostasy,*" and the "*wicked,*" or lawless one, called also by him "*the man of sin,* the son of perdition."† He declares that in an age of the church, then future, he was to be revealed; that "*the mystery of iniquity*" (*i. e.*, of the man of sin) did already work; but that when a certain cause, which then hindered, was removed, he would be manifested, and subsequently be destroyed at the coming of Christ. Here we have "*the mystery of iniquity*" at work from the days of Paul, *without any intermission*, up to the time of the end. The seed of the "*falling away,*" or apostasy, sown in the apostles' times, germinates, breaks forth, and comes to maturity in that Wicked One, Antichrist, the enemy of God and man, who continues on the earth till the Lord destroys him with the brightness of his coming," even with the épiphany of his presence. Now, where in this prophecy is a reign of righteousness to intervene? Does it not declare that the present dispensation begins, continues, and ends with apostasy? Yes, with the exception of the remnant, all is apostasy

\* Chapter ii.

† The same, apparently, as spoken of by Isaiah xi. 4, under the same name. Called, also, by him "*the Assyrian,*" ch. x. xiv. and xxxi. Also by the same name by Micah, ch. v. By Ezekiel, "*Gog,*" ch. xxxviii. In a word, Antichrist, in his yet most terrible shape.

and will be to the end. Then, and only then, shall the Lord by his own presence bring health and healing; then, and not before, shall "a King reign in righteousness, and princes rule in judgment."

Sufficient, it is hoped, has now been advanced, to show that Christ's second Advent must be before the millennium; and that till that event no reign of righteousness on earth can take place.

As it is frequently urged against the doctrine here advanced that it is a novelty, it may be as well to state that this was the view taken of Scripture by the early Christians. Bishop Newton says, "The doctrine of the millennium was generally believed in the three first and purest ages." And Bishop Jeremy Taylor, though opposed to this interpretation of Scripture, also testifies, "The doctrine of the millennium was in the best ages esteemed no heresy, but true catholic doctrine."\*

IV. We next consider the NEAR APPROACH of our Lord's Epiphany.

Amongst the reasons for believing that this event is at hand, are the following:

1. The running out (as is generally agreed) of the prophetic dates; so that this, or any succeeding year, the saints may be caught up, and the Lord appear.

2. The general preaching of the gospel is also a remarkable sign of the times. Our Lord declares, that when it has been "preached in all the

\* Quoted by Brooks, on Prophecy, pp. 76 and 78. See the whole chapter, and read the works of this excellent author.

world for a witness unto all nations," "then shall the end come." And, in Rev. xiv., after the angel has been seen, "having the gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth," it immediately follows, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen." Thus showing when the testimony of that gospel has been carried throughout the earth, and God's remnant gathered out, that then the end comes. Now, if there be amongst us those who are comforting themselves with the thought that the end cannot be yet, because the gospel has not been preached to such and such countries, let them remember that Paul says, in his day, the gospel was "preached to every creature which is under heaven;" in other words, to the Roman empire. Let them consider what has been since done, and what is now doing; let them remember that the East, now Mahomedan, was once Christian; that Northern Africa was once the glory of Christendom; and that to the Chinese the Nestorians have long ago conveyed the gospel. Let them put these things together,—let them consider how far the gospel has thus been "preached for a witness," and awake from their carnal security. If they are looking for days of ease yet to come, let them not trust to this broken reed to support their fallacious expectation.

3. The remarkable increase of knowledge is another sign of our being near the end. "Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased."\* How marvellously do we see this now to be the case, and to an extent hitherto quite

\* Dan. xii. 4.

unparalleled. All kinds of science have been wonderfully developed; whilst, as to religious knowledge, since the beginning of this century, the word of God has been circulated in upwards of 200 languages and dialects. The present long period of European peace, with the commercial ascendancy of Protestant and scientific Britain throughout the world, doubtless have not been without their object in the divine counsels.

4. The abounding of iniquity is another sign of our being near the great crisis. "In the last days perilous times shall come;" men shall be "scoffers, walking after their own lusts." The development of atheistic principles in the French Revolution gave a shock to European society from which, apparently, it will never recover. There is, perhaps, no one European government, the rulers of which are not "at their wit's end" to keep under the raging spirit of democracy and anarchy. All agree that the present state of society is like the heaving of a volcano, and no one knows but that at the next moment its terrific elements may burst forth. How fearful is the state of our own beloved country! Blasphemy, revolution and misery, to a great extent, feed on the masses; whilst, amongst the more educated, both in England, Ireland, and Scotland, fearful principles of evil and disunion widely prevail.\*

\* *The Weekly Dispatch* and *The Northern Star*, two blasphemous and revolutionary newspapers, have attained the enormous circulation of 150,000 weekly. These, however, are exceeded in atrocity by 163 different unstamped newspapers, vying with each other in the most atrocious statements, maintaining the lawfulness of rebellion, &c.

In Paris, during the seven years ending 1821, upwards of two

5. The wasting of the Turkish empire, or “drying-up of the Euphrates” of Revelation,—an event closely bearing on the Advent,—is another sign of the end.

What have we not seen in our own day? The suicidal acts of the murder, by their respective princes, of those terrible warriors, the Janissaries and the Mamelukes; Greece; and other dependencies, rent from the oppressor; the Balkan turned by a Russian foe; the destruction of the Mussulman fleet at Navarino, that “untoward event;” the subjugation of Algiers; the fall of Acre; the wasting of Affghanistan and neighboring Islam countries; Morocco humbled; the steady waning of the Crescent, up to this moment, through the whole peninsula of India, and throughout the world; with, finally, the substitution of the British impress on the coinage of that vast country, instead of the “image and superscription” of the Mahomedan princes. All these things show the “drying-up” of that once dreadful power.

million volumes of the works of Voltaire and Rousseau were printed. In Germany, a work has recently appeared, by H. Haire, a writer of great reputation on the Continent, which, the *Quarterly Review* informs us, has created an *extraordinary sensation* both in France and Germany. This writer states, that they have *outrgrown* Deism, and advocates *Pantheism*, or the doctrine that there is no divinity but man, and that all men are gods. Materialism, he says, is the religion of all their greatest *thinkers* and best artists. Contemplating the growth of these principles, and looking forward to the results, he states, that “these doctrines have developed revolutionary forces, which now only wait the moment to *explode* and fill the world with terror and admiration.” “*Then*,” he adds, “will be performed a drama, compared to which the French Revolution was but an innocent idyl!”.—*Prophetic Lectures at St. George's, Bloomsbury*, 1843.

Where are now those "locusts," which, in the space of a century, established their withering dominion over a territory reaching from the Euphrates to the banks of the Tagus? — where those irresistible warriors who cruelly ravaged Italy, thundering at the gates of Vienna, and drank at the waters of the Loire? who, but three centuries ago, made our forefathers to tremble? They are fallen from their high estate; their glory is departed; their strength is "dried up." And when, in God's appointed time, any of the European monarchies gives the word, they will cease to be! Adored be Thou, in all thy works, O Lord, holy and true!

6. Again, the wonderful movement that is going on in the Jewish mind presages some strange event. Nor is the turning of the Gentile mind towards the Jew less extraordinary. We see corresponding principles in both commencing their development in a manner which has not been since the beginning of the gospel. Now, their restoration and conversion, we find from Scripture, are closely connected with the Second Advent.\* May we not, then, hope that "the time to favor Zion, yea, the set time is come," since the Lord's "servants take pleasure in her stones, and favor the dust thereof?"

7. Lastly. "At midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the Bridegroom cometh — go ye out to meet him." How deep the midnight of Chris-

\* We differ from the author on this subject. The only restoration for which we look, is in the resurrection of the whole House of Israel, at the Second Advent. *Pub. of the American Ed.*



tendom is we have already observed ! How that cry is being raised we have also noticed. In the parable it is shown, that, presently after the warning voice is uttered, the Bridegroom of the church comes !

Let, then, believers be awaking from their slumbers too long protracted ; let them arise, and be trimming their lamps. Now is no time for sleep : the day — the bright, the glorious day of Christ is at hand. Believers, “ Let us not sleep as do others.” “ Ye are the children of the light and of the day.” Watch, therefore, and be sober. Take diligent heed to “ the signs of the times.” Let it be your praise, like that of the excellent Thessalonians, “ Ye are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.” Partake not of the deathful slumber everywhere poured around. Awake ! arise ! “ Behold, the Bridegroom cometh ; go ye forth to meet him.”

V. It is now proposed to say a few words on the **RESURRECTION.**

All, we know, will rise, the righteous and the wicked ; but, the Scripture teaches that the resurrection of believers will take place at Christ's coming,\* and, on a literal interpretation, at least a thousand years before that of the ungodly.† But here, at once, it will be objected, Is it not said that all will rise at the day of judgment ; and does not a day consist of twenty-four hours ? Certainly all, both good and bad, will rise at “ the day of judgment ;” but a little attention to Scripture will show that the terms “ day ” and “ hour ” are used by the sacred writers to mean a period of any du-

\*1 Cor. xv. 23.

† Rev. xx.

ration. Thus, in Gen. ii. 4, the word "day" is employed to express the *seven days* of the creation. And, in Ps. xcvi., "The day of temptation in the wilderness" is afterwards declared to be *forty years*. Thus, our Lord also says, "Abraham rejoiced to see my day." And what is that day, but a period looking at least from the first to the second coming of Christ, and now including nearly *two thousand years*? By the word "day," therefore, we understand *a period of time*; and, in this instance, one, at least, of a thousand years, during which Christ will reign, and execute with his saints the several acts of "judgment written." This millenary reign will be but for a limited period; for it has an end.\* \* \* \*

Then shall time merge into eternity, and "the children of the resurrection," having been rewarded in that temporal dispensation according to their present exertions, shall enter with him into his heavenly and *eternal* glory, in which he shall reign forever and ever.

Such, to speak with humility, appears to be the revelation of Scripture concerning some features of the kingdom of Christ.

The table on the next page gives some idea of the relative amount of what is said in Scripture.

1. Respecting the resurrection of the righteous by themselves.

2. Of the wicked by themselves.

3. Of both mentioned together, without reference to time. And,

4. Of the resurrection of the righteous, as contrasted with that of the wicked.

THE FOLLOWING TABLE SHOWS THE RELATIVE AMOUNT OF SCRIPTURE IN REFERENCE TO THE RESURRECTION OF THE JUST AND UNJUST.

I. Passages referring to the Resurrection of the Righteous only, without any reference to the Wicked.	II. Passages referring to the Resurrection of the Wicked only.	III. Passages referring to the Resurrection of the Righteous and Wicked mentioned together, without reference to the time when each class shall respectively rise.	IV. Passages referring to the Resurrection of the Righteous, as contrasted with that of the Wicked.
<p>Hos. xiii. 14. I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death.</p> <p>Luke xiv. 14. Thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.</p> <p>John vi. 39, 40, 44. And this is the Father's will, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.—And I will raise him up at the last day.—And I will raise him up at the last day.</p> <p>Rom. vi. 5, 9. We shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.—We believe that we shall also live with him.</p> <p>Rom. viii. 23. Waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.</p> <p>1 Cor. vi. 14. God will also raise up us by his own power.</p> <p>2 Cor. iv. 14. He shall raise up us also by Jesus.</p>	<p>Rev. xx. v. The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished.</p> <p>Rev. xx. 12. 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.</p> <p>Eph. i. 14. Until the redemption of the purchased possession.</p> <p>Eph. iv. 30. Ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.</p> <p>Col. iii. 14. Then shall ye also appear with him in glory.</p> <p>1 Thes. iv. 13, to the end.</p>	<p>Isaiah xxvi. 19. They dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: and the earth shall cast out her dead, i. e. the <i>Rephaim</i>, or wicked dead.—<i>Leuth</i>.</p> <p>Daniel xii. 2. Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.*</p> <p>John v. 29. They shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation.</p> <p>Acts xxiv. 15. There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.</p>	<p>Luke xx. 35, 36. They which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead; being the children of the resurrection.</p> <p>John v. 29. They that have done good unto the resurrection of <i>Life</i>.</p> <p>Phil. iii. 11. If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.</p> <p>Heb. xi. 35. That they might obtain a better resurrection.</p> <p>Rev. xx. 5. The first resurrection.</p>

\*A friend thus renders this passage:—Many of the sleepers of the dust of the earth shall awake—these unto eternal life; but those, (i. e. the rest of the sleepers) as shameful ones, unto eternal contempt.

In this table one is surprised to see how little proportion there is between what refers to the righteous and to the wicked. The resurrection of the latter is, indeed, distinctly stated; but, whilst full particulars are given of what pertains to the righteous, of the nature, change, and assumption of their bodies, &c., nothing is stated of the bodies, or mode of resurrection, of the ungodly, — nothing more than the bare fact that they shall rise. Surely, then, as the Lord has dealt so bountifully with his saints, in giving them such minute details as to their own glorious change, it behoves them to inquire into these things; and, they have this promise for their encouragement — “The wise shall understand.”

In the preceding table (division III.) are notices of the resurrection of both the evil and the good, but without any reference to time. It is said, that some shall come forth “to the resurrection of life, and others to the resurrection of damnation.” The fact of a resurrection of the two parties is stated; but whether they are to be raised at the same moment, or whether a period, great or small, is to elapse between these events, these Scriptures do not at all intimate: on this subject they give no oracle: but there are others which do. Those, again, which speak only of the resurrection of the righteous, (see column I.) by omitting all notice of the wicked, imply priority in time; whilst those which are noticed in column IV., by speaking of *the* resurrection, have also the same tendency. St. Paul (1 Cor. xv., and 1 Thess. iv.) shows that this resurrection will be at Christ’s coming. In the former of these passages, he says, “Every man

in his own order," or rank, or band; "Christ the first-fruits." This is past. "Afterward, they that are Christ's, at his coming," the resurrection of the just. "Then cometh the end," or, then the end. Thus, as a space of nearly 2000 years has elapsed between "Christ the first-fruits" and "his coming," so between that coming, when his saints arise, and the end, a similar or a longer period (as far as the passage in question is concerned) may elapse. The righteous, then, at the coming of Christ, will be raised in "their own band;" but at what time the wicked will be called forth from their graves is left to an indefinite period. This passage marks the awaking to everlasting life as prior to awaking to everlasting contempt, but by how long a period is not specified. There is, however, another Scripture, which fixes this in the clearest manner. Rev. xix. 11 — 21, and xx., and perhaps xxi. 1, form a chronological prophecy, and give the desired instruction. Here the Lord appears with "many crowns," as "King of kings, and Lord of lords." He executes judgment on his enemies; Satan is bound; the saints rise, and with their Lord "reign a thousand years;" but the rest of the dead live not till the thousand years are expired. At the close of this period another apostasy takes place. Then, comes the last act of judgment, and with it the termination of the earthly kingdom, when a more glorious dispensation follows.

Why, when Scripture speaks so clearly, should we think it necessary to take it in a sense contrary to that which is most plain and obvious? Figures there are, of course; but, figures contain

facts. In the interpretation of Scripture, it is a fatal error to mistake a figure for a fact, or a fact for a figure. The writer does not say but that there are errors in regard to the literal method of interpretation; there are many; but, he believes that, through the figurative, large portions of Scripture remain neglected and unprofitable. He believes that the literal interpretation is alone able to disinter the prophets from those masses of uncertain interpretation under which they have long lain buried, and to cast upon the church of God those bright beams of light which will enable her to see clearly her way through the days of darkness which are coming upon the earth. He hails, with lively gratitude to God, the light which is daily spreading, especially among the ministers and people of the Church of England; and, he prays that the Lord of light will be pleased to communicate the same blessing to all churches of the saints!

Four particulars we learn from this part of our subject; that there is to be, —

1. An exclusive resurrection of the righteous.
2. That this is to take place at the Second Advent.
3. That it is to be before that of the wicked.
4. That it is to precede it by a thousand years.

Let us now turn to an event full of interest, which will take place at the coming of the Lord: namely, —

#### VI. THE RAPTURE OF THE LIVING SAINTS.

From the beginning of the world, the Lord has, for the comfort of his church, shown, from time to

time, his power over death. Thus, Enoch and Elijah were translated without seeing death. In the mount of transfiguration, by the change of our Saviour's mortal body, another example of a similar kind was afforded. Again, the Lord of life, after having recalled several from the sleep of death, himself arose from the grave. Then *after* his resurrection, "the bodies of many of the saints arose, and went into the holy city."\* But a yet greater exercise of authority over death still remains to be displayed. There are numbers who shall never die! death shall have no power over them! The saints who are on the earth at the Lord's coming shall not feel the subduing power of that dreaded foe: they shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. Transporting thought! "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first."† Thus, the righteous dead will first arise in glory; then, believers, who are on the earth, shall be changed, and, joined to them, shall form one brilliant and joyful throng. Together with them in the clouds, we shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air; and so, being assessors with him in the judgment, shall escape those evils that then shall come upon the earth. This change of the quick will also be momentary: "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, . . . we shall be changed." What a marvellous and stupendous event! How astonishing! How joyful! What a sudden, what a rapturous surprise! This

\* Matt. xxviii. 53.

† 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17.

moment, overwhelmed with weakness and infirmity; the next translated into strength and glory. This moment a child of mortality; the next, unexpectedly, instantaneously, a child of everlasting joy. What a change! What a felicity! With this blessedness set before us, is there a believer who does not long for the advent of Christ? Is there one who, without a thrill of rapture, can hear that this blessed epiphany may, probably, within a few — a very few — years, be revealed? What heart does not bound with expansive hope? What soul, stirred with deep emotion, does not, “with unutterable groanings,” cry, “Even so, come, Lord Jesus?” Yea, blessed Saviour, come, — come to thy long desolate and widowed church; and grant unto us, that we, being translated at thy appearing, may be amongst the number of those who shall never taste of death!

VII. In conclusion, we come to the PRACTICAL BEARING OF THE SUBJECT.

1. First, an *enlarged study of the Word of God*. There are masses of Scripture which refer solely, or mainly, to the future glorification of the saints; and these, when the mind becomes interested in the subject, are studied and considered. Here, at once, is a practical good. The writings of the prophets remain no longer unnoticed. Scripture is compared with Scripture, and a flood of light is poured upon the sacred page. Object after object of interest is disclosed; and those portions of the word which before excited no emotion, now call forth the deepest feeling.

2. Nothing, again, is more calculated to *wean*



*us from the love of the world* than the consideration of the glories of the Second Advent. Are our imaginations captivated by the lovely things around us? Are our fond hearts too deeply pledged to earthly joys? Then, what a word is that — “The earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up!” Who will be covetous, that believes the Lord Christ is at hand to destroy the worthless treasure? Who will be self-indulgent, that expects the immediate return of his Lord? Who will be dazzled with this world’s low ambition and paltry splendor, that has in his eye the speedy attainment of a crown of glory? O Saviour! there is that in the meditation of thy speedy coming which dries up the springs of concupiscence, mortifies the schemes of earthly ambition, causes the joys of this world to pall on the sense, and leaves no glory here, by reason of the glory that excelleth. O Saviour! let that glory speedily be revealed!

3. Further, do we complain of *timidity and want of zeal*? What motive so powerful, so constraining, as the speedy coming of the Lord? What! If I believe that suddenly I may see the saints of God snatched from my side, and hurried to glory, whilst I am left to desolation and woe, can I continue cold or lukewarm? If I am expecting presently to see the vials of wrath poured out on an ungodly world, shall I, in the face of that world, be afraid to confess my Lord and my God? No. The sense of these things being near steels the heart and nerves the hand. It gives elevation and boldness, promptness in design, and firmness in action. It makes a man regardless of

consequences, and only careful to be found in that day a firm and consistent follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. On the other hand, do we find those who love not to hear of the speedy return of the Lord? This is an awful sign, indeed. If you truly loved him, you would as truly desire to see him. Your language is, "Come Lord, but not yet." How fearful your state! You do not desire to see him! Alas! your heart has wandered from him; you fear, but do not love. The world has the ascendancy over you. It captivates your imagination, it engrosses your affections. You have a divided heart. Professors of the gospel, here is a test; and may God the Spirit apply it with power to your souls!

4. Another practical result immediately rising from these doctrines is, a feeling of *the necessity of assurance*. Do I believe that the Lord is at hand, and that he will presently separate his saints, previous to the destruction of the apostates? Am I, then, amongst the number of the saints? If not, how can I know a moment's repose? Hence there springs a deep desire of a personal interest in Christ, an assurance that we are his. We cannot desire the coming of our God unless we fully believe that that God is reconciled, perfectly reconciled, to us. Thus the soul is stirred up to more earnest prayer, and the pressure of these things discerned by faith leads the believer to nearer communion with his God.

5. *Consolation under trouble* also springs directly from the subjects under consideration. Some object dearly loved is taken from us; one who was the light of our eyes, from whose presence

joy was diffused on all around. Lonely, and in darkness, we are left to lament our bereavement. But a light breaks in on our desolation — “Them which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.” And is his coming near? Oh, blessed thought! Then soon shall I be restored to the society of those so fondly loved. Soon shall I see and recognize\* those dear departed saints arising victorious from the tomb. And then myself (should the Lord so ordain) with unutterable surprise and sudden rapture, “shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” Here, indeed, is strong consolation. Or, are we depressed under any other deep and abiding sorrow? The near prospect of glory cheers the heart. The bright realities of the future dissipate the darkness of the present; and the believing soul, though laboring and tempest-tossed, yet rejoices in hope, which is the anchor of his soul, both sure and steadfast.

O afflicted believer, cast thine eye forward on the bright, the transcendent future. Art thou overwhelmed by floods of tribulation? Does the fear of death encompass thee, or the sorrows of hell lay hold upon thee? Is it with thee the hour of darkness, and do the workings of the Tempter make thee afraid? “Behold, thy salvation cometh.” Lift up thine head, for thy redemption draweth nigh. He, thy strength and thy deliverer, is at hand, even at the doors. Prepare to meet

\* The whole passage shows that this happiness will be given us.

him. Brood no more over thy sorrows, but realize his appearing. So shalt thou be steadfast through hope. Brightness shall shine around thy path; thy sorrow shall be turned into joy; and thou shalt "rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

6. *Exertion* in the cause of Christ is another practical result to which the doctrine of the Second Advent leads. "The coming of the Lord draweth near." Then, in proportion as this is felt, every nerve will be strained for exertion, every energy put forth, every moment employed, every talent turned to the best advantage. Then, an intense feeling in regard to the souls of others will be excited; missions will be strongly advocated, both that men may be saved from impending judgments, and that we, being made the honored instruments for gathering out an election from the nations, the end may come. Oh! what a motive to exertion have we here! How powerful, how pressing, how abiding!

7. Lastly, *watchfulness* is greatly called forth by the prospect of the approach of our dear Redeemer. Do we believe the Lord to be at hand? Then there is no thought of slumber or inattention. Let those sleep who are putting off to an indefinite period the coming of the Lord. But how shall those who have heard the thrilling cry, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh," how shall they slumber or sleep? "My Lord delayeth his coming," and "Where is the promise of his coming?" these are the secret thoughts of the carnal heart, with which the conduct is in unison. But the believer, thoughtful and considerate, having a sure word of prophecy whereunto he takes heed, walks circumspectly.

He habitually realizes the Lord's coming in glory, the first resurrection, the momentary rapture of the saints, the dismay of the professing church, and the tremendous overthrow of the ungodly. These are to him daily and familiar thoughts; they fill his imagination, they deeply affect his heart. Hence, he is watchful; Satan and the world are kept at bay; the desires of the flesh and of the mind are successfully combated. A spirit of slumber, he feels, would be to him a spirit of destruction. "The Lord is at hand" continually thrills on his ears, and echoes through his heart. He is sober, and watches unto prayer, his loins girt, his light burning, even like a man who waits for his lord.

Thus have we taken a hasty view of this vast subject. May it be to the glory of God! The writer is well aware that the matter considered is distasteful to many even of the people of the Lord. He knows that the interpretation of Scripture here advocated carries with it, in the minds of many, the stamp of weakness, or enthusiasm. But his object is truth; and in endeavoring, however feebly, to illustrate what he believes to be the revealed will of God, he will gladly be counted a fool, if, by the grace of God, some through his folly might be made wiser than before. In proportion as a doctrine is precious, so is it hated and maligned by Satan. Many believers, blessed be God, know the preciousness of the one before us, and are not, consequently, surprised to see Satan's peculiar spite against it. They observe how it has been made odious by the turbulent Anabaptists of former days, and how it has been cherished by un-

scriptural sects of our own. But this does not surprise them, for they are not ignorant of "the depths of Satan." The light which they possess on these subjects, they cherish; by it they endeavor to walk more closely with their God, and they earnestly seek for more. May all who read this know the blessed power it exercises over the soul. May those who, like the writer in years gone by, are prejudiced against this heavenly doctrine, be led seriously to inquire into it. And, in the inquiry, may the same blessing which, through these things, has rested on his heart, be, by the power of the Spirit, made to light on theirs. That which he has found to himself to be, as it were, a second regeneration, he cannot but recommend, and earnestly press on others. Knowing the effective working, and practical bearing of this blessed doctrine, he cannot but commend it to his fellow-Christians. This, with earnest prayer for a blessing, he now does, concluding in the words of the learned and pious Joseph Mede:—"I give thanks to Almighty God, who hath made the light of these his wonderful mysteries to kindle that warmth in my heart, which I felt not till I began to see them, and which have made me that which they found me not."\*

\* Mede's Works, fol. ; Pref.

THE  
PRESENT AGE:

ITS  
BOASTED PROGRESS DELUSIVE.

FROM THE LONDON QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF PROPHECY,  
FOR JANUARY, 1850.

## THE AGE.

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THE special boast of the age is its *progress*. Upon this, its self-gratulations are numerous and fervent, as if it not only loved to advance, but to let the world know, as decidedly as possible, how much it thinks itself advancing.

Are these gratulations well founded? Is this progress a reality? Is there not exaggeration in the boasting? Are there not many compensating and neutralizing considerations which go far to raise the question whether, upon the whole, having respect to *minus* as well as the *plus* of the items, and looking well at the opposite sides of the great balance-sheet, there has been solid and thorough progress — progress which will abide — progress which has placed the nation, or the race, upon a higher level — spiritually, morally, intellectually, physically?

Let it be allowed that, *in many things*, the age is one of advancement. Thus much is notable, and beyond question. It would be unjust and unthankful, as well as untrue, not to allow this. We admit it ungrudgingly, not reluctantly, or through constraint. Into much that is true the age has found its way; and in several provinces of knowledge unreached by its predecessors it has made good its footing. Circle after circle has widened round it, and its discoveries are certainly neither shadows nor tinsel — they are real and solid. No Christian need fear to make this admission, nor think that by so doing he lowers the credit of the Scriptures, as the true fountain-head of God-given truth, or casts dishonor upon Him “in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.”

The *mental philosophy* of the age is, in some respects, of a truer kind than heretofore, though still cloudy and unsatisfying — nay, often stumbling into Scepticism,



**Pantheism, Atheism.** The *science* of the age is prodigiously in advance of former ages. The age's *literature* is wider in its range, and higher in its aim. Its *arts* are on a higher and more perfect scale. Its *astronomy* has searched the heavens far more extensively and profoundly. Its *geology* has pierced the earth more deeply and successfully. It — the age, we mean — has brought to light law after law in the system of the universe. It speeds over earth with a rapidity once unknown. It transmits intelligence not only more swiftly than sound, but more swiftly than the light. It is restoring fertility to the soil. It can shut out pain from the body, in circumstances which, but a few years ago, would have racked or torn every nerve. These things, and such as these, the age has discovered and done; and because of these things we may admit most freely that there has been, *in some things*, wondrous progress — progress which might be turned to the best account — progress for which praise is due to God.

All that is *true*, in any region of God's world, must, in its measure, be valuable. What is true is of God, and therefore not to be cast aside, because discovered by an unsanctified understanding, seeing God has often used his worst enemies as his servants, making them his hewers of wood and drawers of water. The value of a truth is not to be judged of by the character of the discoverer; for why may not God use the finger of a Balaam to point to the Star of Jacob? The difficulty lies not in discerning *what truth* is of value and what is not, but in regulating its *degree* of value, so as to give to each portion or fragment the right place, the true level, the proper space, the due order, and to assign the exact amount of thought and study which it demands or will repay.

“All truth is precious, though not all Divine,”

said Cowper; but to this we must add, that though all truth is precious, yet all truth is not *equally* precious, nor *equally* worthy of our care; nay, and we must also add, that though all truth is precious, yet much of it

must be left unstudied totally ; our life is brief, and we have no time for all ; we must select ; for we are hurrying onwards ; — the King will soon be here, and it concerns us to dwell most on those things which will help to fit us for his presence and kingdom.

There is the atom of dust under our feet ; there is that flower-bud rising above it ; there is yon forest stretching miles around ; there is yon vast mountain-range that walls in the plain ; there is the blue arch above us, with its clouds and rainbows ; there is day, with its sun and splendor ; there is night, with its stars and stillness. All these things *exist*. Their simple being is a *truth* ; and with that being there are connected ten thousand *truths*. Yet there is not the same kind of truth, nor the same amount of truth, belonging to each, for each is the centre of a circle, wider or narrower, less or more important, according to its nature. Yet what there is of *truth* in each is equally *real*, and therefore not to be slighted. To say that the facts in each of these are equally precious, because equally true, or to say that the same amount of study should be allotted to each, would be foolishness. To say that the same amount of time may be expended upon each, is gross miscalculation, indicating a false estimate of the different parts of truth, as well as of the true value of time. The truth which affects the future — specially the eternally future — must be more momentous than that which influences the present only. The truth which relates to the inner man must be more important than that which relates to the outer man. The truth that goes to make up the link between us and the God that made us must be unspeakably more precious than that which forms the tie between us and earth, or even between us and each other. The truth which bears upon earthly citizenship and its rights must be far inferior to that which bears upon heavenly citizenship, and its more glorious privileges. These distinctions the age does not consider. Progress in one direction, or at least in one or two directions, it is apt to regard as progress in all directions. Blinded by the magnitude of its discover-

ies, and by their present bearing upon society, it overlooks counteractions ; it forgets how sadly it is losing ground in many things ; it veils the evil, and exaggerates the good ; and then reports progress, where real progress there is none.

To confound or misregulate the *degrees of value* in truth, is at once an error and a mischief. It deranges everything. It is, in itself, an error, and it leads on to innumerable errors. It is, in itself, a mischief, and it is the root of endless mischiefs. It is not merely equivalent to the non-discovery of truth ; it not merely neutralizes the truth discovered, but it draws out of it all the evil of positive *untruth*, thus making truth the producer of error, good, the fountain of evil, light, the cause of darkness. So that there may be many steps of advancement, which, by the evil use made of them, or the false level assigned to them, become in the end so many steps of retrogression. Has this been duly weighed by those who boast of progress ? Have they calculated the *loss* as well as the *gain*, the *minus* as well as the *plus*, and is it on the ascertained *difference* that they rest their congratulations ? If so, let them boast. It is well. If not, then their estimate is so wholly one-sided, that no credit can be given to it even by themselves.

It is a literary age ; it is an age of science ; it is an age of far-ranging inquiry ; it is an age of discovery ; it is an age of action ; many run to and fro, and knowledge is increased. But still it may not be an age of progress. The amount of knowledge gained may be nothing to the amount lost ; or that which is gained may be so perverted or ill-regulated as to injure instead of profiting.

In these different parts of the world's progress, God is not recognized, or only by a few ; or only recognized out of compliment or custom, and in such a way as to place him at an immeasurable distance from the works of His hands. What is there that is good, or true, or beautiful, of which God is not the centre ? And is not the age, in its progress, fast severing God from his works, making man, or chance, or abstract laws, the centre of

creation, instead of the living, personal Jehovah, — thus shifting the axis of the universe, in order to be saved the irksomeness of coming into contact with Him in whom we live, and move, and have our being? What, then, becomes of the advancement and the enlightenment of the age? Can we look upon them in their present stage without suspicion, or can we contemplate their issues without terror? For all science is a lie, — or at least lodges a lie in its very core, — if apart from God and His Christ. All wisdom is foolishness, if independent of Him “in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” All inquiry must become a mere maze of scepticism, if separated from Him who has said, “Learn of me.” All truth and goodness are but empty abstractions, if away from Him who is the true and good. All beauty is but a torn blossom or a broken gem, if sought for out of Him who is its birth-place. All enlightenment is but a dream, if not received from Him who is the light of the world, the light of life. All liberty is but a well-disguised bondage, if not found in the service of Him whose love hath made us free. All rule and law are but the exhibitions of man’s selfishness, and ambition, and pride, if dissociated from Him who is the Prince of the kings of the earth. Nay, and all religion is but hollowness and unreality, if severed from the fellowship of Jehovah and his Incarnate Son.

We hear much of the knowledge of the age. Well: but has not one of its own poets said, “Knowledge comes, but *wisdom* lingers”? Yes, knowledge comes, but *wisdom* lingers! Knowledge comes, but *goodness* lingers. Knowledge comes, but the world is as far as ever from peace and righteousness. Its wounds are not healed; its tears do not cease to flow. Its crimes are not fewer; its morals are not purer; its diseases are as many and as fatal. Its nations are not more prosperous; its kingdoms are not more stable; its rulers are not more magnanimous; its homes are not happier; its ties of kindred or affection are not more blessed or lasting. The thorn still springs, and the brier spreads; famine scorches its plains, and the pestilence envenoms

the air; the curse still blights creation, and the wilderness has not yet rejoiced or blossomed. Yet man is doing his utmost to set right the world, and God is allowing him to put forth all his efforts, more vigorously and more simultaneously than ever, in these last days. Nor can any Christian mind fail to look with intensest though most painful interest upon these vain endeavors. We know that they must fail. Man cannot deliver himself, nor regenerate his world. Reforms, republics, constitutions, congresses, change of dynasties, will not accomplish it. Art in every form, science of every name, are bringing into play unheard-of energies for the improvement of this globe, and for giving man the complete empire of earth and air and sea. But the task is superhuman, and each new forth-putting of human strength or intellect is only proving this the more. And hence it is with such interest, as well as with such pity, that we look upon the generation around us, with its overwrought muscles, its over-tasked energies — toiling unrestingly, and yet failing in its mighty aim — the regeneration of a world.

There is a secret consciousness of the evil of the times, even among those who have not the fear of God before their eyes. They see but the surface, indeed, and yet that surface is not quite so calm and bright as they could desire, nor are the effects of the supposed progress quite so satisfactory as they expected it would be. They have their misgivings, though they cheer themselves with the thought that the mind of man will ere long be able to master all difficulties, and rectify all the still remaining disorders of the world. Accordingly they set themselves in their own way to help forward the regeneration of the world, and the correction of the evils of the age.

Among these there are various classes, or subdivisions. There is, for example, the *educational* class. It labors hard to raise the level of society by the mere impartation of intellectual knowledge; — “useful knowledge,” “scientific knowledge,” “entertaining knowledge,” “political knowledge;” in short, knowledge of any kind, save that of the Bible, and of the God of the Bible. There

is the *novelistic* class — a very large one, and possessed of far greater influence over the community than is generally credited. It has set itself to elevate the race by exciting what they conceive to be the purer feelings of our nature. Of one school the standard of perfection is romantic tenderness; of another, worldly honor; of another, bare rectitude of character, without reference to such a being as God, or such a thing as His law; of another, it is good-nature and Christmas festivity; while others seem to have no real centre of elevation in view, only they hope, by stimulating some of our finer feelings into growth, to choke or weaken our grosser and more hateful. There is the *poetical* class. They think, by the inculcation of high thoughts and noble images, to lift up the world to its proper level. With one school, it is the worship of nature; with another, it is the love of the beautiful; with another, it is chivalry; with another, it is the reënthronement of “the gods of Greece;” with another, sentimental musings. These, and such as these, are the devices by which they hope to put evil to flight, and bring back the age of gold! There is the *satirical* class. Their plan for meliorating the world is ridicule. Folly, vice, misrule, are to be caricatured in order to be eradicated! Ply men with enough of ridicule — just show them how ridiculous they are, or can be made — raise the laugh or the sneer against them — exhibit them in all the exaggerated attitudes that the genius of grimace can invent, and all will be well! There is the *philosophic* class — large and powerful, composed of men who are no triflers certainly, but who are sadly without aim or anchorage. Give them but “earnestness,” and on that fulcrum they will heave up a fallen world into its true height of excellence. Give them but earnestness, and then extravagance, mysticism, mythism, pantheism, so far from condemned as ruinous, are welcomed as so many forces, operating at different points, for the anticipated elevation. Give them earnestness, and they will do without revelation; or give them “universal intuition,” and they, setting it up as the judge of inspiration, will make *man* his own regenerator by

making him the fountain head of truth. There is the *political* class. They have their many cures for the evils of society, and are quite sure that by better government, a wider franchise, freer trade, the abolition of ranks, the division of property, the extinction of laws of primogeniture, they will bring all into order and peace ; as if these could touch the seat of the disease, or minister to the real wants of a helpless and heart-broken world.

To see the vanity of all these efforts of man to better himself, apart from God, one needs only to look into the extent of the evil to be remedied. It is vast — it is incalculable. We see but its outer circle — its innumerable inner circles of vileness and misery we see not — we cannot see. It is an evil so broad, so deep, so manifold, so malignant, that to attempt to cure it by such appliances, seems like silencing the thunder by the tones of the harp, or arresting the havoc of pestilence by scattering roses on the breeze. Whoever would have some idea of the hideous mass of evil under which the earth is groaning, and with which the atmosphere of the age is filled, let him read the third chapter of second Timothy, or the twenty-fourth of Isaiah, or the descriptions of Israel's state and sin, drawn by Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Let him compare these inspired descriptions of Israel's condition with what he sees in the world around him, and he will, we doubt not, go forth to the world a wiser, more thoughtful, more solemn man ; not disposed to hate, or to scorn, or to satirize, but to pity, and to mourn, and to pray.

Along with its boast of progress, the age boasts of its liberality. Let us look at this, and see how far it can make its boasting good. True liberality is a blessed thing ; for it is but another name for the love that " beareth all things," that " thinketh no evil," that " rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth." With this, however, the liberality of the age has nothing in common. Its essence is, indifference to sin and error. Its object is, to smooth down the distinctions between good and evil ; between holiness and sin ; between the church and the world ; between Protestantism and Popery ; be-

tween the belief of God's Word and Infidelity, or **Atheism**. All its sayings and doings in government, in the legislature, in society, in corporations or private intercourse, are based upon the axiom that there is no real difference between these things, or, at least, that if there be, it is not discoverable by man; so that man is not only not responsible for acting upon it, but it would be intolerance and presumption in him to do so. Kings are, therefore, to rule as if there were no such distinction, forgetting by whom they reign. Judges are to know no such distinctions, forgetting that they are to judge "in the fear of the Lord." Society is to be constructed without reference to any such distinction, as if the Bible were not the basis of all society. But is not this calling good evil, and evil good — putting darkness for light, and light for darkness — putting bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter?

We see this liberality in the kind things spoken of Infidelity — in the praises of Popery; in the sneers against Protestantism, as being by its very name a system of illiberality. Education from which God is shut out, and in which the Bible has no place, is contended for, even by men who call themselves religious; and this is named liberality. To attend mass in a Popish cathedral; to listen to the blasphemies of Socinianism for the sake of the eloquence of the preacher; to hold fellowship with the avowed infidel for the sake of science; to sit at the table of the licentious, on the score of his artistic fame — these are common things amongst us, and all are honored by the name of liberality! Because our fathers condemned these things; because "they abhorred that which was evil, and cleaved to that which was good;" they are branded as intolerant and narrow-minded; and because our own age has thus filled up the gulf between the good and the evil, it is honored with the name of enlightened.

Thus to blot out the difference between truth and error has been the feat of the age. For this it praises itself, pitying the littleness and contractedness of other days and other minds. In so doing, it forgets that no



man is narrow-minded who expands to the full circle of *truth*, and that the first step beyond that is contractedness of spirit. Latitudinarianism is not true liberality; indifference to error is not true liberality, unless it can be shown that the Bible, the Book of Truth, is equally latitudinarian, and equally indifferent to error. It is an appalling fact, that men, with the Bible in their hands, should deny the distinction between truth and error; and then, as if ashamed of what they had done, call it by the venerated name of liberality. But it is a more appalling fact, that men should give, as the reason for this indifference, that truth is not discoverable, thereby throwing the blame upon God for having given a Bible so vague, so ambiguous, so unmeaning, that no one reading it can certainly gather what is truth or what is error.

This liberality, however, turns out to be a one-sided principle. Its toleration of error is unqualified and unconditional, almost as if the fact of its being error entitled it to toleration, and even encouragement. Its toleration of truth is grudging, meagre, restricted. Nay, it only consents to tolerate truth on condition that its supporters will not contend for it too decidedly, but will bring it considerably down to the level of error. Thus, though assuming a Protestant name, its deference to Popery is unlimited; while its hatred of all that is decided and essential in Protestantism is deep and unconcealed. It finds many excuses for the Popish claim of infallibility, but none for the Protestant assertion of the full and thorough inspiration of the Word of God. It palliates the Popish system of monastic vows, but detests and denounces the Scriptural doctrine of separation from the world. It praises and associates with a Papist that believes in the lying legends of saints, and in the virtue of dead men's bones, or in the immaculacy of the Virgin Mary; but it rejects, as silly and insipid, the acquaintanceship of the man who reads his Bible, and loves his Saviour, and walks humbly with his God. Its sympathies are all practically on the side of those very errors it professes to reject, and its hostilities are directed against those very truths which in words it owns.

The age also boasts of its *religion* as a part of its progress. With many, religion is mere philosophic speculation upon truth connected with man's soul. With others, it is the seemly discharge of all relative duties. With others, it consists in admiration for the Bible, as a book of literary excellences. With others, it is the adoption of a creed, or connection with a church. With others, it consists in bustle and outward zeal. In all, it lacks LIFE—that deep, intense, glowing life, which so marked it in earlier times. Its root is not in the *conscience*, but in some outer region of the soul, which does not bring us into close and living contact with Jehovah himself. It is a thing of the imagination, or of the intellect, or even of the affections, but not of the *conscience*. There can be no religion which has not its seat there. The hindrance to living religion is the want of a “purged conscience.” and till the conscience has been purged from dead works, there can be no real religion—no true service of God. How little is there of *conscience* in the religion of the day! Hence that lack of simplicity, of freshness, of serenity, which we should expect. Hence its hollowness and shallowness.

The religion of the day is an *easy-minded* religion; a religion without conflict and wrestling, without self-denial and sacrifice; a religion which knows nothing of the pangs of the new birth as its commencement, and nothing of the desperate struggle with the devil, day by day, making us long for resurrection-deliverance, for the binding of the adversary, and for the Lord's arrival. It is a *second-rate* religion—a religion in which there is no largeness, no grandeur, no potency, no noble-mindedness, no elevation, no self-devotedness, no all-constraining love. It is a *hollow* religion, with a fair exterior, but an aching heart—a heart unsatisfied, a soul not at rest, a conscience not at peace with God; a religion marked, it may be, by activity and excitement, but betraying all the while the consciousness of a wound hidden and unhealed within, and hence unable to animate to lofty doings, or supply the strength needed for such

doings. It is a *feeble* religion, lacking the sinews and bones of hardier times — very different from the indomitable, much-enduring, storm-braving religion, not merely of apostolic days, but even of the Reformation. It is an *uncertain* religion ; that is to say, it is not rooted in *certainty* ; it is not the outflowing of a soul assured of pardon, and rejoicing in the filial relationship between itself and God. Hence, there is no liberty of service, for the question of personal acceptance is still an unsettled thing ; there is a working *for* pardon, but not *from* pardon. Hence all is bondage, heaviness, irksomeness. There is a speaking for God, but it is with a faltering tongue ; there is a laboring for God, but it is with fettered hands ; there is a moving in the way of His commandments, but it is with a heavy drag upon our limbs. Hence the inefficient, uninfluential character of our religion. It does not tell on others, for it has not yet fully told upon ourselves. It falls short of its mark, for the arm that drew the bow is paralyzed.

These are some of the features of the age. Such is its *PROGRESS*. Such are its prospects of self-regeneration, or world-regeneration. Alas ! how little in all this do we see of God ! How little can we detect, in these movements, of the Spirit of God ! There is a movement, doubtless ; nay, not one movement, but many. But how much of this is the work of the Holy Spirit — of Him who alone can reform an age or regenerate a world ? How much from above, and how much from beneath ? How much onward and upward, and how much backward and downward ? Is not the age one which is especially grieving, nay, quenching the spirit ? And in many of these things which are counted *progress*, are we not grieving Him most signally and awfully ? Instead of setting our face steadfastly to go after Christ, are we not following after Antichrist, in his manifold delusions, in which, by mixing up truth and falsehood, he is seeking to deceive the very elect ? Instead of putting ourselves under the teaching of the Spirit, are we not taking the false guidance of the evil one, now clothed in the fair disguise of radiant knowledge, and going before us as an angel of light, to mislead and ruin ?

Not as though some strange thing were happening to us. We look for no times of righteousness in these last days. We have been warned to expect evil, and not good — progressive evil, not progressive good — until the Lord come.

The age of *progress* is not the present ; it is the age to come. In the *present* there is the development of evil, — in the *future*, the development of good. Man is now putting forth his power to the utmost in efforts after *progress*. Poor progress at the best, yet much boasted of ! It is but *man's* progress ; it is but *finite* development. Man is now put to the proof. He is allowed to do his best, and he is given time to do it in. God will not hinder the attempt, nor hurry him in making it. Full time, ample scope, large opportunity, will be granted. Man ruined a world ; it is to be proved whether he can rebuild it. He ruined it in a day ; he is given six thousand years to attempt its reconstruction. His *downward* progress was swift enough ; it is to be tried whether his *upward* progress will be as rapid, or whether there can be such a thing as upward progress at all, when he is left alone. God has been putting him to the proof. He says to him, "Try to govern the world ;" man tries it, but fails. He says to him, "Try to regenerate a world ;" he tries it, and fails. He says to him, "Fertilize the earth ;" he tries it, and fails. He says to him, "Try to advance — make progress — increase in knowledge ;" man tries it, and fails. It will not do. Man's day has been a long one ; but it has been a day during which, in all possible circumstances and with all advantages, he has been proved helpless, ignorant, evil ; unfit to rule, and unfit to be left without a ruler ; unfit to teach, and unwilling to learn ; unfit to be intrusted with the care or management of aught within the world's wide circle — from the atom of crumbling dust beneath his feet, up to his own imperishable soul.

When God has made this proof to the universe of man's utter incapacity ; when he has demonstrated man's unworthiness of trust, and inability for any pro-

gress, save a downward one; he sets him aside as "a despised and broken vessel," in order to bring in the "greater man," — ay, the greater than man, even his own eternal Son. The great experiment of 6000 years is now drawing to a close. The vast but awful demonstration is now nearly complete. The case is most manifestly going *against* man. King, prince, noble, peasant, beggar; statesman, diplomatist, master, parent, child, servant; poet, philosopher, artist, mechanic — all have had their long age of trial, and all have failed. The verdict will soon be given, and the sentence pronounced.

At this crisis we now stand. At the close of a long series of experiments, made to see what man could do, we find the world as wicked and lawless (to say no more) as at the first. Peace has not spread her reign among the nations, nor misrule departed. Righteousness does not sit on the throne of the nations, nor does holiness beautify the homes of the children of men. Man's merchandise is not consecrated to God, nor his wealth laid at the feet of Jesus. The heart remains still deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. Oppression, murder, cruelty, selfishness, lust, sedition, strife, and hatred, are still uneradicated, unsubdued, unmitigated. Man has found no cure for these maladies. They rage on, but he is powerless. The curse still pervades the earth and poisons the air. Man cannot disinfect it. The thorn and thistle still shoot up their prickly memorials of the primal sin. Man cannot uproot them. Disease still haunts the body, and man says, "Depart," in vain. The "rooted sorrow" still keeps place in memory, scorching health's freshness, and tearing down life remorselessly — man vainly endeavoring to pluck it out. Death still smites down its daily myriads, and man tries in vain to bribe or disarm it. The grave still receives the loved, and preys upon the beautiful — man pleading in vain that it should give back the joy of his heart and the desire of his eyes!

Such are the fruits of the first Adam's doings, and such the powerlessness of his children to remove so

much as one of the ten thousand evils. It has been proved that man can ruin, but not restore, a world. His attempts at restoration have been sad and mischievous failings. His attempts at progress have been abortive; so that progress in evil, progress in alienation from God, is the feature of greatest prominence in his history.

But this progress in evil has a limit. God has set bounds to it which it cannot overpass. He will not allow this earth of his to be totally a hell. He will make the sin of man to praise Him, and he will restrain the remainder thereof. A certain amount and a certain duration he will allow, but no more. Neither of these is indefinite; and we seem to be nearing their boundary.

It is well. For then shall the good displace the evil, and the blessing the curse. The second Adam is at hand, and, with him, the kingdom and the glory. He brings the cure. He knits the broken world. He rebukes disease and sorrow. He binds death. He rifles the grave. He delivers creation. He sets up a righteous, peaceful throne. He draws aside the curtain that hid heaven from earth, making them as one — the inner and the outer chamber of the one tabernacle of Jehovah — and setting up the true Jacob's ladder, on which the angels shall be seen ascending and descending, still ministering in holy service to him and to his saints in the day of the kingdom, as heretofore they have done in the day of tribulation and shame.

That is the age of progress! What progress, when God shall set his hand to it! In the light of that ever-widening knowledge, in the blaze of that ever-brightening glory, how poor, how vile, shall seem the progress of the dishonored past! Not merely like age's recollection of childhood's trivialities and wasted time, but like morning's remembrance to the drunkard of last night's revelry and lust; like the King of Babylon's remembrance of his seven years' sojourn with the beasts of the field!

THE  
SECOND ADVENT  
INTRODUCTORY TO  
THE WORLD'S JUBILÉE:  
A LETTER  
TO  
THE REV. DR. RAFFLES,  
ON THE SUBJECT OF HIS  
"JUBILEE HYMN,"  
BY  
A PROTESTANT NONCONFORMIST LAYMAN.

"THE supreme judge, by which all controversies of religion are to be determined, and all DECREES of councils, OPINIONS of ancient writers, DOCTRINES of men and private spirits, are to be examined, and in whose sentence we are to rest, can be no other than THE HOLY SCRIPTURE delivered by the Spirit; into which Scripture, so delivered, our faith is finally resolved."—*Dec. of Faith of the Congregational Churches, A. D. 1658.*

## P R E F A C E

TO THE AMERICAN EDITION.

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THE following Letter to Dr. RAFFLES, of England, was called forth by the accompanying Hymn, entitled, "The World's Jubilee," from his pen. The letter is from an anonymous correspondent, but is none the less valuable on that account. It is evidently from the pen of one thoroughly conversant with the Scriptures, and deeply imbued with the blessed hope of the speedy Advent. We would commend its perusal to all candid believers who seek for truth. Although it contains but little that is actually new, yet it presents, in a plain and easy style, the scriptural arguments of our hope, — arguments which cannot be easily gainsaid, or set aside.

There is a painful indifference manifested by professed Christians towards the study of the Prophetic Scriptures. The theory of a Millennium before the Resurrection is everywhere referred to as a well-established prophecy; and there is a manifest dislike to an examination of the bearing of the prophecies on which that belief is founded. If such an expectation is warranted by the Bible, the evidence of it should be clearly unfolded, so that all who profess the name of Christ may work in accordance with that expectation. If the validity of such a belief is seriously doubted, as it is, the nature of those doubts should be carefully examined, and either their soundness admitted, or their unsoundness exposed. This we have a right to demand. We believe the expectation of a large portion of the church, of a Millennium before the personal coming of Christ, is not only not warranted by the letter of Scripture, but is in direct conflict with it. Some of the reasons for this belief are presented in a candid manner in the following pages. We bespeak for them an attentive perusal; and we ask those who dissent from the reasoning to point out its fallacy.

JOSHUA V. HIMES.

*Boston, January 1, 1847.*



## THE WORLD'S JUBILEE.

A HYMN FOR THE JUBILEE YEAR OF THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

BY THE REV. DR. RAFFLES.

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### I.

HARK! ten thousand, thousand voices  
 Sing the Song of Jubilee;  
 Earth, through all her tribes, rejoices,  
 Broke her long captivity!  
 Hail Emmanuel! — Great Deliverer!  
 Hail Emmanuel! — praise to Thee!  
 Now the theme in pealing thunders,  
 Through the universe is rung,  
 Now, in gentler tones, the wonders,  
 Of redeeming grace are sung.

### II

Wider now, and louder rising,  
 Swells and soars th' enraptured strain;  
 Earth's unnumbered tongues comprising, —  
 Hark! the Conqueror's praise again.  
 Hail, Emmanuel! — Great Deliverer!  
 Stones shall speak, if we refrain.  
 Thus, while heart and pulse are beating,  
 To his name let praise arise,  
 Till, from earth, the soul, retreating,  
 Joins the chorus of the skies.

### III.

Then in loftier, sweeter numbers,  
 We shall sing Emmanuel's praise:  
 Freed from all that now encumbers,  
 Nobler songs our voices raise,  
 Hail, Emmanuel! — Great Deliverer!  
 Live forever, in our lays!

While our crowns of glory casting  
 At His feet, in rapture lost,  
 We in anthems everlasting,  
 Mingle with th' angelic host!

## IV.

But, till that great consummation,  
 That bright sabbath of mankind, —  
 Till each distant tribe and nation  
 Taste the bliss by God designed, —  
 Speed the Gospel! — let its tidings  
 Gladden every human mind!  
 Be its silver trumpets sounded,  
 Let the joyous echoes roll,  
 Till a sea of bliss unbounded  
 Spreads o'er earth from pole to pole!

## V.

Then shall come the great Messiah,  
 In millennial glory crowned;  
 "Israel's hope," — and "Earth's desire,"  
 Now triumphant and renowned.  
 Hail, Messiah! — Reign forever! —  
 Heaven to earth reflects the sound;  
 Heaven and earth, with all their regions,  
 At his footstool prostrate fall:  
 Heaven and earth, with all their legions,  
 Crown Emmanuel Lord of All!

THE  
SECOND ADVENT  
INTRODUCTORY TO  
THE WORLD'S JUBILEE.

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REV. AND DEAR SIR :

Long before this letter will have met your eye, or that of the public, thousands of Protestant nonconformists, of the congregational order, will have read your "Jubilee Hymn" in their most widely circulated periodicals, "The Evangelical Magazine," and "The Christian Witness." It will by this time have been imprinted on the memories of thousands of our youth, and have been breathed in the sweet melody of the "Vesper Hymn," by Christians old and young.

And I hear you, my dear sir, exclaim, "Why not? I composed and published it for that very purpose." I know you did; and that you did so, fully assured that the sentiments it contains are those of scriptural truth. And it is just because I conceive that it contains sentiments diametrically opposite to scriptural truth that I address to you this letter.

Forgive me if its tone or language should savor of aught but that meekness and reverence with which every professed disciple of Christ should bear his testimony to the truth. God being my helper, I will avoid giving offence; and, from my knowledge of yourself, I am well assured that you will not take as such any warmth of expression into which, in earnestly contending for the faith, the spirit of the writer may be for a moment hurried.

To say that I esteem you very highly in love for your own sake, and for your work's sake, is to say that only which must be said from the heart, by every one who loves the gospel, and who has the privilege of your friendship or acquaintance.

I prefer writing to you anonymously, not because I would, or do shrink from the public avowal of an almost

obsolete creed; but because, having some little acquaintance with human nature, I feel that a humble champion may enter the lists against a titled antagonist under more favorable auspices, by concealing his name, than he can by putting it into prejudicial comparison with that of one whose coat-armor bespeaks his superior rank.

Suffice it, then, that I am an old-fashioned Protestant nonconformist, a congregationalist, and a layman. I wield no weapon with my feeble arm but the word of God, and with that alone would I now engage with you, my dear sir, and say, May God defend the right.

I am quite aware that your "Jubilee Hymn" contains no sentiment which is not uttered from nearly every congregational pulpit in the land, and which is not responded to by nearly every congregational worshipper; that well nigh all the members of the Christian denomination, clerical and lay, to which you and I belong, hold the doctrine contained in your hymn, and which, divested of the rhythm and metre in which it is expressed, is this: — *That when, and not until, the whole world shall have been converted, by the preaching of the gospel, the Messiah will return to the earth.*

I throw down my gauge; and, with the word of God in my hand, I say, "The doctrine is not true:" that it is diametrically opposed to the testimony of the Bible.

I am well aware that the church of Rome maintains, and has maintained it through all the dark ages of her apostasy and delusion. I am equally aware that, though neither the articles nor the formulas of the church of England recognize it, yet that it is preached from most of her pulpits, and received by most of her members. I am aware, too, that it has been held and taught by many of the divines of the congregational order during the last, and by most of them during the present century, having been broached upon the Protestant world (A. D. 1718) by Dr. Whitby, in his "*New Hypothesis*," as he calls it, of a *spiritual millennium*. I am also aware, that though the venerable founders and fathers of the Missionary Society, whatever might have been their private opinion on the subject, suffered not that opinion to appear in the statement of "*The one object of the Society*," yet that it is maintained in all the Society's reports, and at their public meetings. But I deny that it was taught by Christ or any

one of his apostles, either directly or indirectly, so far as their teachings have come down to us in the canon of Scripture.

I freely make this assertion, and I shrink not from its proof. Away with all human reasonings. Away with all traditionary legends. Clear the arena of all such intrusive obstructions. You and I, dear sir, thanks to our Protestant principles, can join heart and hand to cast these far away, that the WORD OF GOD may have free course. What saith the Scripture? It, and it alone, must decide the question. Will the second coming of Christ be delayed till the whole world shall have been converted by the preaching of the gospel, and so prepared for his advent? — or will he come when the world is neither prepared for nor expecting him? You affirm the former, and deny the latter. I deny the former, and affirm the latter. And, again I ask, what saith the Scripture?

Which of the apostles will you venture to call? — Peter — James — John — Jude — or Paul? Or which of the evangelists who have recorded and handed down the *ipsisima verba* of Christ himself? I unhesitatingly appeal to each and every one of them; and I find their testimony is uniform and unequivocal — as uniform and as unequivocal as language can make it. But before we hear them, I cannot refrain from quoting from one of your own discourses a beautiful testimony to the authority of the Word as the sole arbiter in matters of controversy — “Consult that holy oracle,” you say, “that oracle which never gives a false decision, that oracle which never uttered an uncertain sound — not, indeed, the Urim or Thummim beaming in the breast of the high priest as under the law — but the more sure and certain word of prophecy written in this book, to which you would do well to take heed, as to a light shining in a dark place; here, by the decision of Christ, put on permanent record.

“ ‘This is the judge that ends the strife,  
Where wit and reason fail,  
Our guide to everlasting life,  
Through all this gloomy vale.’

“From these oracles there is a hand ever pointing; from these oracles there is a voice ever crying, ‘This is the way, walk ye in it.’ From these oracles there is a

beaming that kindles up the brightness of noon amid the gloom of midnight, and they are a light unto your feet and a lamp unto your path. Against the decision of man, against the opinions of the world, against the fashions of the age, against the dictates of expediency, against the impetuosity of passion, against the shrinking of the coward, against the burnings of lust — against all, any, every thing, *let your appeal be to these lively oracles, to the law, and to the testimony, and abide by their decision* on any occasion, at any risk, at the loss of your fair fame and man's esteem, at the loss of property, liberty, eye, of life, for 'if a man love father and mother' — his dearest connections, or houses and lands, his property and his estate, or his own life — more than Christ, he is not worthy of him. Hence the spirit and principles of martyrdom, when men gave up their lives that they might seal their testimony with their blood.' "

And now, what say the oracles upon this momentous subject? What says St. Peter? — "That ye be mindful of the words that were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour; knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as from the beginning of the creation." Again, "The end of all things is at hand; be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer." What says St. James? "Go to, now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten; your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. . . . Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. . . . Be patient, therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. . . . Stablish your hearts; for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned; behold, the judge standeth before the door." "Behold," says St. John, "behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him, and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him." . . . "Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

Hear St. Jude, the brother of James : " Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him. These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts ; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage. But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ ; how they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts."

What saith the apostle of the Gentiles ? — " Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. . . . For our conversation is in heaven ; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body. . . . Behold, I show you a mystery : we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump ; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. . . . But of the times and seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you, for yourselves know perfectly, that the day of the Lord so cometh, as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety ; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child ; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are the children of light, and the children of the day : we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others ; but let us watch and be sober. . . . It is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you ; and to you who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. . . . The Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils. . . . This know, also, that in

the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof. . . . All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. . . . Yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry."

This is the burden of the testimony of *every one* of the apostolic writers. What is that of the Lord himself, as his divine sayings are recorded by the holy evangelists? Does he give the slightest intimation — the least ground for expectation, that the gospel of the kingdom, which he commanded to be published throughout all nations, should be received and obeyed by all? Just the reverse: "*Many*," he says, "are called, but *few* are chosen. . . . Wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat; because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." These may seem hard sayings, and hard indeed they are to flesh and blood; but, nevertheless, they are the words of truth. They may grate on the ear of modern divinity, but they can neither be blotted out nor explained away. They were true in the sad experience of those who heard them. True have they been in the experience of every age that has passed since they were spoken; and true will they be in the experience of those who are found by the Lord alive when he cometh. "When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" "Find faith?" "I hear a thousand voices exclaim, "find faith, Lord? why, thou wilt find the whole world converted to thee by the preaching of the gospel. — Thou wilt hear ten thousand voices singing the song of jubilee; earth with her long captivity broken, rejoicing through all her tribes; the theme of redeeming grace pealing, now in thunders, now in gentler tones, through the universe, the strain rising wider, and swelling louder, comprising earth's unnumbered tongues. —



Thou wilt find, Lord, the bright Sabbath morning of mankind dawning to greet thee; each distant tribe and nation gladdened by the gospel; tasting the bliss designed for them by thy Father; the earth a sea of unbounded bliss spreading from pole to pole. — Thus, Lord, thou wilt find the earth when thou comest.”

And can you, my dear sir, lend the aid of your tongue and pen in the cause of such a delusion, which is enshrouding the church and the world? What was the condition of the world in the day that Noah entered into the ark? What was the condition of Sodom on the day that Lot escaped from it? Was it anything like the condition of the world as you describe it shall be when the Messiah shall come? Yet such, saith that Messiah himself — such as was the condition of the antediluvian world in the days of Noah — such as was the condition of the cities of the plain in the days of Lot — such shall be its self-same condition in the day when the Son of man shall be revealed. The preaching of the truth by Noah convinced not, converted not, the ungodly world of his day. That of righteous Lot convinced not, converted not, the men of Sodom and Gomorrah. Neither will the preaching of the gospel, if Christ's words be true, convince or convert it into the paradise, the sea of bliss unbounded, that you declare in your “Jubilee Hymn” shall be its condition when the Lord shall come.

Need I remind you, or any other minister of the gospel, of the reception which the seed of the kingdom finds, when you, the spiritual sowers, go forth to scatter it? True it is, that some falls into good ground; and when it does, it yields even a hundred-fold; but how much of it falls by the way-side, and is snatched up by the “fowls of the air,” those envious fiends who catch away that which is sown in the heart. How much falls among thorns, and is choked by the cares of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lust of other things, and becomes unfruitful? Need I remind you of that leaven of malice and wickedness which the woman, the great harlot, has hid in the meal, and with which she has soured the once unleavened bread of sincerity and truth? Need I remind you of the ravenous, envious, obscene birds of the air, which not only catch away the way-side seed, but have found

a lodgment among the branches of the great tree into which the little mustard seed has grown? Need I remind you, that as you and your fellow-fishermen draw the gospel net through the wide sea, that though you gather of every kind, all are not fit to be put in the vessels, but that, when it is drawn to shore, there are bad to be cast away? Need I remind you of the tares which the enemy sows among the wheat, and which will grow together with it until the harvest? Oh no! the word of unerring truth — Truth Himself — has forewarned us of all that shall befall his blessed gospel, from the time he first preached it, until the time of his second coming; of its reception by the *few*, of its rejection by the *many*. We may be ready to exclaim with Peter, "That be far from [it] Lord," but we may not dare to falsify the words of truth, lest haply we be found speaking wickedly for God.

And what are the figures employed by our Lord to convey to his church an idea of *the mode* of his coming? Is it the gradual dawning of the morning in the east; or the sudden flash of the lightning athwart the sky? Is it the appointed hour of the friendly visit in the day-time; or the unlooked-for coming of the thief in the stillness of the night? Is it the return of the master from his journey on the appointed day; or in the hour when the servants thought him still in the far country, and neither looked for nor expected his return? I need not remind you of the character of our Lord's teaching on this point; it is clear, distinct, unqualified, unambiguous, as words and figures can make it. There is no escape from it but by a denial of its truth, or perversion of its meaning. With Christians, the first is unthought of; but you cannot be ignorant, that when the Lord speaks of his thus coming, he means an individual's death, or the destruction of Jerusalem. I do not mean to say that you resort to such explanations; but I know that they are not unfrequently the refuge of the system which your hymn proclaims.

And now I have given a sample of the testimony of each of the writers of the New Testament, corroborated and confirmed by that of the Lord himself, to the fact, that when the Lord returns, it will be to an unexpected and an unprepared world.

But you may say, and doubtless will, that there are predictions in the Old Testament of the conversion of the world. I know there are; and no one shall rob me of that joy with which I contemplate the glorious times of which they speak — “when the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established upon the top of the mountains, and be exalted above the hills; when the knowledge of the glory of the Lord shall cover the earth, as the waters do the sea — when the wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock, and dust shall be the serpent’s meat — when there shall be new heavens and a new earth, and the former shall not be remembered nor come into mind — when none shall have occasion to say to his brother, Know the Lord; but when all shall know Him from the least to the greatest — when Christ shall have the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession.” These and hundreds such as these, descriptive

“Of scenes surpassing fable, and yet true,  
Scenes of accomplished bliss, which who can see,  
Though but in distant prospect, and not feel  
His soul refreshed with foretaste of the joy?”

They are too dear, too precious to my soul, to be forgotten; and too deeply graven in the rock of truth, to pass away without a full, O how full! an accomplishment. Not that accomplishment which your Hymn would give them in the absence of the Lord, but which shall be given to them when “He shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe” — when “He who was once offered to bear the sins of many, shall a second time appear without sin unto salvation.”

But the heart sickens when the eye stops short of the glorious scenes, and rests on what must precede them; as the heart of woman sinks and faints when she looks to the hour of anguish and nature’s sorrow, which *must* precede the hour of woman’s joy.

We look back to the day when John looked on Jesus as he walked, and said, “Behold the Lamb of God,” and to the hour when the blood of that gentle victim was poured out on Calvary for the sins of the world. But “Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah; this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in

the greatness of his strength! I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thy apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat? I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me; for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in my heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. And I looked, and there was none to help, and I wondered that there was none to uphold; therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me. And I will tread down the people in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth."

Well may we exclaim with the prophet Habakkuk — "When I heard, my belly trembled; my lips quivered at the voice; rottenness entered in my bones, and I trembled in myself, that I might rest in the day of trouble." "Who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth?" This is a fearful prelude to "the World's Jubilee." But no less true than fearful. I know that it is easier to prophesy smooth things than to tell such truth as this. And I know, also, that the people love to have it so; and I am scarcely surprised that it should be kept back, as it is, from the church and the world, or that the blood of Edom should be alluded to by Gentile Talmudists and explained as signifying the blood of Calvary — that the avenger of blood should be converted into the bleeding victim himself. What cannot be concealed or mystified, if it stand in the way of pleasant dreams or human systems?

The morning indeed cometh — the morning of the world's Jubilee; but it must be ushered in with clouds and darkness. The sword shall indeed be beaten into a ploughshare, and the spear into a pruning-hook, and nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more; but ere that day arrives, the ploughshare must be beaten into a sword, and the pruning-hook into a spear; and there shall be the battle of the warrior, with confused noise and garments rolled in blood. The great Messiah shall indeed come, crowned in millen-

nial glory, and not when that glory is over and gone, but to create it—to be the soul and centre of it—to receive the homage of “the escaped among the nations;” when every knee shall bow to Him, and every tongue confess that He is Lord, to the glory of the Father. “Art thou a King, then?” “I am,” said the meek-eyed Lamb of God, “and hereafter ye shall see the *Son of Man* coming in the *clouds of heaven* in power and great glory.”—“And I saw in the night visions,” said the prophet greatly beloved, “and behold one like the *Son of man* came with the *clouds of heaven*, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him a *dominion* and *glory* and a *kingdom*, that all people, nations, and languages should serve *Him*.”

I need not ask you, my dear sir, whether the Son of man, at his *first* advent, came “with the clouds of heaven;” or whether he has yet received the promised dominion and glory. No: the kingdom is yet in store for him; the kingdom promised from the foundation of the earth, when the Son of man shall come with all his saints; when he shall come a *second* time to receive that kingdom, and to share it with all them that love his appearing—a kingdom which shall not be destroyed—an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away—a throne based on the ruins of the kingdoms which the devil, the god of this world, sought to tempt Him with, in the day of his humility and abasement; and which he will, ere long, dash to shivers, like a potter’s vessel, in the day that he shall tread on the lion and adder, and trample the young lion and dragon under his feet—the day in which he will give you a crown of glory, which shall never fade away. May you be able to say in that day, with the great apostle, “I have not shunned to declare the *whole* counsel of God.” While you are preaching the doctrine of the *first* advent, the advent of humility, as the foundation, the sole foundation of the church’s hope, O do not withhold the doctrine of the *second* advent, of glory, which is the consummation, the sole consummation of it. Call on the Congregational churches and their pastors to make a stand against the Man of Sin in all his forms and pretences. Our forefathers made a noble stand against him in days gone by. Let us not retain a single shred of the Babylonish garment.

Is there a doctrine the Church of Rome has reason to fear and detest more than another, more even than the foundation doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ, for which she would have ground Luther to powder? it is that of the second coming of Christ. And well she may dread it — well may she hate to hear it — well may she hope that it is all a cunningly devised fable; for if it be not, the Lord shall then consume *her* with the spirit of his mouth — aye, destroy her with the brightness of his coming. But there is another who may dread it as much as the great harlot — it is the beast on which the woman sitteth, and which must go into perdition with her when the Lord shall come. And there is still another, who once asked crouchingly, “Art thou come to torment us *before the time?*” but who will not ask the question again, well knowing that the time will then have arrived — one who trembles at the thought of the chain, and the great abyss, and the stone which shall cover its mouth, and the scenes of everlasting darkness in store for him, when he shall be cast out of the godship of this world, no longer the prince of the powers of the air, but a howling, crushed, and impotent fiend, confined to the nether regions of darkness.

Yes: those three may well tremble — the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet; for their reign of tyranny and lies shall be over, and the reign of truth and righteousness begun, under the sceptre of Him “who shall come, will come, and will not tarry” — when He shall take to him “his great power, and reign from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth . . . when all nations shall bow before him, and his enemies lick the dust.”

But what has his Church to fear — why should she stop her ear, when she is told that the Lord is at hand? Why should the bride tremble at the coming of the Bridegroom, or try to believe that his coming is all a fable, all a delusion? Why should the Lamb’s wife turn away her eye from the face of her beloved? O but you say, “She does not; she looks for his *spiritual* coming.” His spiritual coming! What! Is Ichabod written on her door! Has the Lord’s Spirit departed from her? Has He left her, to whom was said, “Lo I am with you alway, even to the

end of the world?" Has He broken his word? Has He, indeed, departed in spirit, as well as in person — that she is looking for him thus to return to her? His spiritual coming! Who can have taught her thus to tamper with, thus to nullify her hope? Not the Lord himself — not the apostles — not the angels who stood by to comfort the widowed and sorrowing church, who, as the cloud received her Lord out of her sight, thus consoled her: — "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? *This same Jesus*, who is now taken up from you into heaven, shall so come *in like manner* as ye have seen him go into heaven." Did he spiritually go? Then spiritually he will return. Did he go personally and bodily? Then personally and bodily will he return. Who mocks the sorrow, and taunts the hope of the loving wife, by telling her that her absent husband will return to her spiritually? And where is the loving wife whom such mockery would persuade to quit her watch-tower, or her accustomed evening walk, that she may look out for and welcome the return of the beloved of her heart?

But I hear it asked, as I often have, "Where is the difference, whether we go to Him, or he comes to us?" I reply, simply this: — that the departure of the individual believer's spirit to the bosom of the Lord is one thing, but not the thing of which we are speaking. The coming of the Lord is another thing. I know well that the individual believer is taught to concentrate all his hopes in the article of death, when the spirit ascends to God who gave it, and when he is told that he shall receive his crown of glory. But as I know that St. Paul is still waiting for his, for that crown which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give him at *that* day, the day of his appearing, and not to him only, but to all those that love that appearing, I know that such teaching is not only unscriptural, but that it turns the eye of the church, and of each individual member of it, from the one great object of hope — the coming of the Lord to raise his sleeping saints, and to change his living ones, clothing them all with his own image and likeness. It puts out of sight — far out of sight — the resurrection of the body; and not out of sight only, but out of the reach of all practical, influential belief. This was not the teaching of the apostles who

preached Jesus and *the resurrection* — not Jesus and *death* — as the hope of the church. Resurrection, not as an object to be contemplated at the close, but at the commencement, of the millennial kingdom. It was the resurrection of the body which inspired them with hope, and which made them look with such eager desire for the coming of the Lord. “If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead!” exclaims one who well knew what he was panting and striving after, — a body fashioned like unto the glorious body of his beloved Lord. No wonder the early Christians were continually exclaiming, “Come, Lord Jesus, come *quickly*.” And when the last of the holy penmen heard the words, “Surely I come quickly,” no wonder that he breathed out his soul in the last words of inspiration, “Amen, even so, come, Lord Jesus.” And no wonder, now that the church has been taught to put death in the place of the resurrection, that she cares not how long the Lord may tarry, or how slow his chariot wheels may be in coming. And why this difference, this contrast between the hopes and expectations of the primitive and the modern church? Your “Jubilee Hymn” explains it all. The world must be converted before the Lord can come. This conversion may, and probably will, take thousands of years to accomplish; and when accomplished, it is to enjoy a thousand years of blessedness and glory, which may mean, as I have heard from the pulpit, a thousand years, each day for a year, or 365,000 years; and *then* the Lord will come to destroy it; and *then* the saints shall have their resurrection-bodies. What wonder, then, that the church has fallen in love with the king of terrors, and taken refuge in the blessedness of the disembodied spirit, clothing it in all the glory of the reëmbodied state? What wonder that books are written by learned divines to prove that there is *no resurrection of the body*, but that all the change takes place at death? What wonder that a version of the Bible should have appeared with 20,000 *emendations* (?) and among them the substitution of the “*future state*” for the *resurrection*, and the introduction of that state for the resurrection’s synonym? But wonder it is, that such things do not startle the church from its dream; will nothing do so but the midnight cry, “Behold, the Bridegroom cometh;



go ye out to meet him?" Can we wonder that the church-taught world goes on in its mad career, and, laughing, exclaims, "Where is the promise of his coming?" when the church herself, whose only hope is bound up in it, joins the world in the cry, as far as she dare, and says, "The Lord delayeth his coming?"

Oh, sir, we laymen want apostolic preaching and teaching on the subject of *dispensational truth*. We know what it is, thank God! We have the Bible in our hands, "the sure word of prophecy, a light shining in a dark place until the day dawn, and the day-star arise." We are commanded to try the spirits whether they be of God, since many false prophets are gone out into the world; and we, unlearned as we may be, can and do try them by the standard of truth given to us for that purpose. We compare scripture with scripture, and doctrine with doctrine. We find that while some ministers are preaching that the world is ripening into glory, others are preaching that it is ripening for judgment. We know that *both* cannot be true. We take the standard of truth in our hands at home, in our closets, and we find that one class is teaching a Bible-truth, the other a Popish fable. Ought these things so to be? "If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself for the battle?" If one pulpit proclaims "*Peace and safety! the Lord delayeth his coming,*" and another, "*Watch, for ye know neither the day nor the hour when the Son of man cometh,*" who can be surprised if the joyous world looks on, listens, and laughs? And listen and laugh it does — such a laugh of merry mockery! And Satan listens and laughs too — O such a laugh of malicious joy! And the harlot laughs as she hands round the gilded cup, and sings for very wantonness, "I sit a queen *forever*; I shall see no sorrow. The Lord delayeth his coming. Thou hast much goods laid up for many years. Eat, drink, and be merry."

But you say, "We Congregational ministers are at least consistent with ourselves — we are nearly to a man agreed in preaching against the doctrine of the Lord's pre-millennial advent." Granted: but what say our hymn-books — our manuals of psalmody? True, in the compilation of our "Congregational Hymn Book," the doctrine is all but excluded, yet even there it glimmers. But Dr. Watts, the

sweet singer of our congregational Israel, must undergo an expurgation, ere the pulpit and the precentor's desk accord in doctrine. And has it never fallen to your lot to hear (it has to mine) that precious hymn —

“Lo! He comes, with clouds descending,  
Once for favored sinners slain:  
Thousands thousands saints attending,  
Swell the triumphs of his train:  
Hallelujah! Lo, He comes, He comes to reign.”

sung with holy enthusiasm after a sermon in which the doctrine it contains has been preached against? And, when, again and again, as though the chorus would never die away, the prayer — the seemingly impassioned, believing, expecting prayer — has gone up as the voice of one man —

“O come quickly! Hallelujah! Come, Lord, come!”

Yes, often have I heard this hymn, and others breathing the same truth, sung by congregations, who, with their ministers, believe and contend earnestly for the truth of the Romish legend, that “the Lord will not only not come quickly, but will not come at all, till the whole world is converted;” and who will sing your “Jubilee Hymn” to the vesper air, with the same apparent expectation and belief, as that in which they had been invoking the quick return of the Lord. Is then truth so light a thing, as that she may be played with like a tennis ball?

But suffer me to ask, my dear sir, whether the pulpit is always consistent with itself. I have before me now one of your eloquent sermons, from which I have before quoted, in which you thus plead with sinners: — “The day is fixed, irrevocably fixed; and come it must. There may be at present no appearance of its coming, all things may continue as they were from the beginning of the creation; the sun may rise and set, and the moon wax and wane, and nights and days interchange, and times and seasons revolve and return as usual; and men may come and go, and buy and sell, and marry and give in marriage, and revel and riot in intemperance and dissipation, in vanity and in folly; and the scoffer may point to the cloudless skies, and ask, ‘Where is the promise of his coming?’ but it will come; these heavens shall be wrapped together

as a scroll ; these elements shall melt with fervent heat ; this earth and all its works shall be burned ; the windows of heaven shall be opened ; the fountains of the great deep shall be broken up ; another deluge, but not of water, a deluge of flames, shall enwrap the world ; and then shall be the sign of *the coming of the Son of man*. All this dreadful convulsion will be but the harbinger of his approach, and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him, and all kindreds shall wail and cry."

One of the two doctrines must be given up ; *both* cannot be retained by the church. They cannot consist—they are diametrically opposed. The church must give up either the suddenness and uncertainty of the Lord's coming, or the certainty of the world's conversion as preparatory to it. *Utrum horum?* We can no more hold the two, than we can serve God and Mammon—we must cleave to the one and let the other go—we cannot believe in both. Rome says, and many, too many, alas! say with her, Give up the former. I say, and I care not for being in a ridiculed minority, I give up the latter ; "heaven and earth may pass away, but the word of Christ cannot pass away ;" and *æ* has said, "Behold I come as a thief."

But ere I draw this letter to a close, let me ask you one question. Do you considerably believe that the earth is on the advance to such a consummation as your hymn describes ?

I am writing to you with the map of the world suspended before me. The map of this world, of which Satan is the god, and whose right to it, *de facto*, the Bible does not dispute, but recognize. Will you in your study, travel with me over the map or ground plot of the great usurper's dominions, and tell me where it is that you have discovered the cause of such jubilant acclamations as your hymn so joyfully, so sweetly breathes ; for I confess that this map is to my eye, like Ezekiel's roll, full of "lamentations, and mourning, and woe."

Where shall we begin ? With the dark places of the earth, which by universal consent are full of the habitations of cruelty ? Poor Africa ! I will not seem as one that mocketh, by asking you whether you find it there—Whether, from the Isthmus of Suez to the Straits of Gib-

raltar, you can find a resting-place for the foot of *your* happy muse. Well, then, shall we coast it down the Western shore, from the Straits of Gibraltar to the Cape? Oh, you exclaim, let us hasten on, for these shores are dyed with blood, and so deeply dyed, and the stain so continually, hourly renewed, that the Atlantic waves cannot efface it. Back then, along the Eastern shore, with a sigh, a tear, and a groan for poor Madagascar as we hasten along, and another for Arabia, miscalled "the happy," and its stony and its desert region, as we pass up the Red Sea to the point from which we started. I ask not if we have yet found a spot where we could pause for a moment to chant our "Jubilee Hymn."

Let us then cross this mighty continent — we shall need no guide. The Pagan, the Mahometan, and the Christian slave-driver have marked ten thousand roads for us athwart the otherwise trackless deserts, and we have only to follow the track strewed with the bones and wet with the blood of poor Africa's children. Should these be not enough to guide us, let us listen to the cracking of the whips, and the shrieks of agony which fill the sultry air, the groans of the fathers, the wailings of the mothers, and the plaintive cries of the hapless children. But we must hasten on — all, all is dark, dark as midnight, gloomy and cruel as the caverns of hell.

But the Cape! you say. The Cape of Good Hope! Well, we will return to the Cape, and to some other sweet oases in the great desert of the fell tyrant's dominions before we part company. At present let us hasten on; surely we may not spend many moments in that frightful continent of South America, which seems to look across the ocean to the continent we have left, and defy it to a rivalry of cruelty and woe.

From the Isthmus of Panama to Cape Horn, and from Cape Horn to the Isthmus of Panama, all, all around and within, is true and faithful to its allegiance to its hellish master.

Onward, then, onward to the land of the "pilgrim fathers." We need not tarry, I hear you say, in the Gulf of Mexico, to look either to the West on Guatemala, or to the East on Cuba, St. Domingo, or the Islands, which for ages have almost concentrated in themselves the groans of cre-

ation. Nor will you, I am sure, desire to linger in the slave states of the south, where the "Jubilee Hymn" could not even be heard were it sung by ten thousand voices, for the cry of bitter woe which would drown its notes — where the brutalized tyrant of the south imports and breeds human slaves for his own use, and that of the free-born sons of the pilgrim fathers of the north. Haste we, then, from the sickening scenes which your eloquent tongue and your eloquent pen have often in vain endeavored fully to describe.

And have you the heart to sing the hymn in the land of slave-holding Christians, among men who, even if they believe the black has been washed in the blood of Jesus, will buy and sell him, grind and oppress him, flog, torture, and murder him; and who, if you or I, or any other who knows what liberty means, should take him by the hand and call him brother, would hand us out of the pale of civil and Christian communion; and if we should be bold enough to propose to proclaim liberty to the captive and the opening of the prison to them that are bound, in any other than a spiritual sense, would not scruple to hang us up at the nearest convenient tree?

Linger here, my dear sir, and sing with such a people your "Jubilee Song," if you can: I could not join you if I would; my voice would falter, my tongue would cleave to the roof of my mouth, I should choke with indignation.

O but, you say, they have divines! I know they have, and many sound and good ones; and greater will be their condemnation. But they have among them one whom a monthly journalist describes in most glowing language; one who has just sent across the Atlantic a book called "Anastasis," written to prove that *there is no resurrection of the body*; that all the resurrection there is or ever will be, takes place simultaneously with the dissolution of the soul and body — a mere resurrection of the principle of animal life, and that this principle of animal life will, at the moment of death, pass into the spiritual bodies of the unseen world. I see you quiver, and well you may. Let America emancipate her negro slaves; and then let her talk of freedom. Let her burn in the market-place the books of professors which deny the resurrection of the body; and then let her talk of her divinity. Let her

close the doors of infamy in which the 15,000 hapless victims of the sensuality of the citizens of her capital hide their shame and their sorrows, (first comparing the number of these unfortunates with that of the adult male population of the city,) and then let her talk of religion and morality. Meanwhile, it is no place for the strains of the "Jubilee Hymn," and it is almost a relief from the nausea caused by the scene we are hasting from, to have to pass through the Canadas, and such of the tribes of North American Indians as have escaped the cupidity of the degenerate sons of the "blessed pilgrim fathers," and crossing the Straits of Behring, to enter upon the vast regions of Asia. But where can we stop? In Siberia, or either of the Tartaries, Russian, Independent, or Chinese? In Turkey, Arabia, Persia, Thibet, Hindostan, or China? All, all belongs to the god of this world; all, all is peopled by the children of disobedience. And what of the great islands of the sea, Sumatra, Java, Borneo, New Guinea, and that continental island, Australia, and its companions, Van Diemen's Land and New Zealand — what but the same sad, dark, and gloomy scene?

"Oh but," you say, "here we may stop; in Oceana among the sweet little islands of the Southern Sea — isles so green, so tranquil, so simple, so happy." — You need not press me; I sigh for something to remind me of Paradise, however faintly, however feebly. Well, I have brushed off the fly-spots which were mixed in with the happy little isles, and which had increased to my eye their apparent number. Yes, they are green and lovely, and seem almost as if they were rescued from the rent-roll of the great usurper by the hand of the faithful missionaries of the cross; as though the sword were beaten into the ploughshare, and the spear into the pruning-hook, and the reclaimed savages would learn war no more. But, dearly as we all love to be deceived by that which soothes and solaces, can we, I ask you, can we venture to stop even *here*, to sing your sweet song of triumph? It must not be at Tahiti, poor Tahiti, surely — rescued, well nigh rescued from the jaws of the dragon, to become the prey of the great papal harlot and her infidel paramour.

And what will be the fate of the rest of the islands of the Southern Ocean, whether Christianized or Pagan, God

only knows ; but he who calls himself the Vicar of Christ has marked them out for his own. They are part and parcel of his new diocese of "Oceana ;" and Rome has friends, powerful enough and willing enough to aid him in bringing them under the pastoral crook of the hircling shepherd, as we have, alas ! seen to our sorrow.

Who is ignorant or unobservant of the strides Rome is making, of the energies she is putting forth, to subdue the world to her dominion ? He who sees it not must be blind indeed, with the records of the Propaganda open for his perusal, and the scenes at home and abroad acting before his eyes. And who, with the Bible in his hand, knows not of the doom that awaits the Man of Sin, when he shall come in like a flood, and the standard shall be lifted up against him ? When come to the full — when ripe for destruction — the Lord shall consume him with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy him with the brightness of his coming. But till Antichrist falls, I have no heart for the "Song of Jubilee." Come the day, and I trust then to join you in it ; when the Universe shall hear, as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunders, saying, Alleluia ! for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice and give honor to him ; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. Amen. Alleluia.

But we have yet another part of the globe to travel over ere we have finished the map. It is the seat of the beast itself — civilized, Christianized, enlightened Europe. Let us be here rather more minute, and take a glance at the different kingdoms, as they are composed of infidel, papal, patriarchal, protestant, and papal-protestant materials. Shall we begin with infidel Turkey ? Pass on quickly, you exclaim. Shall we stop, then, in equally infidel, though nominally papal, France ? Pass on. Italy ? Austria ? Spain ? Portugal ? The islands of the Mediterranean ? I am not mocking, I assure you, I only want to take in *detail* that which may mislead or mystify if spoken of in the *aggregate*. Well, then, Russia and the lately revived kingdom of Greece, who, taught by the patriarch, and not by the pope, deem it an abomination to worship the *image* instead of the *picture* of the Queen of Heaven — the Mother of God ?

True it is, that, as we travel northwards, we escape from the denser regions of Christian idolatry; but are you willing to pause in Germany, Belgium, or Holland? In Prussia, Denmark or Sweden? I deem you would rather be hastening on to the land of liberty — the land of Bibles — our own beloved island, the ocean queen. O what a relief! Here at least we can breathe after what we have passed through —

“Such regions dolorous — a universe of death!  
Where all life dies — death lives.”

Here at least we may breathe freely. But where, O where shall we find a resting-place to sing the “Song of Jubilee;” for here surely, if anywhere on the globe’s surface, it may be chanted, and with lute and viol. Where shall we begin the strain? Let us search for a suitable spot. Surely we shall find it where those who represent the aristocracy of the land are gathered in one peerless assembly. Surely among those whom the people have chosen to represent the great community. I would not speak of dignities or of those in authority with irreverence; but I ask you, what would be the reception of the legislator who should propose, in either of those august assemblies, to frame a law on such a simple cardinal principle as this, “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself,” and adduce the authority of Jesus of Nazareth as his warrant for introducing a bill framed on such an obsolete maxim?

Shall we look for the spot in the ranks of our brave soldiers, and invite the accompaniment of the trumpet and the drum? or among our gallant sailors, in some interval of cessation from oaths and blasphemy? Shall we find it with the conductors of our daily press, which leads while it follows the opinions of its millions of readers? Shall we find it in our commercial or manufacturing towns — or among our rural population?

You know something, sir, of both, and could give a description of each which would make us hide our heads for shame and sorrow. O what a tale do the beer-shops of our agricultural districts tell! And were it seemly to speak of those things which are done of the world, the fair-spoken, respectable-looking, well-dressed world, by our cities and towns, in secret, where could we hide our



heads, or conceal our shame? You are not ignorant of the statistics of crime, soul-polluting, soul-destroying crime, which have been furnished to the public, of one town, for example — a town where the gospel is proclaimed continually with eloquence and with power, but a town which vies with the great metropolis itself in a sin which increases beyond the ratio of the increase of its vast population. I have before me a pamphlet, in which the philanthropic writer endeavors to grapple with the monster which is ruining its thousands, aye, sending its tens of thousands of our youth, our baptized youth, down quick into the pit — a pamphlet in which the writer avails himself of facts supplied by one of your fellow-laborers, a devoted minister in your town, of our denomination — facts which would seem incredible were they not given on unquestionable authority. Let this one speak for itself; but had it ten thousand voices, it would not tell one ten thousandth part of the sorrows, the unutterable sorrows, which it is the key to. Hear it, ye men of pleasure — hear it, ye deceivers and deceived, ye who are hastening, with the gospel sounding in your ears, to the pit of destruction, and dragging with you the souls of your wretched associates in crime. There is spent in the town of Liverpool alone, in the course of a single year, upon one sin, so emphatically called in the Litany of the national church, “a deadly sin,” two hundred thousand pounds.

Ponder this one fact, with which you are already acquainted; follow it out through all its details, causes, and influences, and I need not ask you whether you select such a town as this for the “Jubilee Hymn” — a town devoting the wealth it once earned in the service of Moloch, during the bloody days when its docks were crowded with slavers, to the service of Moloch’s great compeer and rival, the dissolute Belial. Such a town! and can we flatter ourselves that Liverpool stands *alone*? The statistics of crime tell, but too plainly, that it is rather but a sample of the mass of our civic population. Need I lift up the curtain which conceals the condition of the great metropolis, “the monster city,” as it has not been unfitly called? That curtain has been drawn aside by able and powerful hands; and what scenes of sickening corruption have been disclosed! “It must be admitted,” says a

writer whom I have already quoted, "though the admission bring sorrow to the heart, that by far the great majority of men in every land are still in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity. In heathen lands vice assumes the most brutal forms, and gathers to itself innumerable victims — it is savage, cruel, relentless: but in those countries where civilization has advanced, there exists a refinement in vice which renders its approach more subtle and its blow more deadly. In the former, it is open and undisguised; in the latter, it is noiseless and secret. In the former, it is bold and daring, giving its victims the chance of escape; in the latter, it has a stealthy pace, and, serpent-like, winds its folds around its victims, the more securely to crush them to the heart, without a ray of hope. The history of the word furnishes abundant proof that, as civilization has advanced, vice has become more refined, and has brought down certain desolation and ruin. Do not Greece and Rome present examples? and is not the truth of this remark manifest in this country, the land in which so much has been done and is doing to extend and perpetuate the blessings of religion and virtue? The great metropolis itself, in its leading thoroughfares, in its lanes and alleys, in its winding courts, testifies to the truth of the remark. Take but any of the vices with which London is deluged: mark well all its machinery, regard the *modus operandi*, and it will be discovered that fiendish arts and infernal contrivances are employed to entrap its victims. More especially is it so in reference to the vice of uncleanness, which holds an almost undisputed sway throughout the length and breadth of the land. Horrid and systematic schemes, intricate, but not the less fatal, are continually practised, which have disturbed domestic peace, drawn thousands into ruin, and entailed a lasting disgrace upon the country." But the subject is too fearful, too revolting, to be dwelt upon, though too fearfully true and significant to be suppressed. I speak as unto the wise. Judge ye.

Is there no spot, then, where Satan has relaxed his grasp of the territory he has won? Look at the wide sea, which has become almost as populous as the dry land — "the great highway of the world," which no longer separates man from man, but brings all nations into familiar-

ity with each other. Is there one man more proverbially godless than another — is it not the poor mariner? Thank God for “the Bethel flag.” But oh! what is still the condition of the tens of thousands of every nation, who live on the bosom of the great deep? — who fear neither God nor devil, and who look for a final state between heaven and hell; not fit, as they deem, for the one, because of their wickedness, nor deserving of the other, because of their bravery. Oh! could the different seaports of the world disclose the amount of guilt which every vessel that enters them leaves with its cargo, what a tale would they relate! It is said of our *own* seamen, that “the curses and imprecations of those they have injured in distant lands are poured upon them, and *our* country is denounced as the scourge and bane of the world.” What must be said, then, of the crimes of other nations, who pretend not to rank with us in the scale of morality?

But while we are on the ocean, let us slack sail and linger a moment, not for a jubilant hymn, but for a mournful dirge. Would the waters of the great Atlantic stand on a heap, a wall on this side, and on that, as did the waters of the Red Sea, in olden time, what would the pathway disclose, the pathway of “the middle passage?” what but the countless bones of millions of poor Africa’s sons and daughters — of those who have found a place where the wicked cease from troubling — a refuge from woe — woe past, present, and to come — at the bottom of the silent deep? Do I hear you say, This can only tell of bygone days? Would it were so. Thank God, O thank God! that we have washed our hands of the guilt of the hellish traffic in human flesh, and that we do what we can to atone for our past atrocities; but what is the state of that traffic at the present moment? Though more than thirty years have elapsed since the slave trade was declared piracy by the law of England, and though millions have been spent by us for its suppression, the slave trade has, instead of diminishing, doubled in amount, and every year witnesses the drainage from Africa of 500,000 of her hapless race, of whom the great proportion find a welcome — O *how* welcome, how sweet a grave! — in the heart of the deep. It is a stupendous fact; but could we hear the groan of one poor agonizing wretch, as it ascends

from the hold of the slave ship — one shriek, one moan from the agonizing mother, one wail of the little child — the fatherless, motherless, homeless child, as it goes up to the ear of Him who records it all against the day of reckoning, it would leave an impression far deeper even than the one astounding fact, that half a million of such sorrowful creatures are yearly doomed to drink the cup of woe handed out to them by their fellow-man — one groan, one single groan, would drown the “song of jubilee,” if raised by a thousand voices. But who can count the groans, the shrieks of mourning, lamentation, and woe, that every moment are heard, by day and by night, along the great pathway of the world?

Well is it for us that we cannot see, that we cannot hear, what we are impotent to heal. The heart would give way in its frantic struggle to stay or avenge it.

“No eye but *his* could ever bear  
To gaze all down the drear abyss,  
Because none ever saw so clear  
The shore beyond of endless bliss.”

No, the groans of creation are anything but jubilant; and well may we exclaim, “O Lord, how long!” The whole creation groaneth and travaileth, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God — waiting for the appearance of the Lord, the Head of the new creation.

“O that the months would roll away,  
And bring the coronation-day.”

But it is time that I brought this letter to a close. Before doing so, I must fulfil my promise of visiting with you some of the little oases in the world’s great desert. Bless God there are many of them — sweet “little spots enclosed by grace, out of the world’s wide wilderness;” and there is no part of that wilderness where they are not to be found. In the frozen shores of the Arctic regions — in the burning sands of the deserts — in the east and west — in the north and south — on Greenland’s icy mountains — on India’s coral strand — in every country and in every clime — in the quiet village and in the busy town — in the palace — in the cottage — in the mansion, and in the garret and cellar — in the houses of parliament, and in the houses of correction for indigent poverty — God has a seed

to serve him, and he is still gathering them out of the world that lieth in the wicked one, by the preaching of the gospel — by the evangelist at home and the evangelist abroad — from every kindred and nation and people and tongue. Great is the honor he puts upon Britain in making her a quiver for his arrows. The Bible Society, the Missionary Societies, the Tract Society, like three sister graces, look lovely apart, but O how lovely in their blended beauty! What has not God wrought by means of their work of faith and labor of love, (and by America, too,) notwithstanding our national crimes, in the one great cause of “spreading the knowledge of Christ among heathen and other unenlightened nations.”

Well, here, you say, here we may surely sing with a joyful heart. True: but it must not be a strain that tells of “the world’s Jubilee” in the absence of the world’s rightful Lord — of the earth’s deliverance from bondage while “the god of this world” is triumphant and making the whole creation groan. It must not be of a time anterior to that when the cry shall be heard, “The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever.” Tell me not that it is the preaching of the gospel that will do all this. It is only the province of the gospel to *announce* it. “The gospel of the kingdom” is one thing; “the kingdom” itself is another thing. The invitation is not the feast. We have come to talk about the gospel as though there were something cabalistic in the *word*. We have come to regard it very much as the Jew regards the law, or the papist the crucifix. It is a message — it is an announcement — it is not that of which it testifies — it is *not* the kingdom of Christ — it has done, and is doing, and will yet do, its appointed work, *gather out* the little flock to whom it is the Father’s good pleasure to give the kingdom. But it will do no more. It will not heal the sick, for it is not its province. It will not give sight to the blind, nor hearing to the deaf, nor feet to the lame, for it is not its province. It *will* not raise the dead, for it is not its province. It *will* not cause waters to spring forth in the desert, nor make the wilderness flourish and blossom as the rose. It will not dethrone the god of this world, for it is not its province. It *will* not close the door of the world’s great hospital — 14

"The lazar-house, sad, noisome, dark, wherein are hid  
 Numbers of all diseased, all maladies  
 Of ghostly spasm, or racking torture, qualms  
 Of heart-sick agony, all feverous kinds,  
 Convulsions, epilepsies, fierce catarrhs,  
 Intestine stone and ulcer, colic pangs,  
 Demoniack frenzy, moping melancholy,  
 And moon-struck madness, pining atrophy,  
 Marasmus, and wide-wasting peatulence,  
 Dropsies and asthmas, and joint-racking rheums."

But all this is to be done; and when the number of the elect is complete, — that number known only to him who keeps the book, "the Lamb's book of life," in which their names are written — when the last of the little flock shall have heard the Shepherd's voice through the instrumentality of the preaching of the gospel — then the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we (the living) shall be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. And *then* the kingdom shall come, and God's will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven, and the groans of creation shall cease. Let the angel speed, then, his flight, through the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation and kindred and tongue and people, and say with a loud voice, "Fear God, and give glory to him, for the *hour of his judgment is come.*" For then shall come the restitution of all things promised before the foundation of the world. For, concomitant with and consequent upon the second coming of Christ, shall be — The resurrection of the sleeping saints — the change of the living saints — the casting out and binding of Satan — the destruction of Antichrist — the gathering of Israel — the descent of the New Jerusalem — the eradication of the curse from the earth — the deliverance of the creature from the bondage of corruption — the kingdom of Christ and his saints — the whole earth filled with his glory. — And then shall the Redeemer see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied. And we shall be satisfied too, "if by any means we may attain unto the resurrection of the dead," awake in *his* likeness, and share in *his* glory.

I do not know that I can better close this letter than in the closing words of "the declaration of the faith of the Congregational churches:" — "As Christ would have us

to be certainly persuaded that there shall be a judgment, to deter all men from sin, and for the greater consolation of the godly in their adversity, so will he have that day, unknown to men, that they may shake off all carnal security, and be *always watchful*, because they know not *at what hour the Lord will come*, and may be *ever* prepared to say, 'Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.' — Amen.' And to this I add my *Amen* also.

Yours, Rev. and dear Sir, in the faith of the gospel, and  
in the hope of the Lord's appearing and kingdom,  
LAICUS.





THE DUTY OF  
PRAYER AND WATCHFULNESS  
IN THE  
PROSPECT OF THE LORD'S COMING.

BY THE  
REV. JAMES HALDANE STEWART, M. A.  
INCUMBENT OF ST. BRIDE'S, LIVERPOOL.

## REMARKS.

WE have selected the following discourse from a new English work containing twelve sermons on the "Second Coming, the Judgment, and the Kingdom of Christ." They were delivered in London by twelve clergymen of the Church of England, in the year 1843.

The preface of the work is by the Rev. E. Bickersteth, from which we give the following extracts :

"The second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ is allowed by all Christians to be a subject of unspeakable importance. The CERTAINTY OF IT is with them an unquestionable fact. It comes into every creed of the church. It is continually set before us in the Scriptures as the great object of hope, and the great event to prepare for which our thoughts, and words, and works, should be constantly directed. There needs, then, no apology for this united effort to call the attention of the church of Christ to this all-important event."

In the principles, on which it is said those who preached these sermons "are entirely agreed," we also agree with them so far :

"They all expect a Millennium yet to come ; they all look for the personal coming of our Lord before that Millennium. They look for the first resurrection, and glory of the saints at the coming of our Lord before the Millennium."

We have selected this as being eminently practical, and suited to the present time. We hope it may have an extensive circulation, as it will tend to dissipate worldimindedness and scepticism, so rife among the professed people of God at the present time.

J. V. HIMES.

## S E R M O N .

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Rev. xvi. 15.

*“ Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments.*

THIS remarkable sentence is taken from a part of this interesting prophecy, which many approved expositors believe to be now receiving a partial accomplishment.

The text attracts our attention by the significant word with which it commences, “ Behold ;” an expression which, according to the idiom of the sacred Scriptures, is usually employed to usher in an event which merits peculiar notice. Thus, the angel who addressed the shepherds said to them, “ Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.” In the same manner the Apostle Paul writes to the Corinthians, “ Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be

changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." So the Prophet Isaiah, "BEHOLD, the Lord hath proclaimed to the end of the earth, BEHOLD, thy salvation cometh; BEHOLD, his reward is with him, and his work before him." This word, therefore, may well excite our earnest regard, since it would not have been used, unless something of more than ordinary importance were to follow.

The text is still further remarkable from its singular position. It stands as a parenthesis in the midst of the pouring out of one of the most eventful of the vials of the wrath of God. For in the prophetic description of this vial, we are told, first, of the drying up of the great river Euphrates, that the way of the kings of the east may be prepared; and we then read of the active energy of three unclean spirits like frogs, the spirits of devils working miracles, going forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of the great day of God Almighty.

But, whilst the word by which the text is introduced, and the position in which it stands,

may make it interesting, its chief attraction consists in this, that if we may avail ourselves of such a simile, it may remind us of the shrill sound of the trumpet at the dawn of day—"la réveillée," or the morning call, to the troops—for it is a note of warning given by our blessed Saviour to awaken the slumbering members of his church, and to prepare them for his near approach. It is also a word of encouragement graciously intended to strengthen the faith, animate the hope, quicken the zeal, and dissipate the fear of his faithful people. I have, therefore, selected this striking portion of Holy Writ, as peculiarly appropriate to the subject appointed for the concluding lecture of this series of discourses, which your much-esteemed and beloved minister has requested me to deliver. The appointed subject is, "The Duty of Watchfulness and Prayer in the Prospect of the Coming of our Lord;" a subject eminently practical, and one which proves that the object of the Lord's servants who arranged the syllabus of this course, was, not to proclaim any fanciful theory or speculative opinion, but, by the Divine blessing, to impress the hearers with that deep tone of piety which the unveiling the future prospects of the Church is so well calculated to produce.

If there be any one topic more than another

calculated to solemnize the mind, to bring us as lowly suppliants to the Throne of Grace, and to lead to watchfulness and prayer, while at the same time it cheers and animates the spirit, filling it with that blessed hope, which led the Apostles, the army of martyrs, and we may add, our Protestant forefathers, to "count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowlege of Christ Jesus their Lord;" if there be any subject calculated to produce these blessed effects, it is "the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

Let me, then, entreat your silent but fervent prayers, that the aid of the Holy Spirit may be granted, while I attempt to open and improve the awakening announcement of our blessed Lord, "*Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments.*"

Without entering into the other topics to which my text might give rise, allow me to call your attention, First, to THE SUDDENNESS of the advent of our Lord, "*Behold, I come as a thief;*" and, secondly, to HIS ENCOURAGING COUNSEL, "*Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments.*"

I. Observe the *suddenness* with which our Lord will come.

Here we may profitably notice how frequently and how emphatically this stirring fact is de-

clared in the Word of God. It would seem, as if the Holy Spirit, being fully aware of the tendency, even in sincere Christians, to forget the future return of the Lord, were for this reason desirous to impress upon the Church, in a manner the most awakening, the important truth, that He will come at a time when he is least expected. For, if we read the Holy Scriptures with attention, we shall see, that the illustrations employed to describe the second coming of the Son of man, are those which most clearly and strikingly manifest the *suddenness* with which He will appear.

His advent is at one time compared to a flash of lightning. Thus we find, in Matt. xxiv. 27, "As the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." We know how suddenly a flash of lightning appears. At such a season, it may be, the clouds previously cover the heavens; there is the appearance of a gathering storm: but when and where it will burst, no one can say. In an instant, the flash is seen lighting up the heavens. Thus our Lord will come.

In another passage, the advent of our Lord is compared to a snare which suddenly entraps the prey. How unexpected is this! The unsus

pecting bird, it may be, is singing among the branches, not anticipating any evil. She invites her brood to descend and take some small particle of food, which her maternal eye has discerned upon the grass. In the moment of her descent, with all her young about her, she finds, too late, that this tempting morsel was but a bait. She is taken in the snare, and thus falls into the hands of the fowler. Thus, again it is written, shall be the coming of the Son of man: "Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For *as a snare* shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth." (Luke xxi. 34, 35.)

In a third place, the coming of our Lord is compared to the destruction of the old world and the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah. How sudden were these events! "They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark; and the flood came, and destroyed them all." Such was the deluge! And in the narrative of the burning of Sodom, the Holy Spirit hath, in a peculiar manner, set forth how unexpectedly this awful judgment was sent. It is written, "*The sun was risen upon the earth when*



*Lot entered into Zoar.*" Thus when the inhabitants of Sodom awoke, they perceived nothing peculiar in the morning sky. The sun appeared with his accustomed brightness, and no evil seemed to portend the city. The inhabitants went forth to buy and sell, to eat and drink, as they had done on the preceding day. "*Then,*" it is said, at this moment of apparent calm and dazzling sunshine, "the Lord rained upon Sodom, and upon Gomorrah, brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven." "Even thus," my brethren, "shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed."\*

In the passage I have chosen for our present consideration, another emblem is employed; an illustration which, if possible, ought, from its being so frequently repeated, to strike us still more forcibly. It is recorded, by the Evangelists, St. Matthew and St. Luke,† as used by the Saviour upon two different occasions; "If the goodman of the house had known what hour *the thief* would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through." St. Paul, too, in his first epistle to the Thessalonians, writes thus: "Yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord shall cometh as *a thief in the night.*" St. Peter, also, in his sec-

\* Luke xvii. 30. † Matt. xxiv. 43. Luke xii. 39.

ond General Epistle, declares, that "the day of the Lord will come *as a thief in the night*; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat." And we read, in the admonition of our Lord to the angel of the church in Sardis, "Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee *as a thief*, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee." When this remarkable similitude occurs in our text, it is with this additional emphasis that the whole sentence bursts upon us with the suddenness of the midnight robber. To this point I have already directed your attention. This emphatic warning occurs, you perceive, in the midst of the description given by St. John of the pouring out of the sixth vial of the wrath of God. At the moment when "the kings of the earth and of the whole world" are being gathered together by "the spirits of devils working miracles," "to the battle of the great day of God Almighty," a cry is suddenly heard, like the voice of a trumpet, from the Bridegroom of the Church, "*Behold, I come as a thief.*" This call to his professing followers comes as unexpectedly as the entrance of a thief into the peaceful dwelling of a slumbering householder.

It is by these repeated declarations, and by these striking emblems, that the suddenness of the advent of our blessed Lord is declared. Oh ! that the Holy Spirit, of his infinite mercy and goodness, would deeply impress our minds with this important truth ; so that, instead of being like those to whom the Lord shall come unawares, we may be of that happy number who are making ready for his appearing, and who, when He does come, shall be able to say, "Lo, this is our God ; we have waited for him, and he will save us : this is the Lord ; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation."

II. Let us now attend to the counsel given by our Lord in connexion with the sudden announcement of his coming : *Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments.* The first part of the description here presented, *Blessed is he that watcheth*, fully accords with the counsel which our Lord had previously given to his disciples in his remarkable prophecy delivered upon the Mount of Olives : " Watch ye therefore : for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning : lest coming suddenly, he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch."\*

\* Mark xiii. 35—37. See also Matt. xxiv. 42 ; and xxv. 13. Luke xxi. 36.

The same counsel is given by the apostles of our Lord, St. Peter and St. Paul: "The end of all things is at hand: *be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.*"\* "Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; *but let us watch and be sober.*"† The word *sober* not only includes such a temperance in diet that the body be not overcharged with surfeiting or excess of wine, but it more especially refers to sobriety of mind; or to that temperament which preserves its possessor from worldly care and anxiety, from that eager desire for earthly objects which acts like an intoxicating potion. Against this the Lord would caution his followers. As he grants, so he directs them to seek after "the Spirit of power, and of love, and of a sound mind;" a discreet and chastened judgment, not elevated by temporary success, or cast down by unforeseen difficulties; but a spirit kept in a state quick to apprehend, and prompt to execute, whatever may be required in the service of the Lord.

That the mind should be so disciplined is of great moment; for it is not a sudden flash of

\* 1 Peter iv. 7.

† 1 Thess. v. 4—6.

ardor, or a hasty ebullition of fiery zeal that will suffice. A Christian soldier has counted the cost in the retirement of his closet. There he makes his calculation ; and there he deliberately reckons "all things but dross, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord." He is not surprised by difficulties, or turned aside by temporary reverses. He pursues his steady course, following the great Captain of his salvation "through evil report and good report." He does not imagine the sky will be always clear, but, like an experienced mariner, without foreboding evil, he provides for future storms.

This sobriety is the more requisite at the present time for the faithful followers of Christ to obviate the prejudice which is sometimes entertained against those who obey the command of the inspired apostle, to "take heed to the more sure word of prophecy, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place." While these prejudices have, to a certain extent, been promoted by the crude, fanciful, and visionary interpretations of some rash expositors of this mysterious book, it should ever be borne in mind, that among the students of prophecy have been found the most wise and the most holy of the servants of the Lord. It was the prophet Daniel, the prime minister of the monarch of Babylon, a counsellor

whom his royal master "in all matters of wisdom and understanding found ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm;"—it was this wise man, a man of prayer, one "greatly beloved" of the Lord, who, by his diligent study of the prophetic books, understood the time when the Lord would deliver his people from captivity; and who, as a true patriot, set himself to prayer for this desirable object. In this study others, also, of the eminent servants of the Lord, both under the Old and the New Testament dispensations, have been deeply engaged. The inspired prophets of the olden time, not satisfied with delivering the heavenly oracles to the Jewish people, "inquired and searched diligently what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory which should follow."

Of these things I remind you, my beloved friends, lest any individual present should entertain the feeling to which I have referred. Let such an one be assured, that, when this study is pursued, as it was by the prophet Daniel, with earnest prayer to God for Divine teaching—and this my beloved brethren, is the mode we would most strongly recommend—there is not any

employment which has a greater tendency to enlarge the mind, to humble the spirit, to sanctify the affections, and to elevate the soul, than the careful study of the writings of the inspired prophets. These portions of Holy Writ are among the most choice gifts of God to His most honored servants, bestowed when they enjoyed the most intimate communion and fellowship with the Lord.\*

Be sober, then, my beloved brethren; let your spirit and conversation be such as to manifest that your high esteem for the prophetic Scriptures has not arisen from a momentary impression, but is the result of a diligent study of the oracles of God, with earnest prayer for Divine instruction.

I pass on, however, to the express language of our text—“*Blessed is he that WATCHETH.*” This admonition extends beyond sobriety of mind; the latter referring to the inward frame, the former to the outward conduct. Be vigilant. Stand upon your watch-tower. Mark the movements of the enemy. Think not you are safe because you have obtained partial success, nor vainly imagine that, having passed the day securely, the night will not have its dangers. “Let your loins be girded about and your lights

\* See DAN. ix. 20, &c.; Jer. xxxij. 16 to the end; Rev. i. 10.

burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord when he shall return from the wedding, that when he cometh and knocketh they may open to him *immediately*."

This vigilant spirit, in regard to the coming of our Lord, implies *the expectation* of this great event. For men are not set to look for the arrival of a person who is not expected; nor do we watch for the coming of a friend, when no intimation has been given concerning his approach. Here, therefore, it is understood, that from the study of the sacred Scriptures, and from an assured faith in their truth as the Word of God, an expectation is wrought in the mind that this event will undoubtedly happen; that "He that shall come will come, and will not tarry;" and that "unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

There is also implied a consciousness of the *uncertainty of the hour* in which this event may happen. Although esteem for a friend we love may, long before the time, beget an earnest desire for his arrival, it is not until near the day he has fixed for coming that we expect his approach. When, therefore, it is said, "*Blessed is he that watcheth,*" it implies a consciousness of uncertainty as to the time when the event shall



come to pass. He may come in the first, or the second, or the third watch. He hath not so precisely fixed the very time that we can say at what moment He will arrive. It may be "at even, or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning." I must therefore be watching; for I cannot say when it will be.

An *earnest longing for His appearance* is also implied; so that in the anticipation of His coming we are led to watch the movements of His Providence, and feel the time to be long while He is absent. The believer will say, "Why is His chariot so long in coming? Why tarry the wheels of His chariot?" Or he will partake of the spirit of David, when he said, "My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning: I say more than they that watch for the morning." Until the Lord shall appear it is night time with the Church; and she longs for the day; she watches for the streaks of the early dawn, and is ready to hail with gladness the first tokens of the coming of her Lord. As when some very dear friend is expected the eye almost involuntarily turns, when the hour of his arrival draws near, toward the quarter from whence it is believed he will come, so he who *watches* is longing for the advent of his Lord. He loves His "appearing." He says from his inmost

soul, "Come quickly. Even so, come, Lord Jesus." Such, beloved friends, will be the state of mind of one who partakes of this blessed character. Oh! that this may be the spirit in which every one now present may be "looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God."

All that I have stated is implied in the expression, "*Blessed is he that watcheth.*" But it is not the whole. The counsel given by our Lord, like an order from a great military commander, is short, but most expressive. A single word, "*Watch!*" but this one term contains a volume. For it includes not only this diligent preparation for His coming, but a spirit of constant vigilance. That we watch the providences of God, so as to meet the Lord in his ways; that we watch the first risings of sin in the heart, so as to check it in the very germ; that we watch against whatever may "grieve the Holy Spirit;" since it is by His active grace, that the spiritual life is begun, maintained, and advanced; and that we watch, in a very special manner, against the dangers with which the church of Christ is encompassed. And who, my beloved friends, can measure the extent of these dangers in these "perilous times?"

To mention only a very few of them. The

danger, for instance, of self-deception. At all times we are exposed to this from the deceitful workings of the human heart. In the present day, however, there is a peculiar liability for persons to be deceived. The prejudices against the preaching of the Gospel, which existed some few years since, are, with regard at least to its general statements, much lessened. The spread of Divine truth among the higher and middle classes has given a greater respectability to an open profession of religion. The numerous societies also having a religious object in view, but not requiring any qualification in their members beside an annual subscription, have a tendency to promote this self-deception. A person constantly hearing the truths of the Gospel, attending the meetings of religious institutions, mixing with sincere Christians, to whose society he becomes attached from their mild and gentle manners, and engaging with them in their benevolent objects, will frequently entertain a certain self-approbation, which is quite consistent with the feelings of the natural man, but which the individual himself may mistake for true spirituality of mind. As, therefore, scarcely anything in the present day is more easy than to make a profession of religion, so few things are more easy than to be deceived by such a

profession. It should, therefore, be strongly borne in mind, that conversion is not a mere outward act; it is an inward change of the soul. The thoughts and desires, the hopes and fears, the pleasures and sorrows, of a converted man are all changed. Let each, then, ask himself, in what period of his course a change like this has taken place. For, excepting those who have received the grace of God in their very tender years, all who have lived according to the general course of the world will be able to trace a season, more or less distinctly marked, when such a change occurred. They will recollect, for instance, that at such a time they entered into their closets, and, with an earnestness they had never felt before, prayed to the Lord to forgive their sins, to enlighten their understandings, to give them a new heart, and to impart therewith strength to run in the ways of His commandments.

Another danger to which the hearers of the Gospel are exposed in the present day is, a departure "from the simplicity that is in Christ," or from the plain simple truth as it is in Jesus.

We find, that very early in the Christian Church there were these departures from the faith. We perceive either a Judaizing spirit,

requiring the Gentiles to observe the Mosaical ceremonies; or a philosophizing spirit, corrupting the truth with the false wisdom of men; or a sectarian spirit rending asunder the bond of peace, under different leaders. To departures like these we are especially exposed in the present day. We need, therefore, to be reminded of the solemn words addressed by St. Paul to the churches in Galatia, "Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." The revelation that God has made to man comprises the strongest arguments and the most powerful motives that can be devised. And it is well deserving remark, that, in examining the addresses delivered by St. Paul to persons of very different stations in life and of various dispositions, namely, the prejudiced Jews, the polite Athenians, the luxuriant inhabitants of Ephesus, and the superstitious Lycaonians, we find, that, although the introductory parts of his discourses vary, the conclusion of all is the same. He calls all to repentance. He preaches the Lord Jesus Christ once crucified, but now risen from the dead, and exalted to the right

hand of God, as the only ground of salvation, the only Mediator between God and man, the only source of inward sanctification, the only hope of everlasting life.

The spirit of the age, my beloved friends, and the prevalence of false teachers, expose us in a peculiar manner, to the danger of departing from this primitive simplicity. It would, however, occupy too much of your time further to dwell upon these distressing errors. Enough has been said to show the need we have to watch. I only add therefore, what is especially included in the counsel of our Lord, the watching *unto prayer*. Without this accompaniment our vigilance would be like that of an infant watching the inroads of an army. We find these graces constantly united. Our Lord said to his disciples, "*Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation;*" and again, "*Watch ye therefore, and pray alway, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things which shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.*" It was the neglect of this all-important charge which led Peter to deny his Lord, and the other disciples to flee from him. It well demands our notice, that, in the night in which our Lord was betrayed, although the disciples enjoyed such privileges as none but themselves ever possessed; though they

conversed with our Lord as with a friend; though they received the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, administered to them by the Saviour himself; though they united with Him when He offered up His most beautiful intercessory prayer, yet still forgetting His word, "*Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation,*" during that very night they all fell into sin: they either denied their Lord or forsook Him.

It would be difficult for us to set too high an estimate upon prayer. It is the great moral means that God, in his wisdom and goodness, has provided for imparting blessings to his people. It is their distinguishing grace. We read, "Shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto Him?" It gives to them the strength of Omnipotence; for it contains a force which, if we may use the expression, the Almighty himself cannot resist. These were his words to his servant Moses, "*I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiff-necked people: NOW THEREFORE LET ME ALONE, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them.*"\* "Let me alone," as if, had Moses continued in fervent supplication, he would have exercised a power which the Lord could not withstand.

\* Exodus xxxii. 9, 10.

How encouraging an example of the blessing of a prayerful spirit does the history of the prophet Daniel afford! "*At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to show thee; for thou art greatly beloved.*"\* Not only was his prayer for the deliverance of his people answered, but far more was granted to him than he had asked. The period was revealed to him at which Messiah was to come "to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness." Time would fail me to describe the blessedness of prayer. It, more than anything else, brings man to his becoming posture as a poor, weak, needy, helpless sinner. Prayer, at the same time, especially honors God; for it manifests his omnipotence, his providential care, his beneficent goodness, and overflowing bounty; his tender sympathy and parental compassion. Prayer, we may also add, especially glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ; for it is through Him alone that our petitions find access to God. It is the merit of His one offering, the sweet savor of his intercession, the love his Father bears unto Him, and his hearing Him at all times, which cause our broken supplications to be accepted.

\* Daniel ix. 23.



Yes, it is because "we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous," that we have boldness in drawing nigh to the throne of grace; for we are assured, that through Him we shall "obtain mercy, and find grace to help us in every time of need."

Oh, that the Lord would grant to us, my beloved friends, "the Spirit of grace and of supplications," so as to make prayer our delight, and communion with Him our sweet employment, counting the moments we spend with our God the most choice and the most blessed of our lives.

III. I must pass on to the latter part of the counsel, "Blessed is he that watcheth, *and keepeth his garments.*"

This expression is considered to have an allusion to the service of the temple. It was customary for the Levites, during the night, to guard the different entrances of the temple; and for this purpose, twenty-four wards, or companies, were set. To see that they properly performed the service, one was appointed as the provost, called the man of the mountain of the house of God. He went round about unto every ward, during the night with torches burning before him; and every warder that did not say, "Thou man of the mountain of the house, peace be unto thee," it was known that he was

asleep, and he did beat him with his staff, and burn his garment. So that sometimes they said in Jerusalem, "What noise is in the court?" and they answered, "It is the cry of a Levite who is beaten, and has had his garments burnt, because he slept at his watch."\* We may easily conceive with what shame he would appear when morning came. He would be seen with his garments burnt, and the skirts stripped off, so that all who beheld him would know that he had neglected his duty, and slept at his post. In contrast to these slumbering Levites, our Lord pronounces a blessing upon those who, like the watchful warders, keep their garments.

The emblem is one of great force in its application to the garments of salvation. These consist, first, of the robe of righteousness which the Saviour has wrought out for our justification before God, by his obedience unto death; a garment which is freely bestowed upon all who believe in his name. The other, the robe of sanctification; the garment of an inward purification of the soul, and of that holy conversation before men which becometh the Gospel. The one robe is that which is made white by the blood of the Lamb; the other is that which is adorned with the graces of the Holy Spirit.

\* See the works of Lightfoot, vol. i., p. 919.

By keeping these garments, we may understand preserving them in their purity, according to the charge given to the angel of the Church of Sardis, "Thou hast a few names, *which have not defiled their garments*, and they shall walk with me in white;" or, as this emblem is employed by St. Jude, "Others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating *even the garment spotted by the flesh*." Keeping the garments, therefore, includes in it a continual application to the precious blood of Christ, and to the sanctifying energy of the Holy Spirit. It implies, also, a wariness in avoiding the defilements of sin; diligence in improving the means of grace; and carefulness in walking with God. As well might any one suppose he could walk through the streets of this metropolis in the winter season and keep every part of his dress free from spots, as the Christian imagine he could mix unreservedly in the prevailing course of this world, and keep his garments white. He considers, therefore, if we may so speak, that he is attired in his court-dress; that he is wearing the robes in which he is to appear before the King; and, therefore, he walks circumspectly. He carefully shuns whatever is of a polluting nature; and while he trusts altogether in the merit of the atoning blood and perfect righteousness of his

Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, he remembers that it is written, "*Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.*"

All this, my Christian friends, is included in watching and keeping the garments; and blessed, yea, truly blessed, is that believer who is thus waiting for his Lord. So our text declares, "*BLESSED is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments;*" for he is delivered from those fears and anxieties which often fill the minds of the worldly; sources of distress, which will more and more increase as the coming of our Lord draweth nigh. For, while men who have cast off all restraint may "have their consciences seared as with a hot iron," so that, like the unjust judge, they "fear not God nor regard man," those who attend the services of the Church, who occasionally read the Holy Bible, and who meet from time to time with truly consistent Christians, cannot but have inward misgivings. They will say to themselves at times, How will it be with me when He who once appeared in our nature and tabernacled on earth, shall come again as He hath promised, "to be glorified in his saints," and, "to take vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of the

Lord Jesus Christ?" How can I meet him? My principles and my conduct proclaim that I am not among his friends. It must, therefore, be a dreadful meeting to me. These thoughts oppress the mind, and produce much inward distress. It is not very long since a nobleman of high rank, surrounded by apparent gaiety and external splendor, took the opportunity of a momentary absence of his usual acquaintances to confess to a casual godly visiter, "I have the forebodings of death upon me, and I am, at this moment, miserable beyond expression. Can you tell me how to obtain any consolation?"

From these agitating fears, those who are watching for the coming of their Lord, and keeping their garments, are graciously delivered. For why should they fear? Have they not fled for refuge to their coming Saviour? Is He not their friend and their Redeemer? Has He not engaged never to leave them nor forsake them? And hath he not promised, that they shall "sit with Him upon his throne, even as He is set down with his Father in his throne?"

This, however, is only a part of the blessedness of the true followers of our Lord. They have the delightful anticipation of the "glory to be revealed" frequently presented to their minds. For, if he who is watching for the arrival of a

friend, not only looks toward the place from whence he is coming, but refreshes his spirit with thoughts of the pleasure of the meeting, of the sight of his friend, of the joy of his countenance, of the sweet communion and fellowship to be possessed in his society; so it is with those who are waiting for the coming of their Lord. They are often meditating upon the blessedness of that day. They frequently revolve in their minds such declarations as these: "*When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory;*" and again, "*It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.*" We shall be *like Him* in our outward frames; for He "will change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body." We shall be *like Him* also, in the inner man, being entirely conformed to his image, in knowledge and righteousness and true holiness; loving God with our whole souls, and delighting in Him as our God; yea, our Father and our friend forever and ever.

Thus, ere the blessed day actually comes, a true Christian hath a foretaste of its joy: "for as he thinketh in his heart, so is he." To him, therefore, the sweet promise is, in a measure, fulfilled, that his days shall be "*as the days of*

*heaven upon earth.*" Filled with bright hope, his joyful soul speeds on its heavenly way; and while the Redeemer sitteth upon his throne, expecting till all his enemies be made his footstool, He longs to see Him, and be with Him for evermore.

Hence it is, my beloved friends, that you will generally see those Christians who are most watchful, and most prayerful, and whose eyes are most frequently directed toward their home, men of cheerful spirits. For they know by experience the truth of the Word, "*Happy are the people that are in such a case; yea, blessed are the people who have the Lord for their God.*"

Permit me, then, in conclusion, especially to recommend the established believer deeply to ponder and to pray over the words of the text. Far be it from me to wish to occupy your thoughts with vain or fanciful speculations; but I would earnestly entreat you to be of that blessed company who are "*watching, and keeping their garments.*" I desire it for your own present happiness, being convinced that there is an indescribable force in that word in the text, "*Blessed.*" Watchfulness is the very state in which the true followers of our Lord have been, when they have enjoyed most of the consolations of the Holy Spirit. Thus favored, they feel they re-

quire but one thing, the presence of their Lord. The frowns of the world distress them not; for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. The cares of the world disturb them not; for He who is coming to put an end to every care hath said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." The pleasures of the world tempt them not; for "in thy presence is fulness of joy; and at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." Oh! then, my beloved Christian brethren, as the early believers were those who had their conversation in heaven, who were "looking for the coming,"\* "praying for the coming," † "hoping for the coming," ‡ "waiting for the coming," § of the Lord Jesus; so, in these latter days, let it be your care especially to take heed to his warning, "*Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments.*"

That this may become, more and more, the habit of your mind, let me recommend to you a *sober study* of the Word of God. I say, *sober*, meaning by this, that we should take his word in its proper character, as that book which can alone guide our feet into the way of peace. Oh! my friends, how ought we to value the Bible in

\* Titus ii. 13.

† Rev. xxii. 20.

‡ 1 John iii. 1-3.

§ 1 Thess. i. 10.



the present day! It is the only volume which can impart true wisdom to the mind, and real consolation to the heart. Sometimes we are asked, what book we would recommend an inquirer after truth to peruse. We answer, **THE BIBLE.** Read more of **THE WORD OF GOD**, and less of the word of man. Read the Bible, soberly, constantly, patiently, diligently. Read the Bible with earnest prayer for divine teaching. Read it as that book of which our Saviour saith, "*The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge you at the last day.*" The more attentively it is thus perused, the more will its matchless excellence be seen.

What adoring wonder should this blessed book inspire! In the prophecies of Daniel, we have a scheme unfolded, which has already embraced a period of above two thousand four hundred years, including in it the great empires of the world. It takes in shorter and more lengthened periods; some already fulfilled, and others which appear on the eve of accomplishment. When the mind traces the different links of this vast chain, and beholds them all interwoven with one glorious purpose, surely we must admire the wisdom, the power, the goodness, and the faithfulness of God. The soul rises with the survey, and is ready to exclaim, How happy is that man whose faith is built on so sure a rock! Again,

therefore, would I recommend a sober study of the word of God, and with it a sober attention to passing events: not yielding to ardent feelings, or to the hasty conclusions of a lively imagination; nor construing trivial occurrences as the direct fulfilment of the prophecies regarding the latter days; but coolly and deliberately to exercise a prayerful judgment upon the events the providence of God brings before us. To be like the prophet Habakkuk, who said, "I will stand upon my watch and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what He will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved."

How delightful it is, my beloved friends, to refresh our spirits by reflecting upon the perfect confidence and quiet composure of mind with which the true Christian may watch the steps of the Great Ruler of the universe. All the events set forth in prophecy are ordered to promote the advancement of the kingdom of God, and the final happiness of his people. At the coming of the Son of man, there were, indeed, to "be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring, men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth." But

this awful period is the season concerning which our Lord hath said, "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." The very events which will bring dismay to the hearts of scoffers and infidels, and mere time-serving professors, are the occurrences which will bring joy and gladness to the faithful followers of our Lord.

Yes, my beloved Christian friends, we have no cause for fear; for "greater is He that is for us, than they that are against us." "Our Redeemer is mighty: the Lord of Hosts is his name." He is "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS." And "He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under his feet."

Let me, further, with the authority of a father, and the affection of a friend, the desire of whose heart is your salvation, who would not see one individual in this large assembly in danger, without stretching out his hand, if possible, to rescue him,—Let me, I say, should there be any present who have not yet sincerely cast themselves at the feet of our Lord, now persuade you to flee for refuge to the hope set before you in the gospel. It is not yet too late; but still the Lord waiteth to be gracious. His word still is "*Who-soever will, let him take the water of life freely.*"

Oh, then, "Seek the Lord while He may be found ; call upon Him while He is near."

To all present I would say, view this lecture as a response from the servants of the Lord on earth, to the awakening warning which He is at this time giving by his Word, by his Spirit, and by his Providence, from Heaven: "*Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments.*" Oh! that the Lord may thus incline every heart! May there not be an individual present hardy enough to neglect the warning; but, touched in his inmost soul by the love of Christ in sending the message, animated by the hope that it has not come too late, and earnestly desiring to partake of the blessings the saints will enjoy on that great day, may each for himself, say, "*Remember me, O Lord, with the favor that thou bearest unto thy people: O visit me with thy salvation.*"

"Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy: to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."











