

# SIGNS OF OF THE SECOND



# THE TIMES COMING OF CHRIST.

JOSHUA V. HIMES, EDITOR.]

"THE TIME IS AT HAND."

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## Illustration of Prophecy.

### BIBLE READER'S REPLY TO MR. MILLER.

EDITOR.—It was with pleasure I noticed in your 15th No. the review of my article on Biblical interpretation. 1. Because Mr. Miller had long studied the Bible, and I wished my principle *thoroughly tested*. 2. I presumed that whatever he wrote would be sure to be noticed by your readers, and thus the principle I advocate would become more extensively noticed by the readers of your paper, and thereby subjected to more rigid scrutiny, and, as I firmly believe it the only true mode of interpreting the Bible, I hope that thus the *truth* will be magnified. Permit me now to test Mr. M's interpretation by the same great first principle set forth in my former article. Mr. M. professing to apply my rules interprets the "dead bodies" in Rev. xi. 8, *to be the Scriptures*, I interpreted them to be "*the dead bodies*" of two persons.

It is a good rule at all times to use what is plain to throw light upon what is obscure, and then to hold fast what is plain, even if we do not readily understand what is dark. And,

1. I interpret them to be "*the dead bodies*" of two persons, because the Holy Ghost first introduced them to our notice in this chapter as "*my two witnesses*." Now it is plain that they had not yet appeared & exhibited their testimony when John wrote, for it is said "*I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall,*" &c. and they were to bear witness or prophecy only 1260 days, and then finish their testimony by a violent death. — But the Scriptures, except the book John was then writing, had appeared, and some of these (more than two) had been uttering their testimony for thousands of years, and are yet doing so now nearly 1800 years since John wrote.

21. It is worthy of notice, that the original word (*martus*) here used for witnesses, occurs but eleven times in the New Testament. Three times it is applied to God, twice to Jesus Christ, and six times to men, and always to persons. There is another word almost spelt like it (*martuz*) and also translated witnesses. It is used 26 times, is applied once to God and 25 times to men. So that both these words are only, and always applied, in the New Testament, to persons.

3. The Holy Spirit also says these "*two witnesses shall prophecy*" but "1260 days," and they are called "*two prophets*," verse 10. Has the spirit ever revealed to us that the Scriptures shall prophecy but 1260 days, or even years?

4. "And in sackcloth." This was the common or rather the official clothing of the prophets. Can this as well apply to the Scriptures, as to two persons?

5. The Holy Spirit reveals to us that these two witnesses *may be hurt*, verse 5. Nay more, that "they shall be overcome and killed," verse 7. Has the spirit any where as plainly revealed

that such events can and will happen to the Scriptures? Were those Scriptures *hurt*, when they were cut to pieces with a penknife and cast into the fire by Jehoiakim? Jer. xxxvi.

6. The Holy Spirit plainly reveals to us, that "the dead bodies" of these two witnesses shall lie three days and a half in the street of the great city where our Lord was crucified, and if our Lord were a prophet, he was crucified in that great city, here called by the spirit Sodom and Egypt, and by our Lord himself, in Luke xiii. 33, Jerusalem. Has the Spirit as plainly revealed that the Scriptures have dead bodies, and that their dead bodies shall lie three and a half days in Jerusalem, France or Rome?

7. It was the prayer of the good man of Uz, "O that thou wouldst hide me in the grave." It was promised to king Josiah that "he should be gathered to his grave, in peace. and even the Lord Jesus Christ, though he endured the shame of the cross as a malefactor, was permitted to be decently interred: And yet the spirit reveals in the plainest manner, that the rights of sepulture should be denied the dead bodies of those two witnesses. "And the people, &c. shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put into graves." Aside from the difficulty of perceiving under what possible circumstances a grave could be a desirable or a decent place for the Scriptures, where has the Holy Ghost so plainly revealed that the nations would not suffer the Scriptures to be put into their graves? He knows well what private interpretation has said about the fulfillment of this prophecy in the treatment the Bible has received in France and elsewhere, but this is no authority that should bind the conscience of a Bible reader.

8. The Holy Spirit has as clearly revealed, that "after three and a half days the spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; all this is plain, if applied to "two witnesses," "two prophets," two sons of Oil, who could "stand before the God of the earth." But where has the spirit so clearly revealed that the Scriptures when killed, should come to life after three days and an half, and stand upon their feet? Is it not easier, as it is safer to adhere to the words and interpretation of the Holy Ghost, than to the words, inferences and accommodations of any man, however shrewd, learned or pious.

9. "They heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, come up hither: and they ascended up to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies beheld them." This applied to "two witnesses," "two prophets," is all plain to the Bible reader: but where has the spirit so plainly revealed that the Scriptures have heard and ascended, or can or will hear and ascend up to heaven, in the sight of their enemies? This he professes he cannot find revealed, though he is not ignorant of how men have in vain, as he thinks, attempted to find a fulfillment of all this in Bible translations, societies, &c. He is free to confess, that he aims to receive the words of the Holy Ghost as a little child, and therefore can-

not but believe this to be future prophecy, unfulfilled. If wrong, he would cheerfully be set right.

10. "And the same hour was there a great earthquake and the tenth part of the city fell," &c. What city? Undoubtedly the same city where these two witnesses were killed, none other is alluded to in the chapter, the city which the holy spirit reveals to us as "where our Lord was crucified."

To be continued.

## EXTRACT FROM THE 'GLAD TIDINGS.'

By H. D. WARD.

THIS WORLD AND THE WORLD TO COME, OR KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.

"Glorious things of thee are spoken,  
"Zion, city of our God!  
"He, whose word cannot be broken,  
"Forned thee for his own abode."

In bringing to your notice this apostolic doctrine, I am called to use terms and texts of scripture, familiar perhaps to you, in senses that I do not understand them: therefore, I need your patience, until we can arrive at a common meaning of doubtful passages. But that you may have a guide to my meaning always before you, observe that I regard the kingdom of heaven which Christ preached, not as the church or gospel dispensation; but as the eternal state of the righteous after the end of this world, in the resurrection and judgment day, and in the new heavens and earth, which flesh and blood cannot inherit, which time cannot limit, and which sin, nor pain, nor death can enter; of which eternal state all the prophets foretell, and the gospel publishes the glad tidings, that it is at hand. In this world, all the promises do travail with faith, and they come to the birth together, in the world to come, at the coming of the Lord Jesus, according to these lines of the poet:

"O'er these gloomy hills of darkness,  
Look, my soul! be still, and gaze:  
All the promises do travail  
With a glorious day of grace:  
Blessed jubilee!  
Let thy glorious morning dawn!"

We know that this world is in darkness, and that the morning of the resurrection is the blessed jubilee of the world to come.

"The world to come:" what means this word of promise?

Every where in the scriptures, the future kingdom of heaven is set before the believer in contrast with the present dominion of the prince of this world; and this world is set in contrast with the world to come. To see this in the light of Revelation, I copy the connection of the words, as they occur a few times in the Evangelists.

"Neither in this world, nor in the world to come:" (Matt. xii. 32,) in relation to blasphemy against the Holy Ghost.

"But he shall receive a hundred fold, now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecu-

tions: and *in the world to come*, eternal life." (Mark x. 30.) "Receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come, life everlasting." (Luke xviii. 30.)

"For the children of *this world* are wiser in their generation, than the children of light." (Luke xvi. 8.)

"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: neither can they die any more; for they are equal unto the angels, and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection." (Luke xx. 34, 35, 36.)

The context does not discover what is meant by "that world," only as the above quotation shows it: and the preaching of it in the name of the kingdom of heaven, was the Lord's universal custom. It belongs with the resurrection of the dead; and its inhabitants are identified, as "the children of God," by their "being the children of the resurrection." So that there is a world to come, into which they who are accounted worthy will obtain entrance in the resurrection of the dead, and live on an equality with the angels; and "that world" is the kingdom of heaven.

To obtain "that world," and the resurrection unto eternal life, is the exhortation of the preacher, and is the effort of the believer, and the commandment of the Lord, in the gospel. But, now the associated efforts of the church, together with the general aim of private Christians, even the hopes of the church, are, to gain this world, *for the Lord*. The generous spirits of the world, "speak of the world, and the world heareth them." (1 John iv. 5.) They contemplate the improvements now making in the world with a high degree of satisfaction, that neither leaves any doubt of a long season of "peace and safety" in this world, before the end comes; nor distrusts the hope of a season of *extraordinary felicity* on earth, in which the messengers of the king shall no more be despised, while they invite the people to the marriage of his son, nor be ill treated, while they ask in the Lord's name, to render him of the fruits of his vineyard. "Now, behold, all things are ready: come unto the marriage."

However, the people make light of the invitation yet: and go their way, one to his farm, and another to his merchandise; and the rest sometimes spitefully use the messengers to this day. Surely, this is gospel, and during this dispensation, it will continue to be gospel to the end. The tares will grow with the wheat; the bad fish will be taken with the good, in the same net; the good seed will fall, some in the highway, and some in stony places, and some among thorns; and the husbandman will, as they now do, refuse to render the Lord of the vineyard his fruits in their season, until the end comes. And when that comes, observe, all ye that love the Lord, then comes the separation of the tares from the wheat, the bad fish from among the good, the sheep from the goats; which is the resurrection and judgment, both of the just and of the unjust. Therefore, as wise men, let us place no hope of any lasting joy, or permanent felicity, or even peace, in this world: and expect the coming of the Lord, and the return of the Jews with father Abraham from the dead, to the New Jerusalem, which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. For:

"What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? And what

shall a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of Man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels." (Matt. xvi. 26, 27.)

"Wo unto the world, because of offences!" (Matt. xviii. 8.)

The scriptures pronounce no blessing on this world, but only on the world to come.

"For all these things do the nations of *this world* seek after;—but rather seek ye the kingdom of God:" (Luke xii. 30, 31.) that is, the world to come.

"For God so loved the world—

"For God sent not his Son into the world, to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved." (John iii. 16, 17.)

But men love darkness still, rather than light; they reject the coming again of the Lord, as they once rejected and slew him; and this is their condemnation, their offence, for which a wo is pronounced against this world. Yet he giveth life unto the world; he gave his flesh for the life of the world: but the world hateth him, because he testifies that its works are evil. He testifies of its people; "Ye are from beneath, I am from above; ye are of this world: I am not of this world." (John viii. 23.)

"He that hateth his life *in this world*, shall keep it unto *life eternal*." (John xii. 25.)

"Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out." (John xii. 31.) This judgment will be *executed* in the end of this world.

"I came not to judge the world, but to save the world." (John xii. 47.) Not so will be his coming again in the end of the world.

"The Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive." (John xiii. 17.) And yet many are expecting a millennium, in which this world will receive the Spirit of truth; in which the foolishness of preaching will become the wisdom of this world; yea, when the preaching of Christ crucified will be no longer a stumbling block to the Jews, or to the Gentiles foolishness.

"For the *prince of this world* cometh, and hath nothing in me." v. 39.

Like prince, like people: neither have any portion in Christ, nor in his kingdom.

"If the world hate you, you know it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." (John xv. 18, 19.)

Where is the promise of the gospel, that *this world* will ever be changed, as in the supposed millennium, and made to love whom now it hates? There is a better world to come, which has the promises. But wo to this world, for it hated Jesus, and slew him; and it rejects the crucified to this day.

"He will reprove the world of sin,—because they believe not on me.—Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged." (John xvi. 8, 11.)

While this world stands it must be reprov'd for the sin of unbelief. Until judgment is executed by the Son of Man, when he will lift up his voice, ("he shall cry, yea, roar; he shall prevail against his enemies,") satan will continue to be the prince of this world. Till then will continue the gospel dispensation, and these words will be true;

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, that *ye shall weep and lament*; but *the world shall rejoice*—and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy." In the end of the gospel dispensation, the Lord's people shall see him

again, and their sorrow shall be turned into joy; for the triumph of satan will be over, "this present evil world," that "lieth in wickedness," will come to an end; and the saints will possess the kingdom of the eternal world to come, for an everlasting inheritance. But to the end of this world, its prince and its people will rejoice over those scenes, which make holy men weep and lament; while they pray to the Father of all: "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done in earth as in heaven."

This "*little while*," in the last conversation of our Lord with his disciples, in John xiii. xiv. xv. and xvi. chapters, used to trouble me, as it did his disciples when they reasoned upon it, and said, "A little while,—we cannot tell what he saith:" and though they obtained satisfaction at least, I could never find, in the word recorded, that which should make the word plain to any ordinary reader; until I considered, that the *absence*, of which he spake, and in view of which they grieved, and to cheer them in the prospect of which, he promised them the comforter, was *his ascension* to the Father; and not his death. In his crucifixion, they had no comforter: but in the absence of which he spake he sent them the Holy Spirit.

Then the "*little while and ye shall not see me*," was the period of seven weeks, to the ascension: "and again a little while, and ye shall see me," is the period from his ascension to his coming again, in the end of the world. So insignificant is time, in the view of eternity; so short is the period of this world, compared with the life of the world to come!

"I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world; again I leave the world and go to the Father." (John xvi. 28.) This is the word that seems to have satisfied his disciples; and it may teach us, that, if we would follow Christ, we must leave the world; having this for the last word of discourse from him, that "*In the world, ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world*." (John xvi. 33.)

"He left his starry crown,  
And laid his robes aside;  
On wings of love came down;  
And wept and bled and died.  
What he endured,  
O who can tell,  
To save our souls  
From death and hell!"

And multitudes are expecting his kingdom to be extended over this world, and his gospel to continue while the world is all *HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD*. As well may the Ethiop be white, and the leopard change his spots; which in this world can never be. When the Lord comes, he will change not the color of this world only; but the entire conformation, and whole nature throughout. And when he prays, with all his disciples around, for the last time, it is without any view of the supposed millennium in this world, however remote. He takes a contrary view.

"The world hath *hated* them because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world; but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil, (the wicked One.) They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." (John xvii. 14, 15, 16.) "O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee." (John xvii. 25.)

When did it ever? or when will it ever? This world is recorded in distinction from that which is to come: "this present evil world."

(Gal. i. 4.) The beloved John declares that "the whole world lieth in wickedness." (1 John v. 19.) The Lord Jesus exclaims: "O righteous father, the world hath not known thee!" And all the current of scripture testimony is decidedly toward the condemnation of this world, and of its prince, who is the prince of darkness, and this world is in his darkness; therefore, the wise need not lay up their treasures here; the holy need not expect perfection here; the zealous need not expect the conversion of the world. "The true light shines in the darkness; but the darkness comprehendeth it not." Whenever the world should become what some expect, the entire spirit of this last conversation and prayer of our Lord, with his disciples, must be changed; all the tenor of the gospel must undergo a new formation; and the word of God and of his Christ, in respect to this world, would seem to pass away: which heaven and earth shall sooner do.

There are prophecies of the earth, (which like the promises to Abraham, regard the new earth,) that must be fulfilled in glory: and it is by mistaking them for persons in this world, as by mistaking the preaching of the kingdom of our Lord for the kingdom itself, even the church for the kingdom, that men have been led, and are still led, I humbly believe, into an error, palpable as that of the worship of images, and invocation of the blessed virgin, which were universal a few centuries ago.

How easily these views may be strengthened by an appeal to the Epistles, the inquiring mind will readily perceive. Proof cannot be multiplied to weariness on so great a subject; but the reader will rejoice more in it, to find some portion of this proof for himself, as he peruses the writings of Paul and Peter, and James and John; taking this one word only to lead in the search:—"Forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." (Gal. vi. 14.) Crucifixion is foreign to the expected state of felicity in the world; but it accords with the hope of a believer in the life of the world to come; and with the Lord's final testimony: "In this world, ye shall have tribulation."

"But be of good cheer, I have overcome the world;" and to as many as follow me, I will give the kingdom of the world to come."

PRINCIPLES OF INTERPRETATION,  
RULE 19.—By H. JONES.

THE words everlasting—for ever—for evermore, &c., are supposed to be but seldom used in the scriptures, except as referring, at least, to an interminable period; and never there joined with the divine promises or threatenings, except to denote a duration which is absolutely endless.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

To arrive at a positive knowledge of the use of these words in all cases as found very many times in the scriptures, or to a conclusion, in which, all the evangelical can harmonize, may be difficult, especially where such words stand apparently disconnected with the general promises and threatenings of God. But as standing joined with such promises and threatenings, where it is of the utmost importance to determine their true meaning, it may seem that the proof is clear to all who love this solemn truth, that the words can only signify a period which is literally and positively endless in its duration.

PROOF.

1. Contrary interpretations of those solemn words in connexion with the promises and threatenings, if no where else, would exhibit the Almighty as trifling with them, and with the solemnities of their connexions, while we all know, that "the sufferings, &c., of this present time, are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."\*

2. Such a figurative use of these words, to signify only a limited time, if frequently practised in the Bible, would naturally throw the reader into darkness and doubt, in regard to knowing positively, when they are to be understood figuratively and when literally, notwithstanding any selected rule of determining the question.

3. The frequent figurative use of such words, to express a limited period, as sometimes interpreted, has always strengthened and always will, the unbelieving, in the favorite theory of the carnal mind, that the eternal curses of God, which are the portion of all the ungodly, will wholly come to an end, either in the present world, or in that which is to come.

4. Such a supposed figurative use of these terms, naturally blots out, or secularizes the glorious divine promises, and thus destroys the great motives and power of the gospel, to the ruin of souls.

EXAMPLES.

(1.) "The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills."† Instead of supposing the word everlasting here, to prefigure only a limited period, of the possession by Jacob of mere carnal blessings, or good things of the present world, as some have done, would it not be more consistent with the eternity, spirituality, benevolence, and omnipotence of God, in the bestowment of his richest blessings to his peculiar people, to conclude that by such blessings, he rather means the infinite and eternal blessedness which, on other occasions he has promised all the faithful, both of the Jewish and Christian dispensation? These infinite blessings will, indeed, as represented in the passage of the example, extend to eternity, or "the utmost bound of the everlasting hills." Surely, by these hills, we are not to understand our mere earthly hills; for if so, there would be seemingly no sense in the expression, while it is well known that hills of earth are no more durable than valleys, or the earth itself. In further

Proof that "the everlasting hills," here mentioned, are literally everlasting and heavenly, other passages of God's word may be examined, where the connexion shows at once that the words hills and hill, are used to represent the high and holy habitations of the Lord, where his greatest blessings are to be given to his people forever. "I will lift up mine eyes to the hills from whence cometh my help,"‡ "I cried to the Lord; he heard me out of his holy hill."§ "Lord, who shall dwell in thy holy hill?"¶

(2.) "For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever."¶

(3.) "The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David; he will not turn from it—of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne—their children also will I set upon my throne forevermore."\*\*

(4.) "Turn ye again now, every one from his evil way—and dwell in the land the Lord hath given to your fathers forever and ever."†† These, and many other parallel passages and

promises, sent forth as enduring for a period which shall be forever, everlasting, forevermore, forever and ever, have sometimes been interpreted to signify only a momentary duration of existence in this world. The words "land," and "throne," of David, in the connexion, are surely no good reason for supposing the whole to be of this world, since there is so much proof that earthly things are necessarily borrowed, as types of things invisible, as shown in the preceding Principles. And is it not more natural that the Lord should use the things of time as figures of eternal things, than that he should use eternity itself as a mere figure of a hand's breadth of time?

\* Rom. viii. 18. † Gen. xlix. 26. ‡ Ps. cxxi. 1. § Ps. iii. 4. ¶ Ps. xv. 1. See Ps. xliii. 3. lxxviii: 15, 16. Isa. ii. 2. \*\* Gen. xiii. 15. †† Ps. cxxxii: 11, 12. ††† Jer. xxv. 5.

Bible Chronology

ENQUIRIES BY ELDER MARK FERNALD.

BR. HIMES,—The motto of your paper is "to the law and the testimony." I have so done to make out the two new chronologies presented in the "Signs of the Times." But I get no satisfaction there concerning your assertions that the 430 years bondage or affliction of Israel, began with Abram. I think the calculation will do harm unless it can be better proved than it is in those tables.

God said to Abram, "Thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them, and they shall afflict them four hundred years, &c."—"and thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace, thou shalt be buried in a good old age." Gen. xv. 13--15. Abram did go to Egypt (Gen. xii. 10,) but when the famine was past, he returned to Canaan without any children to sojourn or stay in Egypt. I have found no account that Isaac was ever in Egypt. The Lord told him to stay with Abimelech, instead of going to Egypt in the famine, see Gen. xxvi. 2, 30 Hence to me it is inconsistent to say that Abram's seed were afflicted or in bondage until Jacob, or Israel, went into Egypt to abide, at which time Jacob was 130 years old. See Gen. xlvii. 7--9. To count the 430 year's bondage of Israel, from Terah's death, or 205 years from his birth, when Abram went to Egypt alters the chronology 135 years thus,

Terah, was	70	years old when Abram was born.	Gen. xi. 26
Abram was	100	years old when Isaac was born.	Gen. xxi. 5.
Isaac was	40	years old when he was married to Rebecca, Jacob's mother, who was without issue for a time not specified, Gen. xxv. 20, 21.	
Jacob born,	130	years old when he and his children went into Egypt and he stood before Pharaoh, Gen. xlvii. 7--9.	

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By your new chronologies, dating the 430 years in Egypt with Terah's age, and death 205 years or Abram's going to Egypt; it makes the captivity begin 135 years before Abram's "seed," or Jacob went into Egypt and stood before Pharaoh.

Terah was 70 years old at Abram's birth, Gen. xi. 26,  
 Abram is 100 when Isaac is born, Gen. xxi. 5.  
 Isaac was 40 at Jacob's mother's marriage,  
 Gen. xxv. 20 21.  
 Rebecca without issue.  
 Jacob was 130 years old at his arrival with the  
 children of Israel to Egypt.

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Wilt thou, or some one of thy correspondents correct this account, or correct your chronologies to satisfy me, and thousands of other Bible readers, (on this point.)

P.S. So Jacob went down into Egypt and died, he and our fathers, Acts. vii. 15

As to the correct reckoning of Usher, 588, I know not.

## ANSWER TO THE ABOVE.

1. Brother F.'s difficulty arises from supposing Abram to have been born when Terah was 70 years of age; but he was not. "Terah lived 70 years and begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran." Terah went forth with his household from Ur of the Chaldeans, unto Haran, and dwelt there, and died at the age of 205. When his father was dead, God removed Abram into Canaan, at the age of 75 years. Gen. xi. 26. xi. 31, 32. Acts vii. 4. Gen. xii. 4. Hence, Abram could not have been the first-born son of Terah, although because of his call to the peculiar privilege of being the father of the holy Savior, he is named first.

2. The second difficulty arises from the imperfection of the text in our version. Our Bible reads Exod. xii. 40, "The sojourning of the children of Israel who dwelt in Egypt was 430 years." But according to Dr. Clark, the Samaritan Pentateuch, the most correct of all the ancient manuscripts of the books of Moses reads it thus:—"Now the sojourning of the children of Israel and of their fathers, which they sojourned in the land of Canaan, and in the land of Egypt, was 430 years. The Alexandrian Septuagint, the most authentic of all the Greek copies of the Old Testament, reads the same. And finally, to confirm the whole, St. Paul gives the same period from the giving of the promise to Abram, to the giving of the law. Gal. iii. 17.

3. The 400 years, during which the seed of Abram was to be a stranger in a land that was not theirs, must have begun when Ishmael was cast out of Abram's house after he had mocked Isaac. This event took place somewhere from twenty-five to thirty years after Terah's death; probably about 20 years. Then 400 years would be left to the exodus. L.

## LITCH'S REPLY TO MILLER ON CHRONOLOGY.\*

1. Br. Miller thinks he is correct in allowing 600 years for Noah's life before the flood, and one year for the flood; because when any particular year of a person's life is mentioned, it is reckoned a full year, although it is the first month. But I think he is mistaken. To illustrate this, 2 Samuel v. 45, it is said David reigned 40 years; 7 years 6 months in Hebron, and 33 years in Jerusalem—40 years 6 months.

Again, Amaziah, king of Judah, reigned 29 years in Jerusalem. 2 Kings xiv. 2. In the fifth year of his reign, Jeroboam, king of Judah began to reign. 2 Kings xiv. 23. But Amaziah lived afterward 15 years. If, therefore, the 15th year of his reign had been reckoned a full year, it would have made 30 instead of 23 years. Hence Noah was 600 years, 1 month, 27 days old when he came out of the ark. And where the days and months are given we should reckon them, where they are not, we are bound to take the round number.

2. I think it more safe to take the testimony  
 \* Page 103.

of that eminent historian and chronologer, Josephus, as to the time of Joshua and the Interregnum after his death, than to trust to conjecture.

One error, however, I wish to correct. In my former communication I coupled Joshua and the elders together, and made it 25 years; but find, since, it is 25 years that Josephus allows for Joshua alone; and the 18 includes the elders and interregnum, or the whole time from Joshua's death until that whole generation were dead.

3. I am not aware that Ferguson's astronomical calculations go back farther than the 7th year of Artaxerxes; on the old chronological plan; nor do I believe it can be sustained farther back than that year.

## SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

"Can ye not discern the signs of the times?"

BOSTON, DECEMBER 1, 1840.

## MILLER'S VIEWS.

This new work is now in progress and will be out in the month of January next. It will comprise nearly all Mr. Miller's unpublished writings, including what has been published in the Signs of the Times the last year, of his Letters, Reviews, &c.

The contents will be briefly as follows:—1. A Likeness of Mr. Miller. 2. A brief memoir of his life, and the way he was led to embrace his present views. 3. His principles of interpretation. 4. His religious views. 5. His chronology corrected. 6. Chronology of prophecy. 7. Exposition of the 37, 38, and 39th chapters of Ezekiel, and the 14th chapter of Rev. the last harvest. 8. His Letters, Reviews, &c.

This, in all probability will be the last work we shall have from this distinguished servant of God. In the last letter received from him he speaks discouragingly. He says:—"Since my sickness, and disappointment in relation to the Conference, my mind has lost that energy it once possessed both for speaking and writing. I feel that my work is about done, and I wait for my last exit; or for the momentous summons, "Arise ye dead and come to judgment." This subject will have its influence yet. "O glorious day, Ah blessed abode, When I shall rise and be with God." I see that the great battle is hastening on; the nations are angry, the wrath of God is hanging over our guilty heads. We are exulting over each other, we are rejoicing in the works of darkness, we are abominable hypocrites! Where are our deep and ardent attachments to the cause of Temperance, Moral Reform &c., that we once professed? Gone, gone, gone. There are but a few solitary individuals in the land that are honest. All these things teach us "that the end is near." Let us be ready.—Remember me to all."

## CHRONOLOGY OF THE MOHAMEDAN POWER.

REPLY TO J. W. CHANNING, (See No. 10, page 77.)

The suggestion of Mr. C. in reference to the Mohamedan Hegina, are certainly worthy of consideration. And the fact that the 1260th year of the Hegira happens in A. D. 1843, should induce a careful examination of those prophetic periods and events which are supposed to predict 1260 years. He asks,—

"Ought not the 42 months in the revelation, the time the Holy City should be trodden under foot, to be calculated as lunar months? This would agree with the Mussulmen's mode of reckoning time, and make 42 months, or 1260 Mohamedan years from 622 to 1843.

As plausible as this theory at first appears, there are some insuperable objections to its adoption.

1. If the 42 months are calculated as lunar months, 29 and a half days to a month, there would be only 1239 days in the period; consequently the 1260 years of the Hegina would exceed the 42 months, by 21 years.

2. If, by "the Holy City," Jerusalem be understood, it is not true that the Mahomedan power trod it under foot, or conquered it, before 637. If by the Holy City, the Christian church be meant, there was no considerable portion of it trodden under foot until some time after the Hegina.

2. The Holy City, the true church of Christ was given into the hand of the papal power, and continued to be trodden under foot from 530, to 1798, a period of just 1270 years. In this case the 42 months of Rev. xiii. was exactly fulfilled. And at the end of that period the papal dominion was taken away. See *Address to the Clergy* page 43—51. L.

## JONES' PRINCIPLES OF INTERPRETATION.

"Principles of interpreting the prophecies, briefly illustrated and applied with notes, BY HENRY JONES." 150 pages 12 mo. Published by Gould and Newman, New York, and for sale by Moses A. Dow, of this city, 204 Hanover Street. price 50 cents.

This work contains 24 distinct principles, as "first principles of the oracles of God," with scriptural and other proofs that they are none other than Scripture principles, and of course, safe to be used in the interpretation of the Bible generally. These principles are designed expressly and exclusively for the ready and simple understanding of the now very much misunderstood *spiritual, infinite and everlasting* things of the prophecies and revelation generally; without engrossing the mind at all with the mere letter which killeth. It contains testimonials, of more than fifty clergymen of different denominations of high standing. We have examined the work, and so far as able thus to decide, from a personal acquaintance with the author, his general sentiments, and manner of expounding the prophecies of Christ's second coming, by his own adopted rules of interpretation, we can recommend the work to Bible students generally, as a valuable auxiliary to a right understanding of the sacred oracles of the Old and New Testaments. That our readers may form a correct estimate of the work, we have given in another page, the "nineteenth principle" with the "illustrations and examples," as a specimen.

GLAD TIDINGS.—"For the kingdom of heaven is at hand." This gospel is preached, not as is commonly supposed, concerning the church, nor concerning the gospel dispensation; but concerning the future state, after the resurrection of the dead, in the world to come. By Henry Dana Ward, New York, A. D. 1836. Daniel Appleton, 12 mo. pp. 190. For sale at 204, Hanover Street.

This treatise sets forth the doctrine of the kingdom of heaven, as the Lord Jesus himself preached it: answers some objections which naturally arise to this doctrine from the lapse of time, and the failure of knowing the Scriptures. It enlarges upon the prophecy of Daniel, and glances at several interesting topics connected with the hopes of the church and our Lord's glorious appearing.

We have perused the word with much satisfaction; and commend it to all who seek instruction relative to the glorious and everlasting kingdom of God.

We have given an article from this excellent work, in another part of this paper: "On this world or the world to come, or the kingdom of heaven." The reader will be richly paid by a candid perusal of it.

## A REQUEST TO MR. WILLIAM MILLER.

Dear Brother,—

Sometime since I had the pleasure of hearing you deliver a number of lectures on the second coming of Christ. In your lecture on Daniel viii. 13, 14 I understood you to say, that if that was the only text that went to prove the coming of Christ about the year 1843, you should feel some doubt on this subject; but that you could prove it seven other different ways by the Scriptures. Although I did not at that time hear you bring any other proof. I afterwards procured your lectures, but was disappointed in not finding the information I sought for. Now, sir, if you would favor the readers of the Signs of the Times with your calculations, and the Scriptural data on which they are made, you would gratify many who are anxious to come to the knowledge of the whole truth on this deeply interesting subject. ABEL W. COPELAND.

Braintree, Vt. November 11, 1840.

ERRATA.—In No. 14, page 110, near the bottom of the notice of Mr. Jones' Lectures, for "think strange," read *not think strange*, should the event take place in *one year*.

CHRIST TO RETURN.—A practical exposition of the prophecy recorded in the 24th and 25th chapters of the gospel according to St. Matthew, with a preface by the Rt. Rev. L. Silliman Ives, D. D. By G. Emlen Hare, rector of Trinity Church, Princeton.

This is a work of high literary merit. It advocates the pre-millennium advent, and rescues the 24th and 25th chapters of Matthew from the false interpreters who confine it to the destruction of Jerusalem. It is an excellent work. For sale at 204 Hanover Street.

#### THE SABBATICAL CONVENTION.

A large and respectable Convention of the various denominations of Christians, was holden in this city on the 17th, 18 and 19th ult. The subject of discussion, was the *divine authority of the Christian Sabbath*. We think those who hold to the observance of a particular day—the first day of the week, as the Christian Sabbath, will have much occasion for gratitude that this Convention was holden. Much instruction was given, and many arguments presented, which cannot fail to exert a powerful influence in favor of keeping the first day of the week as the true Christian Sabbath. A report of the proceedings will be published, which we hope will be extensively circulated, and read.

The Convention adjourned to meet again on the last Tuesday in March, at 10 o'clock A. M. at Chardon Street Chapel. The subject of discussion will be, *the divine authority of the Ministry*.

#### NEW AGENCY.

MESSRS. BARTLETT & WELFORD, No. 2. Astor House, Broadway New York publishers and booksellers, will keep a collection of all our works on the 2d Advent, and obtain those they have not, for those who want them; and will receive subscriptions for the 'Signs of the Times.'

LETTERS TO A MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL, *on his and other interpretations of our Savior's predictions of his return, recorded Matt. 23 : 24 : 25 : containing a minute examination of these prophecies, and exhibiting the evidence they contain that Christ's coming in the clouds of heaven is personal, and near at hand.* By James A. Begg, Glasgow, Scotland. 234 pages 12 mo.

In these letters, Mr. Begg has thoroughly reviewed a course of lectures on the predictions of Christ in Matthew by a distinguished clergyman in that country. In the preface, the author makes the following statement relative to the subject and design of the work.

These Letters have been more immediately addressed to the reverend gentleman by whose Expositions they were suggested. But although that view contained various peculiarities, there exist such a similarity and necessary connection as naturally elicited the animadversions offered on those by whom the Coming of the Son of man is misapprehended in its nature, even when it has not also been misplaced in point of time. In adopting this method, the author feels satisfied that ample justice has been done towards those from whose Interpretations he is compelled to dissent. Although the Discourses to which these Letters owe their origin, formed part of a regular course on the Gospel according to Matthew, the particular views therein maintained have especially been combatted with every circumstance in their favor, which ability, care, and deliberation could afford. They were advocated by a reverend gentleman of acknowledged piety and talent—not in a few casual, hasty, or unstudied observations; but in a long series of about twenty Lectures on the Prophetic part of the Savior's Discourse to his disciples, with few interruptions extending over a period of several months—in the composition of which

he could avail himself of the aids of all preceding Commentators of similar sentiments—and delivered after attention had been loudly called to the doctrine of the Speedy Advent of the Redeemer, by numerous publications advocating Millenarian views; several of which he had perused, and some of the arguments of which he publicly aimed at refuting.

Of these Discourses the author of the following Letters took and preserved very copious notes, the principles of his former work on this subject being thereby assailed. These principles he deemed capable of ample vindication, and conceiving that an important service might be rendered to the cause he has espoused, by a full and deliberate examination of our Savior's predictions, he readily accepted of the call then made, that any farther evidence in favor of the pre-millennial, Personal Advent be produced. Believing that much has been exhibited, it is now, with gratitude, committed into the hand of that blessed Spirit who alone can render it of any avail for producing conviction.

We forbear to say more in relation to the work at this time, as we intend to give the most important parts of it to our readers. See "Letter," in another part of this paper.

#### Papacy—Or. the Little Horn.

I beheld, and the same horn 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.

A SIGN. Some of the Watchmen begin to discern "the signs of the times." We are glad to see it; and hope the time is near when the professed servants of God will see clearly the great events which are at hand, and will arouse the church to prepare for the coming of the Ancient of days." Popery will no doubt make one more effort; but in the midst of it, Christ will come. Anti-Christ will then be "destroyed by the brightness of his coming." The Editor of the N. Y. Evangelist makes the following interesting remarks on this subject. Let them be read and heeded.

#### ROMANISM, OR THE WOUNDED BEAST.

The disposal which the Great Head of the Church is about to make of the Roman Anti-christ, is now a most important inquiry. The sure word of Prophecy must be studied. Romanism was in danger from the Albigenses, but she quelled them by blood. She was again in jeopardy from Philip IV. of France, from her divided Popedom, and from the voice of Wickliff. She surmounted all these. She was again shaken to her foundations by the Lutheran Reformation. In fifty years from the time of Luther, she was deserted by England, Scotland, Denmark, Sweden, Livonia, Prussia, Saxony, Hesse, Wurtemberg, the Palatinate, several Cantons of Switzerland, and the Northern Netherlands—the countries this side the Alps and Pyrenees were doubtful. Here was the battle for fifty years more. Romanism triumphed in France, Belgium, Austria, Bohemia, and over all the debateable ground. Two hundred years have rolled away, and Protestantism has no larger geographical extent in Europe than it had fifty years after Luther. Popery was assailed by Infidelity in France. The Jesuits have been humbled—the Inquisition put down, but Popery reigns now in France again.

In England, the Wounded Beast is rising. Puseyism heralds its approach. In Ireland, it is entrenched in the national heart. Emigration is pouring it upon the American masses. Enough! It is time to awake. The English

Church was never more than half divested of Romanism. Puritanism is the bulwark of the world. Great commotions, of a moral nature, are coming up in English society. Rumors of wars hang over Catholic nations. Great events are at hand. Again, we say, study the Prophecies. Banish every vestige of Romanism from the churches. Cling fast to simplicity in worship. Preach—Justification by Faith alone. Whether Popery is to have a brief and dreadful triumph before her downfall, or whether she is to be crushed in the very arrogance of her hopes, it is difficult to say. There is no doubt her hopes now of regaining the world are strong. Let England and America fall before her, and there is little to withstand her. Her doom, however, is near. See Spain and Portugal bleeding with civil war. See France and Austria in danger of terrible collision—see England and Russia engaged in Asia—see the deep excitement among the lower orders in England. See the hand of overruling Wisdom stretched over all this! Are the twelve hundred and sixty years about to close? Is it in 1843, or 1856, or later? Who can tell? Be that as it may—the Christian soldier must not forget his armor for a moment, nor must he sleep on his post at a time like this.—Romanism is well organized—is artful—wealthy, and active. She is not to be considered a weak foe. She aims at the conquest of the world. "Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and your lamps trimmed and burning."

#### CORRESPONDENCE.

##### EXTRACT OF A LETTER.

FROM E. S. HOLLAND, LEWISBURG, PA.

DEAR BROTHER,—I have seen and read a few numbers of your paper, and admire the spirit in which it is conducted, and the love of truth it displays. But I cannot agree with the sentiment that Jesus will begin a personal reign in 1843. Many of the passages applied to this millenium, I think have had their fulfillment already. And I fear that it will do Christianity no good, to raise an expectation of the accomplishment of this event, at the time alluded to, when in all probability as many will be disappointed as cherish this hope. Soon indeed the time will be up. And, I sincerely hope that they who are converted under this expectation will not, at the close of that year, like the disciples at the crucifixion of their Lord, return to their former practices. It is not necessary that they should.

I think that the past should warn us against great positiveness on this subject. Good men have at different times seen and predicted the end of the world. But thus far they have failed. In the tenth century, the priests told the people that before that century should close, the end of the world would take place. They believed it, and sold their lands for nearly nothing; and much of their property got into the hands of the priests. Still, the Sun continued to shine, and the operations of nature were uninterrupted, and society was visited by no Messiah.

But it is a subject worthy of close examination, and surely the wisdom and goodness of God which daily attends us, is able to bring about a glorious millenium. I am very sorry to see any one treat the subject with ridicule. It is a sad evidence of their lack of trust in God, and is a departure from the Christian spirit. I believe that the prophecies of Daniel, the writings of

Paul, and the Revelation are the principal sources from which you draw. That Daniel's vision groups together a class of events, which in their entire fulfillment, will exhaust the course of time, I cannot doubt. Paul also alludes to what Daniel saw. And the Revelation, (a neglected book,) under different symbols, describes the same anti-Christian power, expressed by the youngest horn of Daniel's fourth sea monster, and by the "man of sin" described by Paul. This "Babylon" of John I consider a good symbol for the proud, swollen, pampered orthodoxy of the Christian world. For the word denotes, *confusion*. Indeed the corrupted woman is called "MYSTERY BABYLON." Had John even lived at this hour, he could not have found a more appropriate name. But I am in great haste and cannot now go into any argument on these topics."

#### MR. JAMES A. BEGG'S LETTERS.

It was our intention to have given his letter on the precise signification of the word "Generation," in this number; but on consideration have thought best first to give the whole prophesy as contained in his second letter, in its connected form, with his remarks thereon, and to give the other in our next. Ed.

#### LETTER II.

A FULL AND COMBINED VIEW OF THE SAVIOR'S PREDICTION OF HIS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN, AS RECORDED BY THE DIFFERENT EVANGELISTS, WITH THE VARIOUS INTERPRETATIONS OF EXPOSITORS.

REVEREND SIR,—HAVING in the preceding Letter endeavored to show the importance to the Christian of the Doctrine of Christ's Return in Glory, and having urged the Duty of Investigation, I proceed to consider one of our Lord's own predictions concerning that event. Frequently as the Savior discoursed of his Coming, there is only one Prophecy recorded at length in which the time and circumstances are minutely specified. On the occasion alluded to, however, these are particularly narrated; and, with a care proportioned to the importance of the subject, has the Spirit employed three of the evangelists to embody it with considerable fulness in their respective Gospels. The account furnished by Matthew, which lately formed the subject of a series of Lectures by yourself, is the most particular; but, in the inquiry into its full meaning, we will be greatly aided by having before us at one view all the circumstances related by the evangelists severally, as each of them supplies information not furnished by the others.

In consequence, however, of the diversified representations of the inspired penmen, there will be, in the order of arrangement in any such attempted harmony, variations in the allocation of certain particulars, suggested by the general views entertained of the whole prediction. Your ideas of the time and nature of the Coming of the Son of man with the clouds of heaven will therefore lead you to object to any harmony which I can form; but as the following has not been adopted without a careful comparison, my grounds of preference, and its accordance with the Sacred narratives, will more obviously appear in course of the argument, in cases where you would at present propose a different arrangement. Although wholly in the words of our authorized version, which have been adhered to even in cases where the connecting of the statements of the different Evangelists might have required slight modification, to avoid very frequent citation it has been formed into paragraphs, with the combined references appended to each.

On various occasions our Lord had intimated to his disciples that He should not only be put

to death and rise again, but that he should leave them altogether for a time. Nor were these intimations wholly confined to his disciples, but were even made to the Jews in general. A prediction delivered in the temple, and which contained the latter important circumstance, appears to have occasioned those inquiries by the apostles, in answer to which our Lord delivered that enlarged prophecy which is now to be the subject of investigation. In order therefore to the right understanding of its meaning, it will be necessary to have in view not only the prediction itself, but also the circumstances out of which it arose.

In denunciations of wrath upon the hypocrisy of the Scribes and Pharisees, our blessed Lord said unto them,

"Behold I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes; and some of them ye shall kill, and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues and persecute them from city to city: that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not. Behold your House is left unto you desolate; for I say unto you, ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that Cometh in the name of the Lord." Matt. xxiii. 34—39.

"And Jesus went out, and departed from the Temple; and his disciples came to him, to show him the buildings of the Temple. And as he went out one of his disciples saith unto him, Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here; how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts. And Jesus answering said unto him, See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, the days will come in the which there shall not be left here one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down." Matt. xxiv. 1, 2, Mark xiii. 1, 2. Luke xxi. 5, 6.

"And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, over against the Temple, the disciples came unto him; and Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew asked Him privately, saying, Tell us when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming and of the end of the world?" Matt. xxiv. 3. Mark xiii. 4. Luke xxi. 7.

"And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you; for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ, and the time draweth near; and shall deceive many: go ye not therefore after them; but when ye shall hear of wars, and rumors of wars, and commotions, be not terrified or troubled; for all these things must first come to pass, but the end shall not be yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and great earthquakes in divers places; all these are the beginning of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted; and they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, and kill you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and to councils, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake, for a testimony against them; and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake, and it shall turn to you for a testimony. But when they shall lead you and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate what ye shall answer; but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, speak ye, for it is not you that speak but the Holy Ghost; for I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist." Matt. xxiv. 4—9. Mark xiii. 5—11. Luke xxi. 8—13.

"And then shall many be offended and betray one another, and hate one another; and ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death; the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son; and children shall rise up against their parents, and shall cause them to be put to death. And many false prophets shall arise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake; but there shall not a hair of your head perish; in your patience possess your souls; he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come." Matt. xxiv. 10—14. Mark xiii. 12, 13. Luke xxi. 16—19.

When ye, therefore, shall see the Abomination of Desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place where it ought not, (whoso readeth let him understand,) when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; let him which is on the house-top not come down to take any thing out of his house; neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto;

for these be the days of vengeance that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But woe unto them that are with child, and to them who give suck in those days, for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people, and they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." Matt. xxiv. 15—19. Mark xiii. 14—17. Luke xxi. 29—30.

But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day, for then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except the Lord had shortened those days, there should no flesh be saved; but, for the elect's sake whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened those days. Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo here is Christ, or lo he is there, believe it not; for there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders, inasmuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. But take ye heed, behold I have foretold you all things. Wherefore, if they shall say unto you, Behold He is in the desert; go not forth; behold He is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For 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. For whosoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together." Matt. xxiv. 20—23. Mark xiii. 18—23.

But in those days, immediately after that tribulation, there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, 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; for the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken. 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; and He shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect, from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven, from one end of heaven to the other. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh. Now learn the parable of the fig-tree, and all the trees; when the branch is tender and putteth forth leaves, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand. So ye, in like manner, when ye see all these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand. Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away. But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven; neither the Son, but the Father only. Take ye heed, watch and pray, for ye know not when the time is; and 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 upon all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. 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." Mat. xxiv. 29—36. Mark xiii. 24—32. Luke xxi. 25—36.

Such is a view of this extensive and magnificent prophecy, derived, by a combination of the circumstances, from the several narratives of the three evangelists. It will not, I think, be questioned by any one, that it appears, at least, to have two great prominent objects, the Destruction of Jerusalem, with the consequences which flowed directly from it, and the Coming of the Son of man in glory. The former is clearly, and at considerable length referred to, but it seems no less evident, that the evangelists also foretell, and that with still greater minuteness, the Second coming of Christ, for which all of them proceed farther to inculcate the duty of watchfulness, by a variety of parables descriptive of the state of the church and of the world, at the time of His Return. By these we shall afterwards have occasion to advert, with the view of more fully demonstrating, that our Lord, by the coming of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven, means His Personal Appearance. At present, however, we proceed to notice a few of the interpretations which have been given of this portion of Scripture.

Whatever may be the difficulties which the prediction itself involves, these, instead of being diminished, have been prodigiously increased by learned and pious expositors. It may indeed with truth be affirmed, that more contradictory, confused, and inconsistent opinions have never

been presented of any portion of the divine word, than have been given of this sublime prediction, even by friends of the Redeemer. Its meaning begins now indeed to be more clearly perceived, and more correct expositions are offered, and its circumstances are more generally understood than perhaps at any former period. A few eminent men there have been, in different ages, whose views of the time and nature of the coming of the Son of man we deem correct—understanding it not only to intimate the overthrow of the Jewish polity, but also the personal return of the Lord Jesus Christ, at the restoration of Israel, at the close of the times of the Gentiles. But, by a misconception of the Savior's meaning in the 34th verse, it has most usually been supposed, that our Lord affirmed, that the whole prophecy should have received its accomplishment before the generation of men then living had ceased to exist. This is your own idea of the words referred to, as it has been that of many eminent men who have gone before you. This opinion has however, given much ground to the enemies of the Savior to triumph in His supposed failure as a prophet, and has perplexed and afflicted others, whose views of the endowments of the Savior for the prophetic office would not admit of the ready reception of any interpretation which seemed inconsistent with matter of fact. "The near approach of this wonderful event," says the infidel Gibbon, "had been predicted by the Apostles; the tradition of it was preserved by their earliest disciples; and those who understood in their literal sense the discourses of Christ himself were obliged to expect the second and glorious coming of the Son of man in the clouds, before that generation was totally extinguished which had beheld his humble condition upon earth. Yet," he adds, "the revolution of seventeen centuries has instructed us not to press too closely the language of Prophecy and Revelation." *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, Vol. 1. pp. 470. 471.*

That the coming of the Son of man in glory was continually urged upon the attention of Christians by the apostles, my former Letter demonstrates; and that it was constantly expected by primitive believers, history fully testifies. But that our Lord affirmed, that it would take place before those alive had departed, is an idea which I utterly reject. It appears to have arisen from attaching a wrong sense to a word used by the Savior, and woeful have been the consequences which have resulted from it.

On the above passage from Gibbon, Dr. Thomas Edwards, the author of a series of Sermons preached before the University of Cambridge, in 1790, says, "The various and opposite methods which Theologians have adopted to remove an objection which is too obvious to be overlooked, form, it must be confessed, a very considerable presumption, that an adequate solution of the difficulty has not hitherto been discovered, and that the objection [of the infidel] is founded on the basis of truth." In confirmation of this opinion, he farther adds, that "some interpreters imagine that the prophecy relates entirely to the ruin of the Jewish nation: others by the convenient introduction of types and double senses, perceive in it a reference throughout to the consummation of all things. Some have contended that it partly belongs to the former, and partly to the latter; but what portions of it are applicable to the one, and what to the other, they cannot ascertain; while a few have ventured to assert, that it represents the final judgment as immediately subsequent to the Jew-

ish Calamities." pp. 18. 19. And inconsistent as these views appear, they embrace all the interpretations offered by Anti-millenarian expositors of the present day; whatever modification there may be of parts of inferior moment, of which there is indeed no inconsiderable variety.

But, after such an exhibition of inconsistent and conflicting expositions, it is not a little remarkable to find this learned preacher assert, that our Lord really did predict the advent of "the Son of man descending visibly from heaven, before the generation then existing was totally extinguished."! p. 23. And again, he says, "our Lord, in the 24th of Matthew, decisively foretells, that the generation then existing should not be totally extinguished till it had witnessed his Second and glorious appearance in the clouds of heaven"! p. 19. He thence concludes, that "the records of history do not authorize us to believe that this prediction was accomplished at the destruction of Jerusalem." pp. 19, 20. And he further states, that "that this awful prediction is not recorded among the stupendous prodigies of the Jewish war." p. 23. Who could hesitate for a moment in placing his own interpretation among the number which have presented no adequate solution of the difficulty? And who does not perceive that the great stumbling-block has been the idea attached to "this generation."

Mr. Faber, an eminently learned living author, who has devoted much attention to the study of prophecy, while he places the coming of the Son of man at the close of the times of the Gentiles, and not only regards it as an event yet future but as near at hand, denies it to be the personal return of Christ. While he rejects as a "vulgar error" that interpretation which makes this event a *Figurative Advent at the destruction of Jerusalem*, he not much less inconsistently with the whole object and scope of the prediction, still understands it to be a *figurative* advent at the restoration of Israel!

But a still more remarkable view of this important prediction is that given by Mr. Houghton, the author of two sermons on the subject. Having, as he conceives, discovered discrepancies in the sacred narratives, he says, "From these differences among the Evangelists, it is evident that they spoke of the destruction of Jerusalem, and of the end of the world PROMISCUOUSLY, and consequently that they considered these two advents as one and the same!!!" p. 225. Again he says, "Mark and Luke, while evidently discoursing of the calamities of the Jews, seem to rise by a sudden transition from the period of the Jewish state to that of the world itself, and describe the coming of our Savior in terms nearly similar and equally sublime with those of Matthew, yet all with one consent refer the whole to that present generation." p. 226.

When such views are put forth by Christian authors, who can wonder at the charges of the Infidel Historian, or condemn as uncalled for the sneer they elicit? It is not at all surprising, that the enemy of our religion should continue dissatisfied, although he as says, "Erasmus removes the difficulty by the help of allegory and metaphor, and the learned Grotius ventures to insinuate, that for wise purposes the pious deception was permitted to take place."

On the same ground, namely, the supposed necessity of finding the fulfilment of the whole prophecy during the lifetime of at least some of those alive when it was delivered, many have conceived the coming of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven to have taken place *after* the

destruction of Jerusalem, by the preaching of the gospel, or otherwise. This was the view which you yourself sometimes avowedly took; but it was so mixed up, in a manner not very easily understood, or rather at different times you took such different views of the words, that any attempt at reply must embrace the whole. At one time you represent the coming of the Son of Man in the clouds of heaven to be the destruction of Jerusalem itself by the Romans; at another time it became the overthrow of the Jewish polity, which followed that event; and at a third time it was represented as the successful propagation of the gospel by the apostles; and again all of these were introduced as if all equally the one event of the Coming of Christ;—and, finally, there was occasionally the opinion given, that it still had a *leaning and looking forward* to the Personal Return of the Savior; while there was, nevertheless, a constant and undeviating assertion, that all had been fulfilled during the life-time of some of those who were the contemporaries of our Lord.\*

Such a variety of interpretations of one glorious event, given in language perfectly precise, and having a definite time appointed for its accomplishment, seems not very unlike the solutions sometimes presented by the pupils to whom has been assigned the task of proving certain problems by every variety of computation, for the purpose of exercising them to ingenuity: the comparison would indeed appear in favor of the latter. For, while it must be confessed that probably nine-tenths of the ingenious calculations are neither designed to be repeated, nor perhaps ever will be in actual business, yet they have all had the merit of at least leading to the right conclusion; but it is obvious that in every case in which predictions referring to one event are applied to a number of very different events,—and events of an opposite nature,—not more than one can be correct. And, in the enumeration above referred to, the interpretations are evidently altogether wrong, having excluded the only event to which the prophecy can refer—the personal Coming of the Son of man at the close of the times of the Gentiles.

The following remarks of Dr. Benson appear to me to state accurately the duty of a Commentator, to which it is much to be regretted that more attention is not given, rather than to discover by ingenuity in how many ways the text may be confused and a reader perplexed, by having his attention forced from the obvious meaning of the divine annunciation made: "It is the business of the Commentator to find out the one true sense of Holy Scripture, and to set it before his reader in as clear a light as he can." Again, the Doctor says, "It appears to me that a Critical Interpreter of Holy Scripture should set out with this as a first principle, viz. that no text of Scripture has more than one meaning, that one true sense he should endeavor to find out, as he would find out the sense of Homer or

\* Among the multitude of astonishing interpretations which have been offered of Mat. xxiv. there is yet one worthy of being put upon record. It was delivered in your own pulpit, since the publication of the first edition of my "Connected View," by a person then a probationer, but who now has the spiritual oversight of a Christian congregation. Evidently regarding his affirmation as of more consequence than the multiplicity of evidence produced for the premillennial return of the Redeemer, he at once set aside both your interpretation and mine, by an emphatic "I say it contains a Prophecy concerning the church, from the time that she came out of the garden of Eden, till the end of time!!!" Any remark on this felicitous discovery is not more unnecessary than it would be unappreciated by its author. Scriptural argument were useless, unless, "I say," is preferred to "thus saith the Lord."

any other ancient writer. When he has found out that sense, he ought to acquiesce in it, and so ought his readers too, unless by the just rules of interpretation, they can show that he has mistaken the passage; and that another is the one, just, true, and critical sense of the place."

This *unity of sense* it will be my object both to exhibit and vindicate, satisfied that thus only is the true meaning of the prediction to be obtained, and convinced that God is more to be glorified by it than by any scheme, however well designed, which is destitute of his sacred sanction. Before, however, proceeding farther, it will be proper to endeavor to remove the obstacle which has been supposed to lie in the way of consistent interpretation, and which has occasioned such absurdity, confusion, and contradiction. This will, therefore, form the subject of the following Letter.

## THE NATIONS.

### PROGRESS OF THE BATTLE.

#### IMPORTANT NEWS FROM SYRIA.

The following important intelligence from the East is published in the *Moniteur Parisien* of Sunday night:—

"TOULON, Oct. 31, 6 o'clock, P. M.  
" Alexandria, Oct. 17.

"THE CONSUL GENERAL TO THE MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

"The events in Syria have become more grave for Mehemet Ali. Beyrout has been occupied by the Anglo-Turks who were fortifying Seyde. The Emir Bechir had surrendered. He has abandoned the cause of Mehemet Ali. The insurrection is making progress in the mountains.

"Ibrahim (Pacha) is about to concentrate his forces."

"TOULON, Oct. 31, 1-2 7 P. M.  
" Malta, Oct. 27.

"THE CONSUL OF FRANCE TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL.

"The British war-steamer *Cyclops* arrived here this morning from Seyde, whence she departed on the 21st. She has on board the Emir Bechir, with 15 members of his family and 115 persons of his suits, on their way to England.

"The captain of the *Cyclops* has confirmed the rising of nearly the whole of the inhabitants of the mountains."

It would thus appear that the Eastern question, so far as Syria is concerned, is pretty well settled, and that the only point which now remains for discussion, is, whether the *decheance* of Mehemet Ali from the Pachalic of Egypt shall or shall not be enforced.

The resignation of Thiers and his associates took place on the 21st of October, after a sharp discussion in Council, on the King's Speech to the Chambers, which Thiers wished to make warlike, and Louis Philippe refused to submit to, desiring peace.

What will be the effect of this political revolution in France, in the peace of Europe, remains to be seen. The *London Morning Herald* says:

"It is idle to speculate at present on French ministerial combinations and their results. Whether a Soult-Guizot or a Guizot-Soult Ministry be formed or not, the fate of France and the decision of the question of peace or war cannot be ascertained before the assembling of the Chambers. The comparative calm in which

French affairs appear to be at present lulled, is no proof that warlike intentions are suppressed, or that angry passions have subsided. It may be but the sullen calm prelude of a fiercer tempest."

### OBITUARY.

Another saint has fallen! Another choice spirit has left this scene of toil and suffering, to dwell in a purer, holier, and happier clime! Another pilgrim has consummated her journey! Mrs. SUSAN M. HALL, the wife of BENJAMIN HALL, of Groton, departed this life, after a sickness of three weeks at her mother's late residence in this city, on Monday, Oct. 5th.—The death of this dear sister was preceded by a train of most unusual and remarkable providences. About the first of August last, her mother, brother, and a sister, then residing in the city, went to Groton to spend a few weeks on a visit. The brother, when he left the city, was slightly indisposed, but his disease was thought to be nothing more than a common cold. But soon after their arrival at Groton, he was severely attacked with the fever, which terminated his existence in the space of a few weeks. During the sickness of the brother, Mrs. Hall's mother was taken with the same fever, and died sometime previous to the young man. Having sustained such an afflictive stroke, and having become fatigued by the labor and care consequent upon such protracted sickness, Mrs. HALL, with her family, come to the city for rest, and for a change of scenes. But alas! rest was not hers, until she found it in another world. In a few days after her arrival in the city, she, and her little son, and sister, were seized by the same disease that had carried two of the family to the grave. But Mrs. HALL was not thought dangerous, until a short time before her death. But she is no more! Her days of sorrow, and suffering, and toil are ended! She is an inhabitant of a better clime. But her loss is great—irreparable. The breach her death has made in the family, in the little church at Groton, and in society at large, is great, and deeply deplored. She was a sincere Christian, and an assiduous and untiring promoter of the reforms of the age. She was a most ardent and devoted friend of the cause of christian union. Her sacrifices and efforts were freely made for the promotion of this cause. It was owing in no small degree to her solicitations and unbounded kindness, that the effort in this cause, commenced at Groton. We can never forget, while memory lasts, her great kindness to us, and her ardent devotion to the cause we love, and to which we have committed our all. But it is a cheering thought, that our much loved sister has gone where there is perfect union. In heaven there is no sectarian strife, bigotry, or selfishness. It is a state of perfect peace, and the most endearing union. Let us, then, by cultivating the spirit of heaven, prepare to follow our dear, departed sister. She has not left the cause. She has only been removed to a higher and more enlarged sphere of the same great work. She has, unquestionably, become a ministering spirit, and we may still be comforted and aided by her kind ministrations, though invisible to us, not again to come to us; but if faithful we shall soon go to her. She has only anticipated us a little in entering the final rest of the saints. She has only joined the happy union above a little before us. By grace assisting us, we shall soon be numbered with the same holy and blissful fraternity. S. HAWLEY.

## Postscript.

### THREE DAYS LATER FROM EUROPE.

BY THE GREAT WESTERN.

It seems by the following summary of the accounts from the East, that, the Allied Powers are victorious in Syria. There is no longer a hope for Mehemet Ali to retain his Syrian dominions.

#### FROM SYRIA—OVERTHROW OF THE EGYPTIANS.

Regular despatches have been received from Syria to the 12th, and Alexandria to the 10th, which fully confirm the news of the capture of Beyrout and the defeat of the Egyptians by the Turks and their allies. Beyrout was evacuated on the 10th, and next day about 2000 Egyptians returned to the town, then in possession of the Allies, and made themselves prisoners. The camp at Djuni bay has since been broken up. Ibrahim Pacha has been completely beaten in a pitched battle; the Emir Bechir has capitulated, and is at Malta; the Libanus is in a complete state of insurrection: Ibrahim is straitened in every direction, and, it is thought, will speedily be obliged to evacuate the whole of Syria; St. Jean d'Acre is besieged. Indeed, the greater part of Syria may be said to have passed from the hands of Mehemet Ali, at least all the north of Lebanon, with the exception of Tripoli.

The Sultan is making great preparations to prosecute the war with vigor. He has sent 5000 more troops, and as many muskets to Syria; and the English frigate, the *Talbot*, and the Austrian brig *Montecuculi* have been placed at his disposition for that purpose. A postscript to one of these letters mention the report of St. Jean d'Acre having been taken by the Allies, but this report the editors of the *Herald* believe to be premature.

France stands neutre as yet. But the question will soon come up in a form that will draw her into the conflict. We refer to the question of dispossessing Mehemet Ali of his Egyptian dominions. We think the Sultan will demand this, in which case France will object, and take up in defence of the Vice Roy of Egypt. While the journals of the day are "crying peace," our fear is, that the Sultan, through Lord Ponsonby's influence will demand the entire subjugation of Mehemet Ali, which cannot be done, without a serious conflict between the Allies, the Egyptians and French.

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