

Articles by Andrew Miller

Andrew Miller

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Short Papers On Church History - The Last Chapter

... If the exposition we have given of the epistle to Philadelphia and to Laodicea be correct, we may expect to find in the nineteenth century an entirely fresh work of God's Spirit; and chiefly in recovering many truths which have been long overlooked by the professing church; probably since the days of the apostles.

Philadelphia is the only church that is without reproach from the Lord; and He commends them for holding fast His Word, for not denying His Name, and for keeping the word of His patience, which means the constant expectation of His coming.

These characteristics of an assembly we have not yet met with in the history of the church. Almost immediately after the days of the apostles, human inventions were substituted for the Word of Christ, and human arrangements for the authority of His Name. And little, if anything, seems to have been said or written on the subject of the Lord's return for the church as His bride, down to the present century. Doubtless there may have been at different periods, some loving hearts that sighed and longed for His coming; but it was no part of the truth taught, either during the middle ages, or at the Reformation.

The doctrines of the unity of the church of God, of the coming of the Lord as the proper hope of the church, and of the Holy Spirit's presence on earth, while Christ is seated at the right hand of God, were almost entirely overlooked by the Reformers.

Prophetic Truth

The study of prophetic truth was greatly revived in the early part of this century. In the year 1821 a short treatise, entitled 'The Latter Rain', by the Rev. Lewis Way, made its appearance. The main object of the writer is to prove from scripture the restoration of Israel, and the consequent glory in the land. His poem entitled, 'Palingenesia', or 'The World to Come', appeared in 1824. Thoughts on the 'Scriptural Expectations of the Church', by Basilicus, followed it in 1826. The author takes a wider range in this book than in the former, though the kingdom of Israel occupies a prominent place.

In 1827 the Rev. Edward Irving endeavoured to arouse the professing church, but especially his brethren in the ministry, to a sense of their responsibility as to the truth of prophecy. He translated the work of Ben Ezra, a converted Jew, on 'The Coming of Messiah in Glory and Majesty', with a long preliminary discourse. This book was originally written in Spanish, and first published in Spain in the year 1812. The circulation of these books, with some others that appeared about this time, and fresh articles constantly appearing in the magazines, awakened a deep interest in the prophetic Scriptures, which became at that time an entirely new study, and led to the establishment of what were called 'The Prophetic Meetings', in Great Britain and Ireland – they were held chiefly at Albury Park in England, and at Powerscourt in Ireland. Clergymen and private gentlemen attended those meetings for some time; but, in their reading, it does not appear that they saw much beyond the restoration of Israel, and the glory of the millennial kingdom. The relations of Christ to the

church, as distinct from the destiny of Israel and the earth, were not then clearly seen.

Church Truth

Just about this time the Spirit of God was evidently working in many minds, and in different parts of the country, and awakening many of His children to the importance, not only of prophetic truth, but of what He has revealed in His Word respecting the church as the body of Christ, formed and energized by the Holy Spirit. This was specially the case at that moment in Dublin.

A few earnest christian men became deeply exercised in heart and conscience, as to the low condition of things in the several sections of professing Christendom, and as to the great contrast between the church of God, viewed in the light of His Word, and that which man calls the church. These convictions resulted - though with deep searchings of heart, and many painful feelings - in a positive secession from the existing religious systems with which they had been severally connected. This was a new thing in the history of the church. The best of the Reformers in all ages had no wish to leave the communion of the church of Rome, had she consented to the reform of abuses.

Nearly all of them were excommunicated. Even the Puritans, and Wesley and Whitefield, were forced out of the establishment. But as many are still alive, of those who took this place of separation in the early part of this century, we shall do little more than state the origin of this community, and give a brief outline of its progress. We could not bring down the history of the church to the present time without giving it a place. But of that which has appeared in print, and been written by themselves,

we may freely speak. Their writings, in tracts, books, and periodicals, are abundant and widely spread over the face of Christendom, so that they are well fitted to speak for themselves.

‘The Brethren’

In the winter of 1827-8, four

Christian men who had for some time been exercised as to the condition of the entire professing church, agreed to come together on Lord’s day mornings, for worship and communion in the breaking of bread, according to the word of the Lord; namely, Mr. Darby, Mr. – afterwards Dr. – Cronin, Mr. Bellett, and Mr. Hutchinson. Their first meeting was held in the house of Mr. Hutchinson, 9 FitzWilliam Square, Dublin. They had for a considerable time been studying the Scriptures – along with others who attended their reading meetings – and comparing what they found in the Word of God with the existing state of things around them, they could find no expression of the nature and character of the church of God, either in the national establishment, or in the various dissenting bodies.

This brought them into the place of separation from all these ecclesiastical systems, and led them to come together in the Name of the Lord Jesus, owning the presence and sovereign action of the Holy Spirit in their midst, and thus endeavouring, according to their light, “to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

Matthew 18: 20; Ephesians 4: 3-4 The brethren continued to meet for some time in FitzWilliam Square, and others were gradually added to their number.

The Brethren’s First Pamphlet

Here we have something most definite and positive as to their principles and starting-point: something more to be relied upon than general report or personal recollections.

In the year 1828 Mr. Darby published his first pamphlet, entitled *The Nature and Unity of the Church of Christ*.

We may consider this tract as a statement of what the young community believed and practised, though not in the form of a confession, and further, as presenting the divine ground on which they acted. It may also be considered to contain nearly all the elements of those distinctive truths which have been held and unfolded by Brethren from that day even until now. Not that the writer thought anything of this at the time; he was simply making known for the help of others what he had learnt from the Word of God for himself. But who could question the guidance of the Holy Spirit in such a production? Surely He was leading His chosen instruments by a way which they knew not, that the blessing which followed might be seen to be of His own grace and truth.

As this paper was the first public testimony of a movement which was so rapidly to produce such great and blessed results in liberating souls, we will here give for the convenience of the reader a few extracts, chiefly as to the unity of the church. (The “extracts” are omitted as the whole article ‘*The Nature and Unity of the Church of Christ*’ is in *Ministry*: J. N. Darby)

The Brethren’s First Public Room

The effect of these statements – so plain and Scriptural – was immediate and great. They found an echo in many a heart. Earnest Christians, feeling and mourning over the

low condition of the churches, welcomed the truth thus brought before them. Many left their respective denominations, and joined the new movement. The numbers so increased that in little more than a year, the house of Mr. Hutchinson was found to be unsuitable for their meetings. Mr. Parnell – afterwards Lord Congleton – who appears to have united with the Brethren in 1829, hired a large auction room in Aungier Street, for the use of the Brethren on the Lord's day. His idea was, that the Lord's table should be a public witness of their position. This was the Brethren's first public room.

There they commenced breaking bread in the spring of 1830; and it may be taken as a sample of rooms which Brethren have generally occupied in all parts of the country ever since. In order to make room for the Lord's day morning, three or four of the brothers were in the habit of moving the furniture aside on Saturday evening. Many, on their first visit, felt the place to be very strange, having been accustomed to all the propriety of churches and chapels. But the truths they heard were new in those days; such as, the efficacy of redemption, the knowledge of pardon and acceptance, the oneness of the body of Christ, the presence of the Holy Ghost in the assembly, and the Lord's second coming.

"There is some difficulty," says Mr. Marsden, "in laying before the reader, in a simple form, the principles of this body. "It puts forth no standards of faith, nor publishes any forms of worship or discipline. "It professes to practise Christianity as Christianity was taught by our Lord and the apostles in the New Testament ... The Brethren equally object to the national church and to all forms of dissent. "Of national churches, one and all of

them, they say, 'that the opening of the door to receive into the most solemn acts of worship and Christian fellowship the whole population of a country, is a latitudinarian error'. "Dissenters, on the other hand, 'are sectarians, because they close the door on real Christians, who cannot utter the shibboleth of their party ...' "The one system makes church wider, the other narrower, than God's limits. "Thus in either way, the proper Scriptural idea of the church is practically destroyed – dissent virtually affirming that it is not one body, but many, "while nationalism virtually denies that this one body is the body of Christ. "That which constitutes a church is the presence of the Holy Ghost in the assembly. " 'It is the owning of the Holy Ghost as the really present, sole, and sufficient sovereign in the church during our Lord's absence'. This is the leading feature in the testimony of Brethren".

Mr. Marsden further observes on the subject of ministry, quoting from their writings: "So far from supposing there is no such thing as ministry, Brethren hold, and have always held, from Ephesians 4: 12-13, that Christ cannot fail to maintain and perpetuate a ministry so long as His body is here below. "Their printed books and tracts, their teachings in private and in public affirm this as a certain settled truth; insomuch that "it is as absurd to charge them with denying the permanent and divine place of ministry in the church on earth, as it would be to charge Charles I. with denying the divine right of kings.

"Wherever it has pleased God to raise up pastors after His own heart, they gladly, thankfully own His grace, and esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake".

In a paper lately written by Mr. Darby about the Brethren at the request of a French journalist, we have not only the facts, but the thoughts and feelings connected with their beginning. "We were only four men," he says, "who came together for the breaking of bread and prayer, on the authority of that word, " 'Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them', Matt. 18: 20, and not, I hope, in a spirit of pride and presumption; "but deeply humbled at the state of things around us, and praying for all Christians, and recognizing all those in whom the Spirit of God was found as true Christians, members of the body of Christ, wherever they were ecclesiastically. "We thought of nothing else but satisfying the need of the soul according to the Word of God; nor did we think of it going any farther. "We proved the promised presence of the Lord; and others, feeling the same need, followed in the same path and the work spread in a way we never thought of in the least".

It is very apparent from this extract, that the Brethren had no thought of constructing a fresh system, or of reconstituting the church as God had constituted it at first - of restoring it to its Pentecostal glory. This was the snare into which Satan wiled that otherwise noble soul - Edward Irving. But the Brethren seemed to have had no plan, no system, no organization. They held the common faith of all orthodox Christians with regard to foundation truths; but, having received light from God's Word as to what the calling, position, and hopes of the church are, they could no longer remain in what man and the world called 'the church'. These thoughts and searchings of heart issued, as we have seen, in the

secession of many individuals from the various bodies of professing Christians, and in their coming together for worship and communion on the ground of the “one body”, as formed and directed by the “One Spirit”.

The Spread of the Truth

Mr. Darby, who seems from the first to have had a love for travelling, or rather for carrying the truth from place to place, soon after the formation of the meeting in Fitz-William Square, set out on his mission; and in a truly apostolic spirit he has steadily gone on for fifty years, and never more so than during the last ten or fifteen.

Limerick was the first place he visited. He held reading meetings, to which some of the gentry and clergy came. Thomas Maunsell, who lived there, worked with him, and was the active labourer for a long time. Mr. Darby went on to Clare, which led to the Lord’s work at Ennis, where Thomas Mahon went on with it. He then went over to Paris, saw some Christians there, and had readings in the same quiet way.

On his return to England, he visited Cambridge and Oxford, and then went down to Plymouth at the request of Mr. Newton, where he met with Captain Hall, who was then preaching in the villages. Reading meetings were held, and ere long, a few began to break bread. This was about the year 1831.

The Origin of the Title ‘Plymouth Brethren’

Their first public meeting-place in Plymouth was called ‘Providence Chapel’, and, as they refused to give themselves any name, they were only known as ‘Providence people’. But when the brothers began to go outside the town and preach the gospel in the villages –

then a rare thing – they were spoken of as ‘Brethren from Plymouth’, which naturally resulted in the designation, ‘The Plymouth Brethren’. This new title rapidly spread over England and elsewhere. As the numbers increased, the little chapel was bought and enlarged considerably. The effect of the truth on the hearts and consciences of the Brethren was soon manifest.

There was great freshness, simplicity, devotedness, and separation from the world. Such features of spirituality have always a great attraction for certain minds; and many, no doubt, who left their respective denominations and united with the Brethren had very undefined thoughts as to the nature of the step they were taking. But all was new: they flocked together, and gave themselves to the study of the Word of God, and soon experienced the sweetness of Christian communion, and found the Bible – as they said – to be a new Book. It was, no doubt, in those days of virgin freshness a most distinct and blessed work of God’s Spirit, the influence of which was felt not only throughout this country, but on the continent, and in distant lands. It was no uncommon thing at this time to find valuable jewelry in the collection boxes, which was soon turned into money, and given to the deacons for the poor. But the bloom of this new movement was soon to be blighted by the subtlety of Satan.

Mr. Newton, though one of the earliest labourers in Plymouth, seems never to have entered into the truth of the position occupied by Brethren, but, almost from the first, to have pursued a course distinct from the others. The tendency of his teaching, though for a time most

speciously disguised, was to undermine and neutralize those distinctive truths which the Lord was bringing out by the ministry of the Brethren, and to set up afresh, though in another form, all that had been renounced. His aim was clerical position and authority; and thus practically denying the first principles of the church of God, he fell into the snare of Satan. Several of the Brethren who had laboured much in Plymouth, not feeling happy with Mr. Newton's course, left to work elsewhere. Mr. Darby went abroad, Captain Hall to Hereford, Mr. Wigram to London; and Mr. Bellett, at this time, was ministering with great acceptance in Dublin.

False Doctrine Detected

Soon after the year 1845, when the numbers at Plymouth, Devonport, and Stonehouse had reached about a thousand souls, troubles arose which caused the first breach among the Brethren; but it was not until 1848 that what had been strongly suspected by some came to the light and brought matters to a crisis at Plymouth. It was discovered by Mr. Harris - through copious notes of Mr. Newton's lectures accidentally falling into his hands - that he had been diligently and systematically teaching, not only that which is ecclesiastically, but that which is fundamentally heretical as to Christ.

When this became known, brethren in all parts were deeply affected by the sad tidings, and numerous meetings were held in different parts of the country to investigate the charges. Nearly all were agreed, after much prayer and confession, that the doctrines which Mr. Newton had been teaching were not only false, but utterly subversive of all that is essential to Christianity.

But though they were thus agreed as to the character of the heresy, they were divided in their judgment as to the principle of separation from it. One part thought that the poison of the doctrines - which had been insidiously taught for some years - might have infected more than were yet manifested; and, therefore, they could have no fellowship with any who sympathized with the doctrines, or had fellowship with their author at the breaking of bread.

Others thought these terms of communion were too strict, that each one applying for fellowship should be examined, and if it were found that they neither understood nor had imbibed the false doctrines, they should be received, even though they came from Mr. Newton's meeting; that every true Christian should be received on the ground of his individual soundness in the faith, no matter from what meeting he came. But many strongly objected to this way of dealing with so grave a matter. They maintained that the glory of Christ was in question, as well as the purity of His assembly; that, on this principle, the door was left open for the heresy to come in and that it was giving up the unity of the church of God, as the ground of action, and going back to independency.

The Division

On this point the Brethren divided. The one part maintained, that, on the principle of the one body, a person coming from a meeting where false doctrine was known to be held, is tainted, though personally sound; and that in receiving one member of the community all are received. This they sought to prove by the divine principle which the apostle applies to the assemblies at

Corinth and Galatia: "Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?" The other part adhering to the open ground which they had adopted, the breach widened, and reconciliation became hopeless. Thus the Brethren have stood from that day until now. Their history is well known. Only one thing further need be noticed.

From this time, the term, 'The Brethren', as found in statistics, or controversial and other writings, applies almost exclusively to those who adhered to the original principles of Brethren. In the census of 1851, three years after the division, the writer concludes his article by stating that "The number of places of worship which the census officers in England and Wales returned as frequented by the Brethren was 132; but probably this number is below the truth, in consequence of the objection which they entertain to acknowledge any sectarian appellation".

In a list of meetings which they publish annually for the convenience of Brethren who may be travelling, they give the addresses of 523 in England, 48 in Ireland, and 75 in Scotland. There are also a goodly number on the Continent of Europe, in Australia and New Zealand, in the West Indies, in Canada, and in the United States. And indeed almost everywhere, if we may believe the testimony of 'The Southern Review' [of April 1877], which says:

"The Society, or order of Christian men, usually styled, 'The Plymouth Brethren,' has already, and almost without observation, spread over the face of the civilized world. "It seems, in fact, to have stolen a march on Christendom, and must now - whether for good or for

evil – be acknowledged as a power in the present awful crisis in the world's history, or tremendous conflict between the powers of light and darkness. "That it is felt to be such a power, is evident, from the fact of the controversy about Plymouth Brethren coming up all over the Protestant world, just now, and by the innumerable articles, pamphlets, and volumes, which this widespread controversy has called forth. "We have placed, at the head of this article, only three references to the literature connected with this controversy, but, if we had so chosen, we might easily have embraced in our list the titles of more than a hundred volumes of the same literature".

The above article is written with great vigour, extends to seventy-nine pages, and discusses the question of 'Plymouth Brethrenism' more fully than any of the "hundred volumes" referred to that have come under our notice.

The writer, being a Methodist, of course does not agree with all their doctrines, but he admires their zeal in spreading the work, admits that he has profited by their writings, and heartily rebukes their unfair critics.

Andrew Miller

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The Christian's Place

"The Jews' religion" had its place and day before the cross; Christianity after it. This makes all the difference. We know not Messiah after the flesh, but a risen Christ in heavenly glory. We are associated with Him there. Judaism was earthly in its character; it had "divine service," and a "worldly sanctuary." Christianity is heavenly. Christians are seated together in heavenly places in Christ. Our place is to be outside the camp with Christ as witnesses, and inside the veil with Him as worshippers.

The Midnight Cry - Andrew Miller

The long-suffering and patient grace of the Lord Jesus shine very sweetly to faith in the parable of the ten virgins, which represents the great body of professing Christians, true and false, wise and foolish. The heart loves to dwell on Him who lingers in His compassion for those who are still outside; who have the lamp of profession, but no oil to sustain the light. He is unwilling to shut the door. Wide open it stands, both night and day, speaking after the manner of men. Seven times the blood of the cross is sprinkled on the throne, and seven times before it. God's claims are fairly and fully met; the throne and the way up to it are reconciled; and whosoever will may now enter in through faith in that precious blood. All who come are pardoned and "accepted in the beloved."... "Him that cometh to me," says the blessed Lord, "I will in nowise cast out." Thus the way is open to faith, and thus it remains, during the period of the Lord's long-suffering. "And account," says Peter, "that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation." He lingers on the throne, He keeps the door open, for the salvation of souls. Precious thought! He waits for the salvation of lost sinners. May we share in His sympathies, and seek to win souls for Him. Ephesians 1: 6; John 6: 37; 2 Peter 3: 15.

But not only is the door open, and the Lord waiting in grace to receive and pardon all who come to Him, His love is active and unwearied - it goes out to seek as well as to save the lost. The midnight cry, so full of solemn warning to the utterly careless and mere professor, is full of comfort to those who are looking and longing for

His coming. To the latter it will be a morning of cloudless joy, the dawn of eternal day: to the former it will be the beginning of endless sorrow, confusion, and eternal night.

But why not listen to the cry now? It is full of the purest mercy and affectionate warning, It as good as says, "Why will ye die?"..... "Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." Once more hear and weigh these words, of priceless value, because they seek to awaken the careless from their fatal slumbers, and the wise virgins from their unwatchfulness. "And at midnight there was a cry made. Behold the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him." Who can mistake the meaning of these words? The midnight, we are assured, is past, the morning must be near; hope springs up in the heart; like the chilly night traveller, who hails with transports of delight the first appearance of the morning star. There, unbelief would be folly, or worse. Who would think of denying that the morning must be near when the midnight is past? And thus it is now to faith and hope, "the coming of the Lord draweth nigh." Already the church, as awakened by the Spirit, has heard His voice, and responded to His expecting love. "I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star. And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Revelation 22: 16, 17.

But we dwell not at present on the beautiful attitude of the church as here presented; our thoughts turn for a moment to the foolish virgins and the utterly careless.

The second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ from heaven is the one all-important event placed before both saints and sinners in the New Testament; not death, as is commonly said, or the uncertainty of life. Of course, we may die, and life is always uncertain; but the testimony of scripture is not to these, in order to arouse the slumbering virgins, but to the coming of the Lord. When He comes, the real condition of all is manifested, whether in the vigour of youth, and dreaming of many years to come, or in the feebleness of age, and feeling that the end is near; or whether making a profession of Christianity, or living according to the course of this world. And as this great and decisive event may take place, for anything we know, before the dawn of another day - before this paper is finished - should not the thought of it, the terror of it, awaken, alarm, arrest the most careless?

All who have heard the gospel of the grace of God - all who have been invited to come to Jesus - and especially all who have heard the midnight cry, but have persisted in a course of unbelief - will then be judged by the Lord as unworthy of that which they have despised, and the door of mercy will then be closed against them for ever. The wise virgins, true Christians, will go in with Christ to the marriage, and the door will be shut. But, like the door of the ark, it will now be shut by the hand of the Lord, and none can open it. Against all who refused to enter in while it stood open, it will be closed for ever. The awakening will now be terrible, but too late. "And the door was shut." This will prove an overwhelming reality to those who can find no admittance, and no oil to buy. Eternal darkness must now be their doom, and they know it. The scene is too awful to contemplate, but the

Lord has said enough to convince us of what will then be, and to warn us while the door still stands wide open.

It is perfectly clear, we think, both from this parable and other scriptures, that great excitement will prevail among the foolish virgins immediately the church is gone. They are evidently taken by surprise, and astonished to find that there is no hope - that the Lord will not open the door to them. Like many in the present day, they intended to be saved, but not until it suited themselves. They never dreamed of being shut out, but of surely being saved at a more convenient season.

Nearly all their relatives, friends, and acquaintances, were Christians; they are now inside; the eternal song begins; the sight of Jesus fills the enraptured throng with joy unutterable; their hallelujahs wax louder and louder; all catch the flying joy, and rolling round the rapturous hosanna, fill the vast regions of glory with their new, eternal song of loftiest praise. "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain," with a loud voice they cry, "to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, glory, and blessing." Revelation 5: 12.

But, once more, what of those outside? They cry too, but with a loud and bitter wail: "Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily, I say unto you, I know you not." This is decisive; there is no appeal from His tribunal. The heart sinks in despair, to be lifted up no more for ever. Oh! that careless souls would think of such things now; it is lacerating to our every feeling to write them, what must it be to endure them in hopeless despair! In Luke 13 they are represented as knocking at the door, and saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; we have eaten and drunk in Thy presence, and Thou hast taught in our streets. This clearly shows that they had not only

been professors, but that they had enjoyed great privileges. Of course, there is no door to knock at but the language conveys the most distressing thought of their disappointment and agony of mind; and this may continue until they fall into the hands of Satan, and believe his lie. (2 Thess. 2: 10-12.) But how could it be otherwise? From some families all will be gone save two or three; from others, only two or three will be gone; and some houses will be left without an inhabitant. Chiefest friends, too, and nearest relations, will be parted, to meet no more for ever. Then the awful thought will burst upon their bewildered minds with undisguised reality: What we refused to believe has taken place - the Lord has come, the church is gone, the door is closed, and over it is written, "There is no hope." But those who have been caught up will neither hear their cries, nor witness their agonies. In their bodies of glory, they are far and for ever removed from all scenes of suffering. The lower things will be forgotten in our occupation with the higher.

How merciful and gracious, then, my dear reader, is the warning voice of our parable! "Behold, the bridegroom cometh." Time enough is given thee between the midnight cry and the Bridegroom's arrival to prove thy state, and find oil to buy. Thou knowest the easy terms on which the oil is sold - "without money and without price!" The door is open, the oil is free, free to the poorest, free to the vilest, free to thee. Come to Jesus just as thou art, but see that thou come now. There is not a moment to lose. Haste thee; flee to Jesus. Canst thou afford to lose Him, and all the friends thou holdest dear? What would be the value of all thy property and thy pleasures, if the door of heaven were shut against

thee? Rich thou mayest be now, but then thou wouldst be poor indeed - Christless, friendless, homeless, godless, heavenless, hopeless. Come, then, oh come! Come as thou art! But, oh, come now! Thou wilt find all in Jesus - blessed Jesus! There is no oil, no saving grace, no Holy Spirit, no eternal life, save in Jesus; but all are thine; thine now, thine for ever, through faith in His blessed name. Oh, trust in Him alone!

When the sight of Jesus bursts upon the gaze of the wise but once slumbering virgins, what thinkest thou will be the shout of their praise? Better come and join the joyful chorus, than swell with thine own agonies the bitter wail of the lost in hell. I will now leave thee, but I hope not for ever, with the encouraging, assuring, word of Jesus: "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve that thou mayest see." Revelation 3: 18.

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